

What is VCAL?

Applied Learning

VCAL is an accredited senior secondary qualification which is recognised within the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF). It has been designed to develop and extend pathways for young people and to help them make informed choices about employment or education pathways, including active participation in the community.

It's a hands-on option for young people and provides practical work-related experience, as well as literacy and numeracy skills, and the opportunity to build on personal skills that are important for work and life.

VCAL, generally, does not provide a tertiary entry score (ATAR) for university.

VCAL Certificate Levels

The VCAL Certificate has three levels – Foundation, Intermediate and Senior. Foundation level VCAL is a Year 10 equivalent. Intermediate and Senior levels are Year 11 & 12, with either completed certificate allowing a pathway into further TAFE courses. These three levels recognise the wide variation in student levels, just as VCE recognises different levels of achievement by awarding higher and lower study scores. The pre-enrolment and pre assessment interview will determine the level most suitable for each student.

Foundation: At this level the focus is on developing knowledge and employability skills, with a strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy skills, and preparatory learning.

Intermediate: At Intermediate level the focus is on developing the knowledge and employability skills that lead to independent learning, confidence, and a high level of transferable skills.

Senior: At this level the focus is on developing the knowledge and employability skills that lead to a high level of interpersonal skills, independent action, and achievement of tasks that require decision-making and leadership.

The VCAL learning programs help connect students with broader options for work, further education and active community participation. Each certificate level provides a learning program of about 1,000 hours, which is generally a mix of (mainly) classroom hours and independent learning activities.

VCAL Strands

There are four strands in VCAL.

Strand 1 – Literacy and Numeracy Skills

Your VCAL program must include literacy and numeracy subjects. These can be selected from VCAL literacy skills units, VCAL numeracy skills units, and selected accredited

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Further Education (FE) studies, such as units from the Certificate in General Education for Adults.

Strand 2 - Industry Specific Skills

These are units from a Vocational Education and Training (VET) course. These units may be from one course, or samples from a number of courses. The range of VET options is extensive and includes units from industries including automotive, engineering, building and construction, hospitality and retail, agriculture, horticulture, warehousing and hair and beauty. Some of these options may only be available through an external provider.

Strand 3 - Work Related Skills

This study area develops your employability skills, and may include modules that will prepare you for work, such as workplace health and safety (WHS) and job interview skills. Students are also encouraged to do a structured work placement or School based traineeship or apprenticeship, or take on part time work when they are ready.

Strand 4 - Personal Development Skills

This subject area helps you to develop your teamwork, confidence and personal skills required in life and the workplace. Students are encouraged to be involved in community based projects, and voluntary work, and to plan, organize and run events that will enable them to develop these important skills.

VCAL Awards

To be awarded any VCAL qualification, students must successfully complete a learning program that contains a minimum of 10 credits. One credit is awarded for the successful completion of:

- one VCAL unit;
- one VCE unit (which may have been studied at a previous school);
- a minimum of 90 hours of VET units of competency; and
- a minimum of 90 hours of Further Education (FE) units of competency.

All VCAL certificates must include at least six credits at the level at which they are awarded, and must include credits from each of the VCAL Strands.

For more details, please read the information sheet called How can I be awarded a VCAL qualification? or read more at www.vcaa.vic.edu.au