



Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority

Annual Report 2004–05



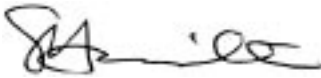
November 2005

Lynne Kosky, MP
Minister for Education and Training
2 Treasury Place
East Melbourne Victoria 3002

Dear Minister

I have pleasure in submitting the annual report of the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA). All reporting is conducted in accordance with the *Financial Management Act 1994*.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stuart Hamilton', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Stuart Hamilton, AO
CHAIR

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Executive summary

Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority

The VCAA is an independent statutory body responsible for providing the curriculum and assessment used across year levels in Prep to Year 12 (P–12) school years in all government, Catholic and independent Victorian schools.

The aim of the VCAA is to provide all Victorian school students with the highest quality curriculum, and the most fair and accurate assessment processes, and recognition of their educational achievements.

The VCAA works closely with teachers, schools, government departments and other statutory authorities to form an education sector that is dynamic, cooperative, accessible and beneficial to all Victorians.

Goal

The VCAA's Strategic Plan 2004–07 is informed by the Department of Education & Training's Corporate Plan 2003–06 and outlines the key outcomes that the VCAA undertakes to deliver in order to fulfil the responsibility it has under the *Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority Act 2000* and to contribute to the Government's strategic directions and the Department of Education & Training's objectives.

Accordingly, our goal is to create a school curriculum and assessment framework which supports high-quality education and the recognition of student achievement which engages students and helps them to move on to work and further study.

Role and responsibilities

The VCAA is responsible for the production and monitoring of the Curriculum and Standards

Framework (CSF), the Victorian Essential Learning Standards, the Achievement Improvement Monitor (AIM), the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE), including vocational education and training (VET) components, and the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL).

The VCAA also supports and facilitates cross-sectoral curriculum and resource development in collaboration with other national and state education and training authorities.

As part of its responsibilities for curriculum and assessment, the VCAA:

- monitors patterns of participation in schools
- maintains records of student achievement
- provides information to the public on general student performance within Victorian schools
- conducts research relating to these core functions
- conducts professional development.

Government goals and targets

The VCAA plays a vital role in the achievement of the Government's vision for Victoria of high-quality education and training for lifelong learning. Curriculum and assessment programs help to achieve the Government's goals and targets outlined in *Growing Victoria Together – A Vision for Victoria to 2010 and Beyond*, particularly:

- the proportion of Victorian primary students achieving the national benchmark levels for reading, writing and numeracy will be at or above the national average
- by 2010, 90 per cent of young people in Victoria will successfully complete Year 12 or its educational equivalent
- the level of participation in vocational education and training of adults aged 25–64 years will increase.

Report of the Chair

The VCAA is now in its fourth year of operation and continues to demonstrate leadership and innovation by providing curriculum and assessment standards that allow young people opportunities to develop their skills to their maximum potential. Steady increases in retention rates for the VCE, VCAL and VET studies, and school-based new apprenticeships indicate the success of the VCAA's programs.

In creating a comprehensive and engaging selection of choices in educational programs, the VCAA provides students with the ability to develop a range of skills, attributes and knowledge, which will guarantee them the best possible opportunities in an increasingly complex global setting.

The VCAA has developed the Victorian Essential Learning Standards (the Standards) as a key element of the *Blueprint for Government Schools*. The Standards offer a new approach to the Victorian curriculum from P–10, and are based on three inter-related components: physical and social development, discipline-based learning and inter-disciplinary learning. The Standards were developed through extensive consultation and collaboration with teachers, parents, students and the education and wider community.

The VCAA has developed curriculum resources specifically for the Melbourne 2006 Commonwealth Games. Throughout 2005, schools are being sent a selection of curriculum materials that will engage students and teachers in the Games. The resources will create a meaningful learning experience of sporting achievement and an in-depth knowledge of Commonwealth nations. Resources will include content on Victorian Indigenous communities, giving students the opportunity to develop greater appreciation of Aboriginal arts and culture. The resources also highlight the Government's commitment to the environment, cultural diversity and to people with special needs.

A commitment to rigorous assessment and reporting processes is evident in the VCAA's improved security measures for VCE examinations, expansion of the AIM assessment program, and the development of the online VCE Data Service and the VCE Examinations Results Service.

I thank the members of the VCAA Board for their lively and focused contribution, the CEO, Michael White, for his leadership, and the staff of the VCAA for their professionalism and dedication during a year of significant achievement for our organisation.



Stuart Hamilton

Report of the Chief Executive Officer

The VCAA has continued to provide the highest quality curriculum and assessment standards for all Victorian students throughout a very productive year. The VCAA has maintained rigorous standards monitoring student progress, conducting research, and providing professional development for teachers and principals.

The VCAA undertook a number of key initiatives that highlight a year of continued success in providing the very best for students.

Improved outcomes for students

The VCAA has achieved improved outcomes across a range of key deliverables including percentage of increased completions in the VCE. The percentage of 19-year-olds who have completed the VCE rose from 71.7 per cent in 2003 to 72.8 per cent in 2004.

The VCAA supports schools and systems in the engagement of students and their successful transition to meaningful work and further training. VET certificate enrolments increased to 42,934 in 2004 from 37,685 in 2003. The VCAA continued to support the strong growth of the VCAL in 2004, with certificate enrolments growing from 5137 in 2003 to 8125 in 2004.

Victorian Essential Learning Standards

The Victorian Essential Learning Standards (the Standards) provide a whole-school curriculum planning framework that sets out standards for schools in the areas of learning, assessment and reporting of student achievement and progress. The Standards will replace the CSF as the basis for curriculum and assessment planning

in Victorian schools and will be available for implementation in January 2006.

The Standards are based on best practice in Victorian schools, national and international research, and widespread consultation with school communities, educators, professional associations and community groups. They represent an outstanding collaborative achievement by all sectors of the Victorian education community. Throughout the state, principals and curriculum leaders have embraced the new approach and the way the Standards support their work in meeting the learning needs of students.

During 2005, the Standards are being validated as schools develop curriculum plans to utilise the Standards in a local context. Feedback from forums with principals and teachers indicates that schools are at varying stages of familiarisation with the Standards. The validation of the Standards covers the following elements:

- developmental progression
- consistency of expectations
- degree of performance
- comparability of the learning focus and standards with other national and international curriculum frameworks.

November 2004 and June 2005 VCE examinations

During the November 2004 examination period, 327,836 examinations were sat by a total of 49,741 students in 117 VCE examinations. Of these, 48,134 students successfully completed their VCE. Forty-seven students sat for their VCE overseas.

In June 2005, over 49,000 students sat for a total of 128,602 examinations in six studies and the General Achievement Test (GAT). Ten students sat their examinations interstate and 683 students sat their examinations overseas.

Updated study designs

As part of the VCAA's ongoing commitment to provide high-quality education to Victorian students, 23 VCE studies and nine VCE VET programs were reviewed and revitalised during 2004 to promote increased participation in the VCE.

At the beginning of 2005, over 130 study options were available to students in the VCE, including 51 languages other than English (LOTE), 27 VCE VET programs and 13 school-based new apprenticeships. The following reaccredited study designs were implemented: Business Management, Environmental Science, History, Media, Physics, Psychology and 17 LOTE.

Ten VCE studies are being reviewed in 2005: Accounting, Chemistry, Dance, Design and Technology, Drama, English, English as a Second Language, Foundation English, Systems and Technology, and Theatre Studies.

Science in the VCE

During 2004, the VCAA undertook a review of VCE Science studies to guarantee Victorian students would be accessing the most recent trends in the sciences. In consultation with the teaching profession and key stakeholders, the VCAA identified emerging fields within Biology, Chemistry, Environmental Science, Physics and Psychology. Science studies have been reaccredited to incorporate these developments.

From 2005, Environmental Science will include specific areas in sustainability, reproductive technologies and eco-tourism. Similarly, Physics will include areas of study in photonics, electronics, medical physics, synchrotron and aerospace. Psychology will now include studies in neuro-science and bio-ethics.

The review of VCE Chemistry continued during 2004–05. A grant of \$82,000 was received from the Department of Innovation, Industry and Regional Development to work in partnership with the VCAA to support the redevelopment of VCE Chemistry. The grant will provide resources for teachers in the areas of new and emerging science in Victoria.

Achievement Improvement Monitor

The AIM is an integrated set of assessment and monitoring programs for measuring student progress and achievement. The VCAA delivered statewide AIM assessments at Years 3, 5 and 7 in August 2004 and subsequently delivered AIM results to all participating schools. As part of its program of continuous improvement, the VCAA implemented enhanced quality processes and gained 99 per cent school compliance. In addition, the VCAA further developed the AIM online system to include on-demand testing and classroom assessment resources for teachers.

For the first time a series of detailed reports were provided to schools online through the AIM Data Service, positioning Victoria at the forefront of online reporting nationally. In 2005, the VCAA initiated pre-enrolment of students in the AIM tests, delivering more timely and efficient implementation of AIM assessment and reporting.

Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning

During 2005, the VCAA assumed complete responsibility for the delivery of the VCAL from the Victorian Qualifications Authority. Since the VCAL's inception in 2002, the program has continued to receive strong support from students, parents, teachers and employers. As at May 2005, there were 10,412 VCAL enrolments with 368 providers around the state. Currently, 85 per cent of government secondary schools are funded to deliver the VCAL, with significant funding directed to regional Victoria.

The VCAL Achievement Awards acknowledge the achievements of VCAL students and highlight the impact the program has made on the lives of young people – many of whom have found it difficult to fulfil their potential in more traditional learning environments. Through their VCAL studies, students have developed skills and achieved successful pathway outcomes

through school-based new apprenticeships, structured work placements and participation in community projects.

VCE Data Service

The VCE Data Service was redeveloped to provide each school with a greater range of confidential information on the performance of their VCE students. Professional development support was arranged across Victoria to assist schools in interpreting the data to generate school improvement.

VCE Examination Results Service

The VCE Examinations Results Service is a new initiative to advance the scope of assessment reporting provided to schools.

The service was released online in August 2004 via the Victorian Administrative Software System. Results from the June and November VCE examinations were provided to schools so that teachers could view information on individual questions and compare their class results within their school and the average performance of the state on each question and section.

Melbourne 2006 Commonwealth Games education program

As part of a whole-of-government education program developed specifically for the 2006 Commonwealth Games, the VCAA has worked collaboratively with the Department of Education & Training and the Office of Commonwealth Games Coordination to prepare curriculum materials for students in Years P–12 that link the VCE, VCAL and VET programs. A series of curriculum resources are being distributed to all schools throughout the year.

These resources will assist teachers in making the Melbourne 2006 Commonwealth Games a meaningful experience for students.

International developments

The VCAA has expanded its delivery of offshore education programs. The International Projects Unit has developed a comprehensive framework for the VCAA's engagement in the international marketplace.

The VCAA has agreements with education providers in China, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia and South Africa for the delivery of the VCE, the GAT, the CSF and now the Victorian Essential Learning Standards.

Tianjin project

Senior members of the Tianjin Municipal Educational Admission and Examinations Authority, a body responsible for implementing examinations for the People's Republic of China, attended a comprehensive assessment training program developed and presented by the VCAA. The program was well received and offered the Chinese delegates an opportunity to view current innovations in assessment and reporting.

The 2004–05 year has been one of tremendous achievement for the VCAA. I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the dedication and commitment of VCAA staff in developing exemplary curriculum and assessment programs, and the leadership of the Chair and the Board members.



Michael White

Highlights

The VCAA's Strategic Plan 2004–07 articulates the goals and targets set by the Government for education and training and outlines the VCAA's contribution towards fulfilling the Government's education agenda.

P–10 curriculum and assessment	
<p>AIM To develop a curriculum and assessment framework that provides students with essential learning standards including knowledge, skills and behaviours; and supports high-quality teaching and learning.</p>	
<p>Key strategic initiatives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide leadership and direction for Victoria in the development of National Consistent Curriculum Outcomes • Produce a new compulsory year's curriculum incorporating a broad framework of essential learnings for all Victorian students including consultation paper, extensive consultation process with stakeholders, and first draft of framework • Produce and disseminate support materials including annotated work samples with a focus on ICT • Investigate assessment and reporting of generic skills within the compulsory years of schooling • Development of an assessment and reporting process for the Victorian Essential Learning Standards • Implement tracking process for students in Years 3–7 • Develop AIM Online vision statement and strategy (3–5 years) to provide for full cohort testing and/or interactive formative evaluations and online reporting to schools and parents on AIM data • Conduct internal review of AIM in-house testing program • Establish guidelines and compliance checks for schools for AIM administrative processes and for supervision of students during the testing period 	<p>Progress/Achievement</p> <p>English outcomes changed in response to Victoria's intervention. Project reviewed following meeting of Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA). VCAA providing mathematics writer.</p> <p>Consultation process completed. Structure, rationale, domain and dimension published on the VCAA website. Published the Standards, which were disseminated to all schools.</p> <p>Initial material published in March 2005 with the Standards.</p> <p>Pilot project established. Project plan endorsed by P–10 Curriculum and Assessment Committee. Assessing and reporting on the Standards due for initial advice Term 4, 2005.</p> <p>Paper establishing principles developed. Assessment and reporting paper in preparation. Materials to be developed with schools in 2005. Over 200 schools have volunteered to participate in development. Years 3, 5 and 7 pre-enrolled in 2005 AIM tests.</p> <p>Business Case for AIM statewide online assessment withdrawn for 2004–05. Further work on AIM statewide online assessment suspended in light of national testing policy development. Future focus will be on classroom assessment and reporting materials to support the Standards.</p> <p>Review completed and recommendations being implemented.</p> <p>Less than 0.7 per cent of schools failed to comply with testing program.</p>
Post-compulsory curriculum and assessment	
<p>AIM To provide senior secondary students with study choices and assessments of their learning to promote successful transition to work or further study.</p>	
<p>Key strategic initiatives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formalise handover of the VCAL to the VCAA and provide curriculum and professional development support to schools for the delivery of the VCAL • Review, approve, publish and distribute 23 VCE studies and nine VCE VET programs 	<p>Progress/Achievement</p> <p>The VCAA formally assigned to VCAL support and implementation. Formal documents detailing responsibilities developed and agreed to. Final discussion of remaining budget nearing completion. Dedicated VCAL staff appointed.</p> <p>All decisions taken by the VCAA and the Victorian Qualifications Authority, twenty-three VCE studies and nine VCE VET programs published and professional development underway.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review structure of post-compulsory curriculum design rules, including VCE studies, VET studies, extension studies and the VCAL • Investigate feasibility of formal recognition of generic skills within senior secondary curriculum • Further develop initiatives in ICT-based delivery and assessment of VCE studies • Provide professional development for teachers of new VCE studies • Establish guidelines and compliance checks for schools for VCE administrative processes and during testing period • Further strengthen the security and quality assurance of VCE examinations • Complete feasibility study of VCE online marking • Trials in ICT-based assessment for VCE English, Mathematics, Information Technology and Accounting • Establish structures for assessment within the VCAL including provision of administrative advice 	<p>VET review and approval process refined. VCAL review successfully completed. Graduation working party commenced discussion on extension studies program.</p> <p>Years 11 and 12 pilot program established. Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) contracted to refine construct to include employability skills. Pilot program to be undertaken across all sectors.</p> <p>Consultancy appointed to prepare Business Case for VCAA ERC bid. To be completed by July 2005.</p> <p>Program of professional development for new VCE studies successfully delivered. High attendance rate recorded with positive feedback.</p> <p>Guidelines completed. A further 213 schools visited, bringing total to 278 over two years.</p> <p>Enhanced packaging, delivery and storage in place. 24-hour video surveillance installed at VCAA warehouse.</p> <p>In July 2004, VCE Chemistry trial marked online and completed without error. Report on activity completed.</p> <p>Online trials successfully undertaken in Term 3, 2004 for 1000 students. Online trials in VCE Accounting and Information Technology conducted May – June 2005 using AIM online software.</p> <p>Quality assurance procedure established. VCAL administrative requirements included in the VCE and VCAL handbook and <i>VCAA Bulletin</i>.</p>
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Research measurement and reporting

AIM To provide accurate and comprehensive information to students, parents, schools, government and the community on education outcomes

Key strategic initiatives

- Develop the capacity to use longitudinal achievement data to inform school program effectiveness and system performance by:
 - Reviewing the equating procedures for LAP/AIM data 1997–2003
 - Investigating the feasibility of mapping existing measures at P–10 on to a common achievement scale to improve reporting of student achievement against the CSF
 - Undertaking a scoping project to extend LAP/AIM below Year 3 and above Year 7
- Investigate international benchmarking (ISA/PISA) for statewide AIM literacy and numeracy assessments
- Establish an Educational Measurement and Assessment Steering Committee comprising VCAA, OSE and OPI personnel to address better use of AIM/ VCE data for decision making
- Develop VCE Data Service for AIM Y3–5 AIM statewide assessment
- Review and redevelop VCE Data Service
- Analysis of student participation and achievement in relation to Government targets for the VCE, AIM and VCAL
- Undertake sectoral and schools data analysis to provide value-added services and support school performance, accountability and effectiveness
- Develop VCAA Annual Research Plan and facilitate establishment of two Research Fellowships in partnership with tertiary institutions

Progress/Achievement

The AIM Link project underway. In June 2005, tests composed of previously administered AIM test items for reading and numeracy were delivered at Years 2–8. Analysis of results will follow completion of marking.

Data checking and item calibration have been completed and students matched in preparation for equating. All prior checks have now been conducted and data is ready for equating.

Committee membership has been constituted. Committee will meet before 30 July to consider, inter alia, the issues arising from the use of alternative Like Schools Measure.

Delivered on time and error free.

VCE Data Service fully redeveloped, and the new system implemented at the commencement of the 2005 school year with very positive feedback from schools.

Reported regularly.

Reported regularly.

Research program in place. Fellowships advertised but no appointments made to date.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop research publications program to include background papers on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – reporting of GAT scores and study scores below 20 – alternative Approaches to Like School Group comparisons – reporting system-wide achievement • Develop VCAA Strategic Reporting Framework and schedule consistent with VCAA's responsibilities under the VCAA Act 	<p>Research program established and continuing. Background papers produced and Like-School Grouping project due for completion in 2005, with significant publication already achieved.</p> <p>Reporting schedule established.</p>
Organisational capability	
AIM To build infrastructure and capability for innovation and deliver improved services to clients.	
<p>Key strategic initiatives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop new Strategic Plan 2004–07 that outlines key directions for next three years • Develop VCAA Data Access policy and protocols for releasing information collected and maintained by the VCAA to external parties • Redevelop VCAA Assessment Processing System (APS) to enable linking of student assessment details and more effective management of historical data • Develop VCAA ICT Strategic plan that interfaces with the Department of Education & Training ICT strategy • Review, restructure and redevelop VCAA website to enable improved client service • Review Provider Registration arrangements in collaboration with RSB and VQA • Undertake strategic analysis of international engagement for the VCAA • Complete review of VCAA Risk Management Framework to manage ongoing monitoring of risks • Led the introduction of Objective Records Management for Victorian Government 	<p>Progress/Achievement</p> <p>VCAA Strategic Plan 2004–07 approved by the VCAA Board, and used to inform the 2005–06 Business Plan.</p> <p>VCAA Data Access policy approved by executive management.</p> <p>APS Project formally constituted in July 2004 with a three-tier governance structure. Project director appointed. Stage 1 deliverables completed, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • project plan • communications strategy • business requirements • architectural strategy. <p>Stage 2 commenced with preparatory work APS-R Build RFT by October 2005.</p> <p>VCAA Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Governance Framework defined and approved by Executive Management. Information Systems Steering Committee established. Scope of works for the development of VCAA ICT strategy agreed.</p> <p>Funds allocated in the 2005–06 budget to deliver final plan.</p> <p>Project completed and feedback has been extremely positive.</p> <p>On hold awaiting outcome of the Legislation Review.</p> <p>International Programs Unit finalised Business plan, International policy document, Standards and Guidelines for applicants.</p> <p>New approach to risk management developed and communicated. Currently being integrated into the Draft VCAA Business Plan 2005–06. Scheduled to meet the Department of Education & Training deadline.</p> <p>Training in Objective Records Management completed.</p>

Summary of financial results

The 2004–05 financial year was the fourth full operating year for the VCAA.

The main source of funding for the VCAA's operations is the Department of Education & Training through operational and project grants. Revenue was also derived from a number of external sources, including overseas student fees, publication sales, student services and royalties.

The 2004–05 revenue totalled \$44.9 million, compared with \$33.5 million in the previous year. This was due to increases in special grants, overseas student fees and student services, royalties and copyright, Expenditure Review Committee funding to develop the Assessment Processing System and an allocation from the Department of Education & Training for long-service leave (with \$3.2 million of these funds tagged for future periods).

The 2004–05 expenditure totalled \$39.3 million (including Assessment Processing System project costs of \$0.3 million), compared with \$34.6 million in the previous year. The increase was a result of curriculum reform, printing and distribution of VCE and AIM examination material, agency staff and contractors, teacher release grants, depreciation and amortisation.

The 2004–05 net result was a \$5.6 million surplus, compared with a \$1.1 million deficit in the previous year.

The management systems used by the VCAA are an essential component of its operations and serve to meet all client requirements, reduce risk, improve performance and demonstrate responsible administration to all stakeholders.

There are presently no known events that could adversely affect the operations of the VCAA during the next reporting year.

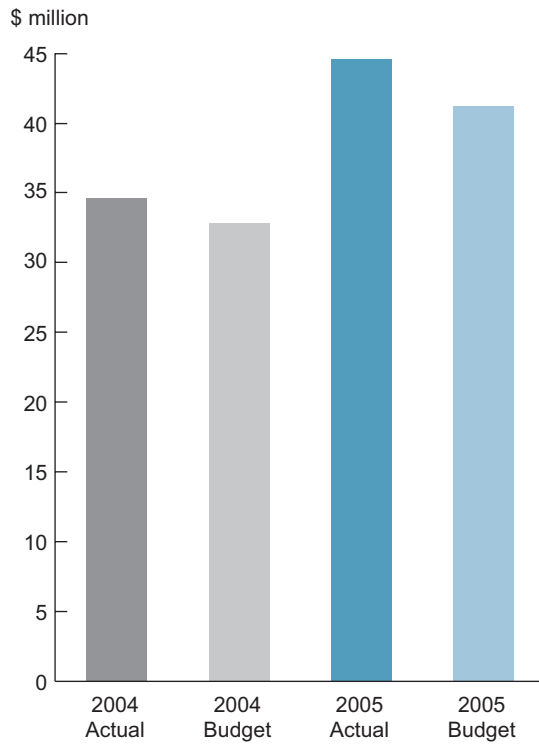
Summary of financial position

	Surplus/(Deficit)	Revenue	Expenses	Assets	Liabilities
30 June 2005	5,642,360	44,902,952	39,260,592	13,324,571	7,585,048
30 June 2004	(1,096,829)	33,456,701	34,553,530	6,022,471	5,925,308
30 June 2003	(932,981)	31,910,252	32,843,233	7,830,662	6,636,670
30 June 2002	(2,153,183)	28,196,883	30,350,066	9,998,502	7,871,530

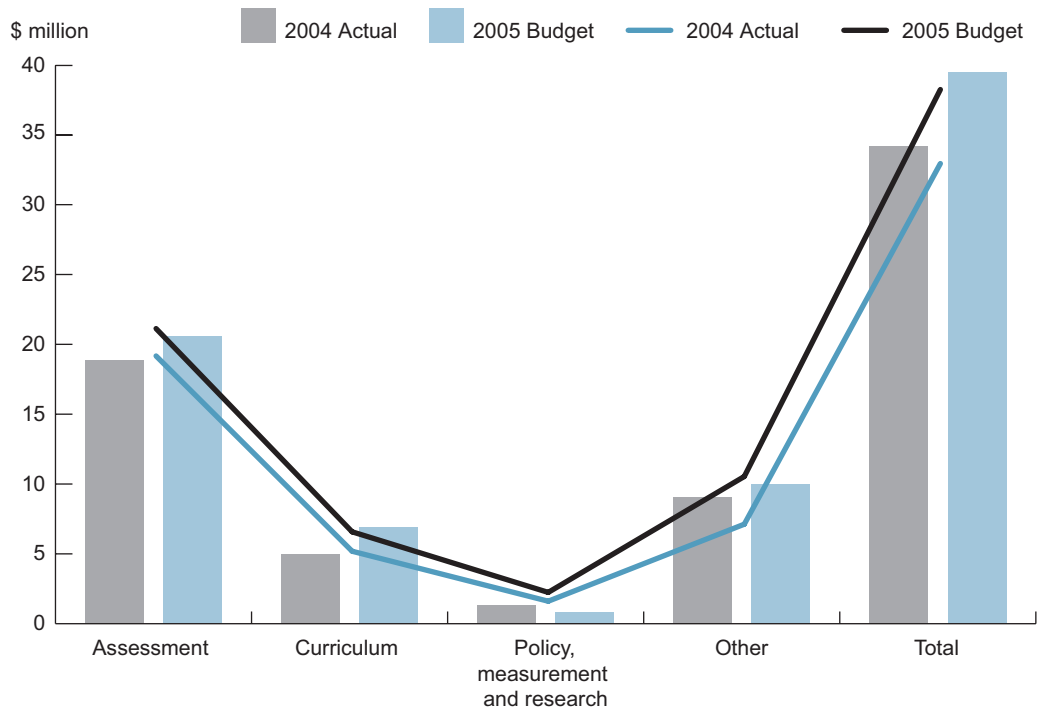
Performance against budgetary objectives as at 30 June 2005

	Actual \$			Budget \$		
	2005	2004	2003	2005	2004	2003
Revenue	44,902,952	33,456,701	31,910,252	41,395,086	32,602,068	29,914,572
Expenditure						
Assessment	21,034,342	19,795,102	19,055,325	20,639,444	18,854,798	19,298,002
Curriculum	6,594,539	4,997,610	4,312,240	7,365,774	4,826,053	5,129,491
Policy, measurement and research	1,415,188	1,101,853	1,498,505	1,269,249	1,412,866	1,365,923
Other	10,216,523	8,658,965	7,977,163	10,623,094	9,026,232	6,989,272
Total	39,260,592	34,553,530	32,843,233	39,897,561	34,119,949	32,782,688
Operating result	5,642,360	(1,096,829)	(932,981)	1,497,525	(1,517,881)	(2,868,116)

VCAA revenue



VCAA expenditure



Overview of the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority

Governance

Establishment

The VCAA came into operation on 1 March 2001 and was the successor to the Board of Studies. The VCAA is accountable to the Minister for Education and Training.

Objectives

The *Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Act 2000* sets out the following objectives for the VCAA:

- to develop high-quality courses and curriculum and assessment products and services
- to develop courses normally undertaken in, or designed to be undertaken in, Years 11 and 12, including courses leading to the issue of the VCE, that will prepare students for successful transition to employment, tertiary education, vocational education and training and further education
- to provide linkages that will facilitate movement between the VCAA's courses and other courses.

VCAA Board

The members of the VCAA Board are drawn from educationalists and community representatives.

During 2004–05 Mr John Fry, Mr Peter McMullin, Ms Joanne Roberts and Professor Sue Willis were reappointed for a further three years. Ms Kylie Sanders resigned her position in February 2005.

Members



**MR STUART
HAMILTON AO**

Chair BA (Hons), BEc

Mr Stuart Hamilton is currently Chief Executive, Open Universities Australia, a member of the Board of the Council for

the Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences and the Academic Senate of Melbourne University Private. He was Secretary of the Department of Education & Training and CEO of the Victorian Innovation Economy Advisory Board. He also chaired the Australian Education Systems Officials Committee and the MCEETYA Taskforce on Teaching Quality and Educational Leadership and was Deputy Chair of the ACER and a member of the National Inquiry into Teaching and Teacher Education. A former Executive Director of the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee, he worked for many years for the Australian Public Service, including as Secretary of the Health and Environment departments. He has been a member of several other boards including the International Association of Universities, Australian Heritage Commission, Australian Sports Commission and the Health Insurance Commission.



MS ESMERALDA BAMBLETT

DipT, GradDipArts, MEd

Ms Esmeralda Bamblett is a member of the Bangerang and Wiradjuri Aboriginal nations and has had a longstanding career in Aboriginal education and development. She was an inaugural member of the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation from 1991–94 and a member of the Australian Council of Women from 1993–96. She has been Vice-President of the Aboriginal Advancement League since 1998. Ms Bamblett commenced her career in education working as a primary school teacher, eventually taking up a lecturing position in Indigenous Studies at Melbourne University in 1998. Ms Bamblett was a Koorie Education Development Officer for the Department of Education & Training from 1989–2003, Research Manager for the Institute of Koorie Education at Deakin University from 2000–02 and was acting manager of the Koorie Education Strategy Team for the Department of Education & Training in 2003. Currently, Ms Bamblett is the Director of Neenann Multimedia and Consultancy.



PROFESSOR GERALD BURKE

BCom DipEd (Melb), PhD (Monash)

Professor Gerald Burke is currently the Chair of the Victorian Qualifications Authority, Executive Director of the Monash University – ACER Centre for the Economics of Education and Training, and a staff member of the Faculty of Education at Monash University. He has undertaken research over a long period on the finance of education and training and on education and employment. He is a member of the Education and Training Statistics Advisory Committee of the Australian Bureau of Statistics and has consulted for a range of mainly government organisations in Australia and overseas.



MR JOHN FRY

(reappointed for a second term on 1 June 2005)

BA, DipEd, GradDipCareersEd, MAICD

Mr John Fry has taught in secondary schools since 1980. He has been a coordinator at faculty and curriculum year level and is currently teaching the VCE and VCAL at Lalor North Secondary College. Mr Fry is Chair of the Whittlesea Youth Commitment and is Deputy Chair of the Hume/Whittlesea Local Learning and Employment Network. He has been a councillor at the City of Whittlesea since 1989, having served three terms as mayor. Mr Fry is a member of the Australian Education Union Council and State Branch Executive. He also serves on the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) Council.



MS JENNIFER HAYNES

BA, DipEd, MEd, MACE, MAICD, FACE

Ms Jennifer Haynes is currently Acting Principal at Mentone Girls' Grammar, a K–12 school, and has taught at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels. Ms Haynes is a life member of the Victorian Association for the Teaching of English and a past president of the Australian Association for the Teaching of English. She was a writer of the VCE English and Literature study designs, a member of the First Council of the VIT and is currently a member of its Standards and Professional Learning Committee. Ms Haynes is also a member of the Victorian Independent Education Union and the vice-president of the Independent Association of Registered Teachers of Victoria.



MR GRANT HEHIR

Appointed as Secretary of the Department of Education & Training in May 2003, Mr Grant Hehir leads the Department in fulfilling its role to provide, fund, purchase

and regulate education and training services for Victorians of all ages. His responsibilities encompass schools, TAFE institutes, registered training organisations, adult community education (ACE) providers, adult education institutions and higher education institutions.

Mr Hehir joined the Department following a career in public sector policy development and budget management. His most recent role was as Deputy Secretary, Strategic, Economic and Social Policy, at the Department of Premier and Cabinet, advising the Premier on social and economic policy matters. His previous role was as Deputy Secretary, Budget and Financial Management Division at the Department of Treasury and Finance. In this role, he provided advice to Government on state budget strategy and management and advised on emerging policy issues.



MR JOHN MADDOCK

GradDipBus, GradDipEd, FAICD, FAITD, MASTD

Mr John Maddock is the Chief Executive Officer of the Box Hill Institute of TAFE. His involvement in the VET sector has

included membership and chairing of committees at both state and national levels. Mr Maddock is a member of the Deakin University Council, the Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre (VTAC) Board of Trustees and Management Committee, Innovation and Business Industry Skills Council Board, the Centre for the Economics of Education and Training, the VET Advisory Committee and is an executive member of the Post-Secondary International Network for Presidents and Chief Executive Officers.



MR GARRY McLEAN

DipT, BEd, GradDipRE, MACE, MACEA, AIMM

Mr Garry McLean is Assistant Director (School Services) at the Catholic Education Office. He taught at a number of

parish primary schools before being appointed Principal of St Mary’s School, West Melbourne, in 1984. He was appointed Principal of St Joseph the Worker School, Reservoir North, in 1990 and later awarded life membership of the Australian Primary Principals’ Association. In 1995, Mr McLean was appointed to the Catholic Education Office in the role of Chairperson, Special Programs. He was appointed to his current position in June 2001. Mr McLean was elected to the executive of the Australian Curriculum Studies Association in 1999 and is a member of the Program for International Student Assessment National Advisory Committee. He is a former executive member of the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria.



MR PETER McMULLIN

(reappointed for a second term on 1 June 2005)
LLB, BCom, FAIM

Mr Peter McMullin is a legal practitioner specialising in commercial law and mediation. He

is currently a Geelong City Councillor, Chairman of the Geelong Regional Library Corporation and a member of the Geelong Art Gallery Board. Mr McMullin is Deputy President of the Museums Board of Victoria. He is a Director of Turning Point, Chairman of the Melbourne International Comedy Festival and former Deputy President of the Victorian Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Mr McMullin previously served on the Melbourne City Council as Deputy Lord Mayor from 1996–99.



PROFESSOR ROBERT PARGETTER

BSc, DipEd, MA, PhD

Professor Robert Pargetter is Professor Emeritus at Monash University and Principal of Haileybury College. He is also a

Director of the Australian Institute of Management. He was formerly Deputy Vice-Chancellor at Monash University, Dean of Arts and Professor of Philosophy. He was Chair of the Management Committee of the VTAC for four years.

research within the state and national projects to improve student learning in the middle years of schooling. Her research work continues in middle years curriculum review and reform.



MS KYLIE SANDERS

(resigned February 2005)
BEd, DipEd

Ms Kylie Sanders joined the VCAA Board with extensive experience as a primary teacher. Currently Ms Sanders teaches at

Tallangatta Secondary College. She is a trained Middle Years Literacy Leader and Civics and Citizenship Leader. Ms Sanders' area of expertise is in the middle years of schooling and civics and citizenship. She has authored two Middle Years programs, Hand in Hand and From Red Earth to .com, and runs professional development on Middle Years programs statewide.



MS CATHERINE PIANTA

BA, BLit (Hons), GradDipEd

Ms Catherine Pianta is currently the Principal of Benalla College. Prior to this, she held a variety of roles with the Department of Education & Training

including curriculum consultant, teacher and principal at primary and secondary schools. Ms Pianta acts as a facilitator and mentor for several leadership development programs. Ms Pianta is a member of the Australian Principals' Federation and the Victorian Association of Secondary School Principals. She is also a Fellow of the Williamson Community Leadership Program of Victoria and is involved in a number of Skillsbank programs for Leadership Victoria.



PROFESSOR SUE WILLIS

(reappointed for a second term on 1 June 2005)
BSc, DipEd, PhD

Professor Sue Willis is the Dean of the Faculty of Education at Monash

University. Her area of expertise is in mathematics education relating to children's development of key mathematical ideas and the development of informed numeracy in children and adults. She has written state and national curriculum frameworks for mathematics, developing cross-curriculum policies and practices in outcomes-based education and in enhancing teacher judgement and professional accountability. Professor Willis is a member of the Australian Association of Mathematics Teachers, the Australian Association for Research in Evaluation, the Australian Council of Adult Literacy and the Australian Curriculum Studies Association.



MS JOANNE ROBERTS

(reappointed for a second term on 1 June 2005)
CertAEd, DipEd,
GradDipCompEd

Ms Joanne Roberts has worked in the primary, secondary and tertiary

sectors, and is Assistant Principal at The Grange P-12 College. Ms Roberts has worked with the Australian National Schools Network and the Department of Education & Training in planning and facilitating professional development of other educators at school-based, regional and national conferences. She has undertaken curriculum

VCAA Board committees

Executive Committee

The Executive Committee consists of the VCAA Chair, its Chief Executive Officer and three Board members: Professor Robert Pargetter, Mr Garry McLean and Mr Grant Hehir.

The Executive Committee carries out business directed to it by the VCAA, oversees projects and policy development for consideration by the VCAA, acts for the VCAA in matters of urgency and provides advice to the CEO on policy and its implications.

Audit Committee

In 2004–05, the VCAA Audit Committee comprised two Board members (Mr John Maddock, Committee Chair, and Professor Sue Willis), one vacant Board member position and one non-Board member (Mr Stuart Alford).

The Audit Committee assists the VCAA in fulfilling its monitoring and oversight responsibilities with regard to its governance, risk management, audit and business assurance activities. In line with its obligations under the *Victorian Managed Insurance Authority Act 1996* and the *Financial Management Act 1994*, the VCAA maintained a register of assets held and managed by it, developed and reviewed its risk management policy and strategy, and reviewed its risk management plan which details the control activities used to manage risk, covering the full range of its activities, including its financial management.

In addition, the Committee reports to the Portfolio Audit Committee of the Department of Education & Training every quarter on high-risk matters and other matters as determined by the Service Level Agreement.

P–10 Curriculum and Assessment Committee

The P–10 Curriculum and Assessment Committee provides expert advice and makes recommendations to the VCAA Board on policies,

standards and criteria for the development of curriculum and assessment programs for students in years P–10; implementation of the AIM program, the redevelopment of the curriculum framework and the Standards, the monitoring and reporting of student participation in P–10 assessment programs and the provision of related research and professional development activities.

The P–10 Curriculum and Assessment Committee consisted of VCAA Board members and two coopted members, Mr Tony Mackay and Ms Patricia Keenan.

Post-Compulsory Curriculum and Assessment Committee

The Post-Compulsory Curriculum and Assessment Committee provides expert advice and makes recommendations to the VCAA Board on the development, evaluation and approval of curriculum and assessment in the post-compulsory years. The Committee manages the policies and procedures for the design, delivery and evaluation of assessments and related products and services for the VCE, VCAL and other post-compulsory qualifications available to students. The Committee also monitors patterns of participation and quality of outcomes, including related professional development and research activities.

The Post-Compulsory Curriculum and Assessment Committee consisted of the VCAA Board plus four coopted members: Dr Dennis Gunning, Mr Tony Mackay, Dr Jillian Blackmore and Professor Peter Stacey.

Review Committee

The Review Committee is responsible for investigating a suspected contravention of the examination rules or an allegation that a student's assessment by the VCAA was obtained by fraudulent, illegal or unfair means.

A Review Committee consists of three persons who are either members of the VCAA Board or staff of the VCAA. A Board member chairs Review Committee hearings.

Appeals Committee

A student affected by a decision of a Review Committee may apply for a review of the decision by the Appeals Committee on the grounds that the decision was unreasonable and/or the penalty imposed was too harsh.

The Appeals Committee is an independent body with panel members appointed by the Minister for Education and Training. Members must not be a member of the VCAA Board or staff.

Other committees

VCE Reference Groups and Review Committees

VCAA Study Reference Groups oversee the development of new VCE studies. In 2004–05, the VCAA endorsed five VCE Reference Groups to develop studies in Bosnian, Classical Hebrew, Punjabi and Yiddish, and to oversee the redevelopment of Environmental Science.

Study Review committees were established to review and evaluate VCE studies and to prepare proposals for new and revised studies for the approval of the VCAA Board. These committees include practising VCE teachers from each sector, academic and curriculum experts, and business and training sector representatives. In accordance with the accreditation periods of VCE studies, the VCAA established 23 Study Review committees in 2004–05: Agricultural and Horticultural Studies, Australian History, Biology, Chemistry, Contemporary Australian Society, English/English as a Second Language, English Language, Food and Technology, Geography, History, Industry and Enterprise, International Studies, Legal Studies, Literature, Mathematics, Music Performance Group and Solo, Music Styles, Outdoor and Environmental Studies, Physical Education, Political Studies, Religion and Society, Renaissance History, and Revolutions.

The list of members of these committees and reference groups appears in Appendix 1.

Senior officers



CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER MR MICHAEL WHITE

BA, DipEd, MEd

Mr Michael White is the Chief Executive Officer of the VCAA. From 2000–02, he was the Director of

School Education in the Department of Education & Training, Victoria. Previously he held the position of Executive Director of Education and Training in the ACT education department. Mr White commenced his career as a secondary teacher in Victorian government schools before teaching for 15 years in teacher education programs at both pre-service and Masters degree level. In addition to his work in teacher education, Mr White lectured in Human Development with a particular emphasis on early childhood development. He has held a number of senior positions in human services in which he led programs including child protection, youth justice, family support, child-care and community development.



GENERAL MANAGER ASSESSMENT MS ELAINE WENN

BSc, DipEd,
GradDipSocSc

Ms Elaine Wenn is responsible for the operations of the

Assessment Branch of the VCAA and the development, implementation and monitoring of the VCAA's VCE assessment policies and procedures. Ms Wenn oversees the Assessment Branch in the development, production, conduct and marking of all VCE examinations and the Years 3, 5 and 7 AIM tests. The Branch manages the quality assurance and moderation programs for school-based assessments in the VCE. Ms Wenn manages the collection and processing of students' enrolment and assessment data for the VCE, VCAL and AIM, the maintenance of student records and, under delegation from the Victorian Qualifications Authority, the issuing of students' VCE and VCAL certificates.



**GENERAL MANAGER
CURRICULUM
MR JOHN FIRTH**

BCom, DipEd

Mr John Firth is responsible for the operations of the Curriculum Branch,

leadership of project teams, VCE Review Committees, the Vocational Education Reference Group and the Curriculum and Assessment Committees of the Board. These committees provide advice and recommendations to the VCAA on the development and implementation of the VCE and the VCAL and development, implementation and monitoring of the P–10 curriculum. He is managing the development and the dissemination of the Victorian Essential Learning Standards.

Mr Firth manages the development and implementation of policies and procedures for VCE VET, block credit and the support and review of the VCAL. He is a member of the national working group on VET recognition established by the Commonwealth Department of Education, Science and Technology, the VET group of Australian Curriculum Assessment and Certification Authorities, the Enterprise and Vocational Education Working Group of the MCEETYA Taskforce on Transition from Schools and the Nationally Consistent Curriculum Outcomes working party.



**GENERAL MANAGER
CORPORATE SERVICES
MR BYRON CRAWFORD**

BComm, BSocSc (InfoMgt), MAppFin, CPA

Mr Byron Crawford is responsible for managing the operational units that

support the conduct of the VCAA's business. Responsibilities cover the areas of corporate governance, executive services, finance and administration, human resources, organisational planning and accountability project and contract coordination, information technology, public affairs, international projects and the VCAA website.



**GENERAL MANAGER
POLICY, MEASUREMENT
AND RESEARCH
DR GLENN ROWLEY**

BSc, BEd, MA, PhD

Dr Glenn Rowley is responsible for the operations of the Policy,

Measurement and Research Branch, and for maintaining and improving the quality of educational measurement and statistical analysis in the VCE and P–10 programs and the strategic reporting of VCAA data. This includes the accurate reporting of achievement data within the VCAA and to the public, as well as the provision of strategic and policy advice that arises from VCAA research and reporting.

VCAA staff establishment

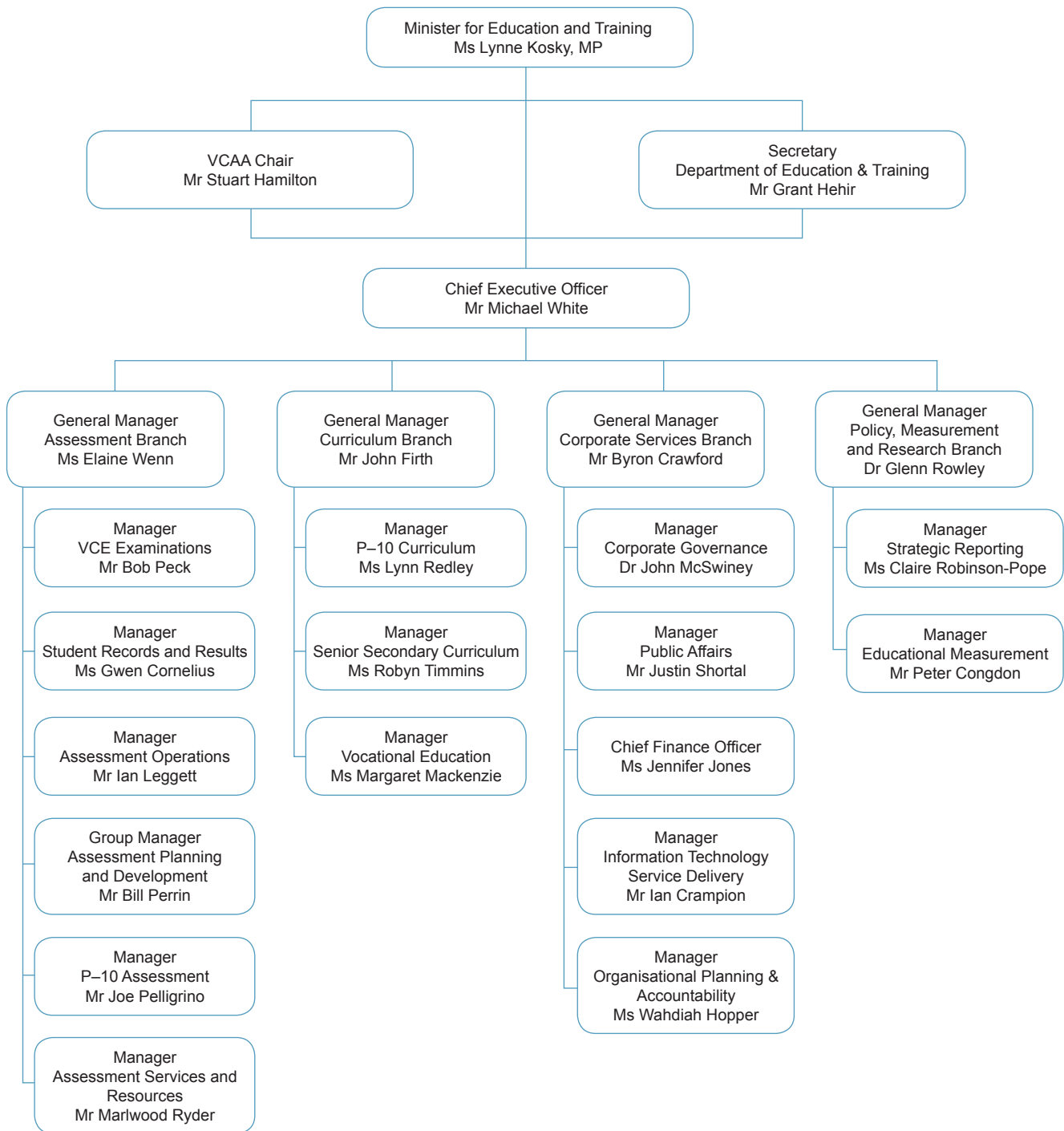
As at June 2005, the VCAA operated with an establishment of 177.4 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions. During the year the VCAA also employed approximately 320 casual employees, and over 3500 sessional employees.

Sessional employees were mainly engaged in the following employment categories:

- assessing written examinations and the GAT
- reviewing school-based assessment (visitation, coursework audit)
- VCE examination setting and vetting panels
- LOTE oral assessment
- arts performance assessment
- AIM marking (pen and paper, online)
- AIM test development (item writers, study content experts and writers)
- VCAL quality assurance panels
- VET state reviewers
- specialist advisory panels (derived examination scores, Music: Alternative Works).

More detail is provided in the workforce statistics section of this report (see Appendix 3).

Organisational chart as at 30 June 2005



Report of operations

Post-compulsory curriculum and assessment

To provide senior secondary students with study choices and assessments of their learning to promote successful transition to work or further study.

There are two senior secondary certificates accredited in Victoria: the VCE and the VCAL. VET in Schools including school-based new apprenticeships can be counted as part of either certificate.

Victorian Certificate of Education

The VCE covers a broad range of studies across the curriculum. Over 130 options are available at Year 12 level, including 51 LOTE, 27 VCE VET programs and 13 school-based new apprenticeships. Curriculum implementation support for revised VCE studies continued over 2004–05. VCE VET programs are fully integrated and provide students with credit within the VCE as well as nationally through training credentials issued within the Australian Qualifications Framework.

VCE participation and completion

There were nearly 145,000 students engaged in the VCE in 2004; just over half of them were female.

VCE participation and completion, 2003–04

	2003	2004
All students		
Eligible to complete the VCE	50,276	49,741
Students satisfactorily completing the VCE	47,585	48,134
Percentage	94.6	96.8
Females		
Eligible to complete the VCE	26,794	26,498
Students satisfactorily completing the VCE	25,529	25,771
Percentage	95.3	97.3
Males		
Eligible to complete the VCE	23,482	23,243
Students satisfactorily completing the VCE	22,056	22,363
Percentage	93.9	96.2

VCE contribution to completion of Year 12 or educational equivalent target

In October 2000, the Government set three targets for education and training, including a target for levels of educational achievement of young Victorians:

By 2010, 90 per cent of young people in Victoria will complete Year 12 or its educational equivalent.

This target is retained in the revised set of performance targets released by the Victorian Government in March 2005 in *Growing Victoria Together: A Vision to 2010 and Beyond*. This target is framed in terms of the completion of Year 12 or its educational equivalent by 19-year-olds in Victoria. The data following provides details of completion of the VCE and should be considered with equivalent Year 12 qualifications for a full picture of achievement against the target.

The table below tracks performance of the VCE according to this target from 2000 to 2004. In 2004, 72.8 per cent of Victorian 19-year-olds had attained their VCE, an increase from 69.3 per cent, that is a gain of 3.5 percentage points, on the 2000 figures.

VCE completion rates for 19-year-olds, 2000–04

Year	19-year-olds who have successfully completed	Target population	VCE completion rate (percentage)
2000	43,039	62,110	69.3
2001	44,010	62,529	70.4
2002	44,796	63,774	70.2
2003	46,404	64,716	71.7
2004	47,733	65,528	72.8

VCE unit results, 2004

VCE completion is calculated on the basis of satisfactory completion of a number of units. For 2004 a total of 124,763 unit enrolments were undertaken, of which 95.6 per cent were completed successfully.

Unit results by gender and level, 2004

	Unit 1			Unit 2			Unit 3			Unit 4		
	Enrolments	Satisfactory completion	%	Enrolments	Satisfactory completion	%	Enrolments	Satisfactory completion	%	Enrolments	Satisfactory completion	%
Male												
number	176,968	164,089	92.7	166,510	154,013	92.5	130,605	127,315	97.5	126,119	123,349	97.8
%	48.8	48.3		48.5	47.9		46.8	46.6		46.7	46.5	
Female												
number	185,420	175,698	94.8	176,611	167,311	94.7	148,406	145,685	98.2	144,124	141,941	98.5
%	51.2	51.7		51.5	52.1		53.2	53.4		53.3	53.5	
Total	362,388	339,787	93.8	343,121	321,324	93.6	279,011	273,000	97.8	270,243	265,290	98.2

Outcomes of graded assessment, 2004

Students undertaking Units 3 and 4 sequences may participate in graded assessment. In summary, the most awarded grade in 2004 was an A. The median grade was a B, with 59.2 per cent of grades at a B or higher.

VCE high grades awarded, 2001–04

	2001	2002	2003	2004
Total number of grades	765,978	795,201	790,462	787,625
Number of A+ grades	107,273	110,172	108,428	108,559
Percentage of A+ grades	14.0	13.9	13.7	13.8
Number of A grades	121,515	126,681	125,087	126,364
Percentage of A grades	15.9	15.9	15.8	16.0

Note: Total number of grades excludes the number NA (not assessed).

VCE study scores, 2001–04

	2001	2002	2003	2004
Number of study scores	254,709	262,055	263,653	263,009
Students with at least one study score	72,005	74,240	75,543	76,050
Students with at least one study score of 40+	14,023	14,410	14,652	14,435
Students with at least one study score of 50	591	610	625	606
Number of study scores of 50	651	677	696	692

VCE examination operations

During the November 2004 examination period 117 written examinations were conducted over 16 days. All student examinations were

processed, assessed and examination scores finalised over a period of 32 days.

The table below highlights the scope of assessment processing for 2004–05.

Key examination facts

Total number of written examinations – (November 2004 and June 2005)	131
Number of examination setters	416
Number of examination vetters	224
Number of assessors (June 2005 and November 2004) – written examinations	2,735
Number of assessors (October–November) – LOTE oral examinations	665
Number of assessors (October–November) – performance examinations	282
Total number of assessors (including emergencies)	3,766
Number of examination centres	490
Number of examination Chief Supervisors	492
Number of examination Assistant Supervisors	2,100
Total number of student examination papers to be marked	460,522
Total number of written examination markings	1,365,547
Number of students sitting examinations interstate (November 2004)	14
Number of students sitting examinations interstate (June 2005)	10
Number of students sitting examinations overseas (November 2004)	81
Number of students sitting examinations overseas (June 2005)	683
Number of students with special examination arrangements (June 2005)	1,600
Number of students with special examination arrangements (November 2004)	2,000
Number of students with applications for Derived Examination Score (November 2004 and June 2005)	3,700

Distribution of VCE results, 2004

In December 2004, the VCAA distributed 78,600 Year 12 VCE statements of results, accompanied by 75,147 GAT statements. In addition, 1664 Year 12 students received a VCAL statement. Of a total of 80,264 home deliveries, 12,300 contained a VET statement. Seven hundred and twenty-nine students successfully completed a University Extension Study as part of their 2004 program.

Year 11 students received their results through their home schools, with 589 home schools distributing 60,887 Year 11 VCE statements of results, 6226 Year 11 VCAL statements of results and 18,445 VET statements of results. Schools distributed 47,174 VCE certificates and 3436 VCAL certificates at graduation ceremonies.

The VCAA and VTAC joint results service provided results to 10,196 students by telephone, 11,578 students by SMS and 44,958 students via the Internet.

Review of VCE study options

The VCE curriculum is subject to rigorous quality assurance processes through both annual monitoring activities and cyclical evaluation and reaccreditation. This ensures that the highest quality curriculum is available to all Victorian students.

The VCAA supports the delivery of the VCE curriculum through advice and resources for teachers, including access to a wide range of VCAA curriculum materials and resources on the VCAA website. Statewide professional development sessions were conducted to accompany the introduction of the revised VCE studies.

During 2004–05, 23 VCE studies were reviewed. Teacher professional development programs and resources were developed for a large number of the redeveloped studies during the first half of 2005.

There was an increase in Year 10 students undertaking post-compulsory study in either the VCE or VCAL with approximately half of Year 10 students participating.

Trialing VCE examinations online

Online examinations were trialed for the first time in late 2004. Trials took place in both Mathematics and English, using assessment and marking software developed by the VCAA.

To measure the effectiveness of the online trials, comparisons were made between the results of online examinations and traditional pencil and paper examinations.

Using Further Mathematics and Mathematical Methods examinations from previous years, multiple-choice examinations were trialed with 700 students from 12 schools. Students completed one examination online and the other examination in the traditional format. The online examinations were automatically marked using the VCAA online software and comparisons were made between the responses in the different formats.

VCE English essay exams were also piloted online. Two VCE English essay questions were written by an examination panel and each student

completed one essay with pen-and-paper and the other essay using a computer. The essays were then marked by a team of experienced markers. The pen-and-paper essays were marked in the traditional way and the online essays were marked by assessors using computers. Approximately 1000 students from 11 schools participated in these trials.

VCE Accounting and VCE Information Processing and Management were trialed online in May and June 2005.

The 2004 June Accounting examination was transferred into an online format and 410 students from 29 schools completed it. The VCE Information Processing and Management examination was trialed online with 720 students from 37 schools. Both examinations were then marked online by experienced VCE assessors.

During these trials, students also completed a computer competence survey which gathered information about students' familiarity with computers and the online environment. Data analysis on the outcome of the trials will be published in 2005–06.

Developments in VCE assessment operations

The VCAA has maintained and strengthened security arrangements in regard to the administration, dispatch, collection and processing of VCE examinations. VCAA staff provided advice and support to schools in the conduct and administration of VCE examinations through written correspondence, telephone enquiry services and school visits. New Chief Supervisors were trained to ensure examination supervision is well conducted. In addition, VCE schools in their first year of operation were visited.

The development of new examinations, notably in the area of vocational educational and training, supported schools and systems in the retention of students and their transition to work. In 2004–05, the VCAA participated in a joint program to trial online examining and marking, which offered the prospect of greater flexibility for students and greater equity to schools outside Melbourne.

Student appeals and breaches of rules

A total of 73 breaches of rules were reported to the VCAA. Of these, two cases proceeded to a hearing and both cases were found to have been in breach of VCE examination rules. In 2004–05, there were no appeals against the decisions of the Review Committee.

During the reporting period, there were two appeals by students against action taken by their schools on school-assessed coursework.

Implementation of special examination arrangement applications

The VCAA appointed an expert working party in 2004 to review its policy and procedures for special examination arrangements. A particular focus of the working party was to review the independent medical evidence and/or educational assessments required by the VCAA to make an informed, equitable decision to approve such arrangements. The VCAA working party prescribed additional tests to enable it to make decisions on extra reading time and/or a reader. In relation to writing time, the working party's findings concluded that actual samples of a student's handwritten work provided the most useful evidence of the effect of the student's condition on their capacity to complete handwritten responses to the examination under the same conditions as other students. The essay evidence would be used to make decisions on granting extra writing time, the use of a computer or a scribe. The new procedures were published in the *VCAA Bulletin* in October 2004.

Information sessions were conducted throughout Victoria to ensure that school personnel were aware of the revised procedures when applying for special examination arrangements for 2005.

Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning

The VCAL is a senior secondary qualification designed to improve the pathways for young people from secondary school to work and/or further education and training. The VCAA assumed responsibility for the statewide implementation of the VCAL in 2005.

The VCAL provides a statewide credential through which participating students can receive recognition for their achievements in programs that have traditionally not provided credit within a formal qualification. This can include recognition of learning that occurs in structured workplace learning placements, locally developed programs, community projects and youth development programs.

A VCAL learning program must comprise four curriculum strands including compulsory studies in literacy and numeracy. The four strands are:

- literacy and numeracy skills
- work-related skills
- industry-specific skills
- personal development skills.

Some students who have completed the Senior VCAL or the VCE are able to enrol in Senior Extension VCAL. Senior Extension VCAL is a pilot program currently operating in three schools: Northland Secondary College, Hawthorn Secondary College and Brighton Bay Art and Design, an annex of Elwood Secondary College. These schools offer Senior Extension VCAL for art and design, a one-year program giving students the opportunity to develop their art portfolio to satisfy this requirement for entry into TAFE institute and university art and design courses.

During 2004–05, the VCAA continued to work towards the following goals:

- an increase in both the number of providers/schools and the number of students enrolled in the VCAL
- ongoing development of the VCAL in keeping with the recommendations from the VCAA review of the VCAL conducted in 2004
- ongoing promotion and marketing of the VCAL as a senior secondary qualification.

VCAL enrolments

By May 2005 there were 10,412 VCAL student enrolments with 368 providers.

In 2005, 85 per cent of government secondary schools were funded to deliver the VCAL. In two regions (Gippsland and Loddon Campaspe Mallee) all government secondary schools were delivering the VCAL. In four other regions

(Western Metropolitan, Barwon South Western, Central Highlands Wimmera and Goulburn North Eastern) over 90 per cent of government secondary schools were delivering the VCAL.

VCAL enrolments by certificate and level, 2004

Certificate name and level	Enrolments
VCAL (Foundation)	2484
ICT Industries (Foundation)	2
All Foundation	2486
VCAL (Intermediate)	4313
Automotive Industry (Intermediate)	31
Carpentry, Joinery and Shop Fitting (Intermediate)	12
Construction Industry (Intermediate)	8
Digital Design (Intermediate)	10
Electrical Industry (Intermediate)	6
Furniture Making (Intermediate)	6
Hospitality Industry (Intermediate)	17
ICT Industries (Intermediate)	7
Land Based Industry – Horticulture (Intermediate)	3
Media and Communications Film and TV (Intermediate)	9
Multimedia (Intermediate)	9
Performing Arts – Music (Intermediate)	10
Plumbing Industry (Intermediate)	19
Printing Industry (Intermediate)	5
Service and Retail Industries (Intermediate)	16
Sport and Leisure Industries (Intermediate)	22
All Intermediate	4503
VCAL (Senior)	901
Automotive Industry (Senior)	7
Digital Design (Senior)	5
ICT Industries (Senior)	3
Media and Communications Film and TV (Senior)	8
Multimedia (Senior)	3
Printing Industry (Senior)	1
Sport and Leisure Industries (Senior)	4
All Senior	932
Senior Extension (Folio Enhancement)	204
Total	8125

Gender ratio

Just over three in five VCAL student enrolments in 2004 were male (61.4 per cent). For Senior and Senior Extension level enrolments there were similar numbers of males and females.

VCAL student enrolments by gender and level, 2004

Level	Gender		Percentage		Total All
	Female	Male	Female	Male	
Foundation	978	1,508	39.3	60.7	2,486
Intermediate	1,607	2,896	35.7	64.3	4,503
Senior	551	585	48.5	51.5	1,136
All	3,136	4,989	38.6	61.4	8,125

VCAL certificate completions

There are two effectiveness measures for the VCAL. These are:

- the completion rate, that is the number of young people successfully completing VCAL programs over a calendar year
- the pathway rate, that is the proportion of students who make successful transitions into the pathway of further training or employment.

In 2004, there were 3642 VCAL certificate completions out of a total of 6126 enrolments which were eligible for completion.

VCAL certificate completions by level, 2004

Eligible to complete Level	Completed	All	% completed
Foundation	794	1,538	51.6
Intermediate	2,062	3,580	57.6
Senior and Senior Extension	786	1,008	78.0
Total	3,642	6,126	59.5

Destinations

The VCAL is a pathways program designed to lead on to further education, employment, apprenticeships or traineeships. Students undertaking the VCAL may take up employment or a mix of employment and training such as an apprenticeship before certificate completion. Destination data collected by the Victorian Qualifications Authority from 90 per cent of VCAL providers (offering delivery to 88 per cent of students) indicates that 85.4 per cent of students are moving to further education and training and employment destinations – 51.5 per cent into further education and training and 33.9 per cent into employment.

VCAL students by education and training destination, 2004

Destination	Number	Percentage
VCAL Foundation	445	6.2
VCAL Intermediate	651	9.1
VCAL Senior	1,176	16.4
VCE Year 11	170	2.3
VCE Year 12	406	5.7
TAFE	731	10.2
University (Higher Education)	104	1.5
Total	3,683	51.5

Source: Victorian Qualifications Authority

VCAL students by employment destination, 2004

Destination	Number	Percentage
Apprenticeship	1,086	15.1
Traineeship	162	2.2
Employment: fewer than 15 hours per week	254	3.5
Employment: more than 15 hours per week	922	12.9
Total	2,424	33.9

Source: Victorian Qualifications Authority

VCAL unit enrolments

In 2004, there were a total of 34,300 VCAL unit enrolments.

VCAL personal development skills units (38.5 per cent) and VCAL work-related skills units (37.3 per cent) accounted for over three quarters of enrolments in VCAL units.

Overall 70.5 per cent of VCAL units were satisfactorily completed. Literacy skills units averaged 69.5 per cent completion, numeracy skills units 62.7 per cent, personal development skills units 71.2 per cent and work-related skills units 71.6 per cent.

VCAL unit completions by level, 2004

VCAL unit description	Satisfactory completions	Enrolments	Percentage satisfactory completions
Advanced Numeracy Skills (Senior)	24	51	47.1
Advanced Study Skills	143	204	70.1
Folio Enhancement and Presentation	165	204	80.9
Literacy Skills (Intermediate) – Oral Communication	1,330	1,898	70.1
Literacy Skills (Intermediate) – Reading and Writing	1,435	2,139	67.1
Literacy Skills (Senior) – Oral Communication	415	571	72.7
Literacy Skills (Senior) – Reading and Writing	479	657	72.9
Numeracy Skills (Intermediate)	1,120	1,790	62.6
Numeracy Skills (Senior)	345	546	63.2
Pathways Planning	162	222	73.0
Personal Development Skills Unit 1 (Foundation)	1,793	2,478	72.4
Personal Development Skills Unit 1 (Intermediate)	3,133	4,110	76.2
Personal Development Skills Unit 1 (Senior)	677	890	76.1
Personal Development Skills Unit 2 (Foundation)	973	1,641	59.3
Personal Development Skills Unit 2 (Intermediate)	2,265	3,309	68.4
Personal Development Skills Unit 2 (Senior)	572	789	72.5
Work Related Skills Unit 1 (Foundation)	1,754	2,332	75.2
Work Related Skills Unit 1 (Intermediate)	2,635	3,550	74.2
Work Related Skills Unit 1 (Senior)	533	685	77.8
Work Related Skills Unit 2 (Foundation)	1,162	1,828	63.6
Work Related Skills Unit 2 (Intermediate)	2,540	3,703	68.6
Work Related Skills Unit 2 (Senior)	539	703	76.7
Total	24,194	34,300	70.5

Implementation of VCAA VCAL Review recommendations

All of the VCAL Review recommendations have been implemented. The *VCAA Principles, Guidelines and Procedures for the Review of VCAL Units* has been endorsed by the VCAA Board and published in the *VCAA Bulletin* and on the VCAA website. The VCAA is currently undertaking a review of the personal development skills units. It is the VCAA's intention to have the revised units available for delivery in 2006. The VCAL Foundation Literacy and Numeracy Units Development working party has started work on the development of the new literacy and numeracy units at the Foundation level. These new units will be available to schools in 2006.

VET in Schools

VET in Schools programs allow students to combine general and vocational studies, and also provide vocational pathways into training and

further education. The programs provide pathways into employment and give students direct experience of business and industry.

VET in Schools programs also contribute to the development of entry-level skills for industry and provide students with a practical and focused introduction to workplace requirements. The programs permit industry to influence and participate in local community networks, while also providing a useful training and supervisory experience for existing employees.

Students undertaking both the VCE and the VCAL are able to choose nationally recognised VET modules in their study program. VET in Schools is the national term that broadly describes the diverse range of structures whereby States and Territories provide senior secondary students with access to VET programs. In Victoria, the term VCE VET has been adopted to clearly describe the formalised arrangements where VET certificates have been mainstreamed in the VCE.

The VCAA continued to broaden the options for students in the post-compulsory years and to improve participation and achievement in education and training. Students enrolled in the VCE are able to gain credit for vocational education and training undertaken in any industry and in any training setting, through VCE VET programs and school-based new apprenticeships or through block credit recognition. Students are able to gain credit in the VCAL for vocational education and training undertaken in any industry and in any training setting through the industry skills and work-related skills strands of the VCAL.

The VCAA develops VCE VET programs drawn from national training package VET qualifications or nationally recognised curriculum so that these can contribute directly as VCE studies. Students are able to select from a suite of vocational certificates approved by the VCAA and accredited by the Victorian Qualifications Authority for inclusion in the VCE.

Block credit recognition is made available to those VCE students who are undertaking VET

training outside the suite of approved VCE VET and school-based new apprenticeships. Block credit recognition enables student access to a far greater range of VET certificates and is particularly responsive to Local Learning and Employment Network (LLEN) and local industry initiatives, and encourages growth in student uptake of school-based new apprenticeships.

VET in Schools enrolments

In 2004, over 33,000 students participated in VET in Schools. This resulted in 42,423 certificate enrolments across a wide range of industry areas including school-based new apprenticeships.

VET in Schools enrolments by sector, 2004

Sector	No. of providers	No. of students
Government schools	318	21,031
Catholic schools	85	5,825
Independent schools	106	4,172
Adult providers	30	2,002
Total	539	33,030

VET in Schools certificate enrolments (excluding school-based new apprenticeships) by sector and industry group, 2004

	Government	Catholic	Independent	Adult
Arts, entertainment, sport and recreation	5,591	1,544	1,223	449
Automotive	1,688	302	83	96
Building and construction	1,159	249	75	227
Community services, health and education	1,171	189	100	166
Finance, banking and insurance				
Food processing	12	11	3	
Textile, clothing and footwear, and furnishings	1,055	180	51	186
Communications				
Engineering and mining	997	141	58	87
Primary industry	1,058	321	150	128
Process manufacturing	23		4	12
Sales and personal services	978	260	62	229
Tourism and hospitality	3,674	1,320	997	478
Transport and storage	18	6	7	1
Utilities	824	208	253	87
Business and clerical	1,535	554	621	73
Computing	2,941	1,039	1,019	371
Science, technical and other				
General education and training	1,110	46	47	2,186
Total	23,834	6,370	4,753	4,776

School-based new apprenticeship participation by sector and industry group, 2004

	Government	Catholic	Independent	Adult
Arts, entertainment, sport and recreation	52	18	6	24
Automotive	164	37	3	41
Building and construction	–	–	–	–
Community services, health and education	17	4	–	–
Finance, banking and insurance	–	–	–	–
Food processing	2	–	–	–
Textiles, clothing, footwear and furnishings	–	–	–	–
Communications	–	–	–	–
Engineering and mining	114	11	2	7
Primary industry	165	42	22	11
Process manufacturing	–	–	–	–
Sales and personal services	1,296	444	165	48
Tourism and hospitality	205	49	24	64
Transport and storage	–	–	–	–
Utilities	–	–	–	–
Business and clerical	103	23	–	2
Computing	33	2	1	–
Science, technical and other	–	–	–	–
General education and training	–	–	–	–
Total	2,151	630	223	197

VCE VET programs and school-based new apprenticeships

Students may enrol in a VET certificate in a school-based new apprenticeship program in a range of industry areas promoted by industry stakeholders. The VCAA published program advice to support these approved industry areas. There are 27 VCE VET programs and 13 approved school-based new apprenticeships.

Program review

As part of the VCAA's ongoing work, VCE VET programs were revised or replaced as national training packages and were endorsed or reviewed for currency, and curriculum was reaccredited or replaced. In 2004–05, programs were revised and program booklets published for VCE VET Agriculture, Horticulture, Community Services, Furnishing, Cisco Networking Academy Program, Electrotechnology and Engineering Studies. Projects for revising VCE VET Financial Services, Desktop Publishing, Sport and Recreation, Laboratory Skills and Seafood Industry were convened and draft programs are nearing completion.

Scored assessment

In 2004–05, 12 VCE VET programs provided students with the option of undertaking scored assessment of the designated Unit 3–4 sequence. The study score for a VCE VET program is calculated through assessments on levels of performance on a set of coursework tasks and an examination at the end of the year. The score allows students to use their VCE VET programs for direct contribution to their Equivalent National Tertiary Entrance Rank (ENTER).

Scored assessment is available in the following VCE VET programs: Business Administration, Community Services, Dance, Electronics, Equine Industry, Financial Services, Furnishing, Hospitality (Operations), Information Technology, Laboratory Skills, Multimedia and Music Industry.

During 2004–05, a new publication, *Scored Assessment in VCE VET Programs, Support Advice for Assessors* was published and distributed to all VCE providers.

Professional development and educational leadership

Information briefings and professional development activities for VCE VET programs were conducted, including:

- statewide briefings in 13 locations on new developments in VCE VET programs to over 700 VCE coordinators, VET coordinators and teachers during November 2004
- scored assessment information forums for 245 new assessors in December 2004 and March 2005
- consensus moderation workshops in 11 scored VCE VET programs over three days in May 2005 for 200 assessors from private providers, ACE providers, TAFE institutes and schools
- professional development seminars in October 2004 for 260 teachers to prepare them for the revised VCE VET Furnishing, Engineering, Community Services, Electrotechnology and Cisco Networking Academy programs.

The VCAA also developed high-quality materials to support the implementation of training packages in VCE VET programs.

The VCAA is represented on a number of reference groups and participates in a wide range of forums in the VET sector.

Generic and employability skills

Work continued in the latter part of 2004 and in 2005 to refine a generic skills construct that seeks to integrate the Mayer Key Competencies and the Employability Skills Framework. In collaboration with the ACER, the VCAA is planning to test this integrated construct in schools, TAFE institutes and ACE organisations. Student achievement of the generic employability skills in the senior secondary years will be assessed and reported.

The next stage of this developmental work is to test system-wide acceptance of the generic employability schema. The VCAA has convened a cross-sectoral reference group to provide strategic advice and to develop links with other, related initiatives.

Achievements

During 2004–05, the VCAA achieved:

- successful outcomes for the Generic Employability Skills project to develop a process for formal recognition of generic skills
- an increase in the number of enrolments in VET in Schools, through increased flexibility in the choice of VET certificates, achieved in part through the expansion of block credit recognition arrangements
- revision of seven VCE VET programs and publication of program booklets
- an increase in student take-up of the scored assessment option in the 12 scored VCE VET programs
- an increase in the number of students undertaking school-based new apprenticeships
- successful professional development for over 1400 teachers and trainers.

P–10 curriculum and assessment

To develop a curriculum and assessment framework that provides students with a solid foundation of knowledge, skills and personal attributes, and supports high-quality teaching and learning practices.

P–10 curriculum

The VCAA develops quality curriculum for the compulsory years of schooling (P–10), and a range of curriculum and assessment support materials to assist teachers in the implementation of their teaching, learning and assessment programs.

During 2004–05, the VCAA supported the CSF, currently the policy framework for Victorian schools, as well as managing the development of a new policy framework, the Victorian Essential Learning Standards. The Standards will be implemented in schools from the beginning of 2006.

Curriculum and Standards Framework

The CSF describes what students should know and be able to do at regular intervals from P–10 in eight key learning areas. Each school currently uses the CSF as the basis of its teaching and learning programs, taking into account government policies and the school community's priorities, resources and expertise.

Victorian Essential Learning Standards

The Victorian Essential Learning Standards (the Standards) were developed as a key element of the *Blueprint for Government Schools*, and will eventually replace the CSF as the basis for curriculum and assessment in Victorian schools. It is a major contribution to the Government's ongoing commitment to improve the learning outcomes of Victorian students. The Standards provide a new approach to organising the curriculum in schools, identifying what is essential for Victorian students to achieve at different stages of their schooling, setting standards for those achievements and providing a clear basis for reporting to parents and for planning programs. The Standards are set in three core and inter-related strands: physical, personal and social learning, discipline-based learning, and inter-disciplinary learning.

Development of the framework

Curriculum reform consultation resulted in the development of a paper outlining the essential elements of curriculum for each compulsory year and the characteristics of learners at different stages of schooling. This paper provided the basis for the development of the new framework.

The structure of the framework was refined and curriculum writers engaged to develop standards across 16 learning domains. Within each strand of learning, the essential knowledge, skills and behaviours were organised into domains with further divisions into dimensions. Standards have been written for each dimension. The domains are distinct but inter-related areas of knowledge, skills and behaviours considered essential in the education and development of students within each of the three strands:

- Physical, Personal and Social Learning:
 - Health and Physical Education
 - Interpersonal Development
 - Personal Learning
 - Civics and Citizenship.
- Discipline-based Learning:
 - The Arts
 - English
 - LOTE
 - Humanities: Economics, Geography, History
 - Mathematics
 - Science.
- Interdisciplinary Learning:
 - Communication
 - Design, Creativity and Technology
 - ICT
 - Thinking.

The first stage of the new framework was released in December 2004. This stage included the rationale and structure that underpin the Standards, descriptions of the three core essential learning strands, introductions to the learning domains, descriptions of the stages of learning and characteristics of learners at each of the six levels, and assessment principles.

The second stage of the Standards was launched by the Minister for Education and Training and released online in March 2005. This stage included an overview to the Standards, learning focus statements and standards for each of the domains across six levels, and six sample units, one at each level, that exemplify an approach to incorporating learning from across the strands into curriculum and assessment programs.

A number of resources designed to provide support for schools as they work with the Standards were developed in Terms 1 and 2, 2005. These provide advice for teachers about:

- the relationships between the CSF key learning areas and the essential learning domains to assist teachers in completing curriculum audits
- the relationships between domains in the Standards structured to facilitate whole school and classroom planning
- the relationship between the domains and post-compulsory secondary curriculum and identified pathways to particular studies and programs

- student development within the domain across the stages of learning statements
- using the standards in specific domains within the context of teaching strategies and assessment approaches.

During 2005, the Standards are going through a validation phase in which school communities are working with the Standards to develop whole-school plans to implement in 2006. Commencing in Term 2, 2005, the VCAA has undertaken the following projects to complement this work:

- the collection of feedback from schools on the clarity and usability of the Standards through a broadly available questionnaire, structured focus groups and interviews
- an independent study to confirm the internal coherence of the Standards
- working with volunteer schools to trial assessment tasks with students that will provide data on the Standards.

Curriculum resources

The VCAA developed a booklet *Introducing the Victorian Essential Learning Standards* to introduce the key elements of the framework. Seventy-five thousand copies of the booklet were distributed to all schools and stakeholder groups in December 2004 to support principals in introducing the Standards to teachers. In response to demand from schools, an additional 20,000 copies of the booklet were printed and distributed in January 2005.

Three thousand copies of a CD-ROM containing a video-taped introduction to the Standards were sent to schools in late January. A PowerPoint presentation with speaker notes which outlined key messages about the Standards was prepared and sent to all principals. Seventy thousand copies of the *Victorian Essential Learning Standards Overview* were printed and distributed to all schools in early Term 2, 2005.

A Student Learning DVD was produced to facilitate teacher understanding of the Standards. Twenty thousand copies were distributed to all schools and stakeholders in May 2005. This resource included associated support materials and resources focusing on curriculum planning,

teaching and learning, and assessment and reporting. In response to requests from principals, the VCAA produced 22,000 printed sets of the Standards at each level for distribution to schools.

Together with the Victorian Qualifications Authority, the VCAA developed information for Years 9 and 10 teachers on elements of design and design principles, product design using ICT, and the standards and conventions associated with particular computer applications. A CD-ROM resource is being developed to support teachers in implementing the Design, Creativity and Technology domain of the Standards.

A brochure for parents explaining the impact of the Standards on a student's education was developed in consultation with parent focus groups and parent organisations. The brochure will be distributed to schools in the next reporting period. Planning commenced for the development of the *Companion to the Standards for Students with Disabilities*. This resource is scheduled for publication in the next reporting period.

Commonwealth Games Education program

Classroom resources were developed as part of the Melbourne 2006 Commonwealth Games Education program. This program consists of five separate but related resources.

- *Starting Blocks: An Introduction to the Melbourne 2006 Commonwealth Games* was published on CD-ROM in Term 1, 2005. The resource provides teachers with teaching and learning activities for all year levels across eight key learning areas that are linked directly to CSF learning outcomes or VCE, VET in Schools and VCAL programs.
- *Post-compulsory Resources for VCE/VET in Schools/VCAL* were developed and published on CD-ROM in Term 2, 2005. These resources highlight opportunities for the Melbourne 2006 Commonwealth Games to be used as a theme to address outcomes in the post-compulsory years of schooling and contain suggestions for classroom activities for VCE, VET and VCAL programs.

- *Let the Games Begin – Middle Years Resources* addresses two themes: hosting a major event and sport and ethics.
- *United through the Games – Integrated Units* are based on the core values of the Commonwealth Games – humanity, equality and destiny – and incorporate references to the Commonwealth of Nations and Indigenous issues, as well as promoting participation in active and healthy lifestyles.
- *CommPASS* is a resource for primary schools. Students will be provided with a ‘passport’ and given the opportunity to ‘visit’ a number of Commonwealth countries. In order to ‘enter’ each country students must complete a number of activities which promote environmentally sustainable behaviours and cultural and geographic understanding of the countries visited.

Professional development

The VCAA responded to requests for professional development for pre-service teachers and returning teachers focusing on both the CSF and the key elements of the Standards.

During Term 4, 2004 the VCAA and the Department of Education & Training conducted a series of statewide seminars for principals and curriculum leaders in government and non-government schools. Seminar participants were introduced to the key elements of the Standards: the rationale, purpose, structure, key features and online design concept. Participants discussed implementation and planning strategies for their schools.

VCAA staff also responded to requests for presentations at more than 80 conferences or workshops hosted by stakeholder groups. These presentations focused on introducing the Standards, approaches to familiarisation and school implementation strategies.

AIM Online participation

	2004				2005			
	Year 3	Year 5	Year 7	Total ¹	Year 3	Year 5	Year 7	Total ¹
Number of schools	32	35	70	105	40	42	85	128
Number of students	1,297	1,455	10,029	12,781	1,712	1,826	12,326	15,864

¹ Many schools offer more than one year level.

Achievement Improvement Monitor

The AIM is an integrated set of assessment and monitoring programs for measuring student progress and achievement. The VCAA delivered statewide AIM assessments at Years 3, 5 and 7 in August 2004 and subsequently delivered AIM results to all participating schools.

The VCAA delivers the statewide pencil-and-paper tests at Years 3, 5 and 7 and optional computer-adaptive tests, known as AIM Online at Year 7. During 2004, the AIM Online was also piloted at Years 3 and 5. Student data is collated and test reports are prepared for students and parents.

Achievements

The development, trialing and production of the 2004 AIM tests was completed within budget and scheduled timelines. A successful trial of pre-enrolment of students was conducted in 2004 leading to full implementation in 2005.

AIM tests were delivered in 2004 to over 124,000 students in Years 3 and 5 and 59,000 students in Year 7. The AIM tests were also delivered internationally to Years 3, 5 and 7 students at the Saudi Arabian International School.

A sample of AIM provider schools are visited annually for compliance with AIM administrative procedures. Enhanced quality assurance processes were implemented in 2004 to ensure school compliance with revised AIM administrative procedures.

The AIM Online program has continued to grow with participation in 2005 reaching its highest point to date. There are now 128 separate schools offering AIM Online in 2005 to almost 16,000 students.

The Assessment Online system was enhanced to include on-demand tests and classroom assessment resources for teachers. The On Demand Assessment project provided schools with a range of assessment resources, including linear and adaptive tests that can be selected by classroom teachers as required. This resource currently includes tests in English, Mathematics, Science and Studies of Society and Environment. Training programs conducted in late 2004 led to over 200 schools registering to use the On Demand Assessment system. It is anticipated that this will increase as further tests, including computer adaptive English and Mathematics tests, are made available in 2005.

Results were delivered to schools for the first time in 2004 through the online AIM Data Service, placing Victoria at the forefront of technology in delivery of statewide test results.

Professional development activities for over 2000 teachers, principals and curriculum leaders at multiple locations across the state were conducted to support implementation of the AIM Online and On Demand Testing, promote data analysis and assist school improvement plans.

A successful trial of an online, electronic marking system was conducted in 2005 in preparation for full implementation in August 2005.

Research, measurement and reporting

To provide accurate and comprehensive information to students, parents, schools, Government and the community on education outcomes against state and national standards.

During 2004–05, the Measurement Unit provided advice and empirical support on a range of issues, including the construction of derived examination scores for the VCE, the equivalence of assessments conducted in different

circumstances and using different modes (online versus paper-and-pencil), and measurement issues that arise in relation to the development and improvement of AIM reporting. Data analysis and advice was provided relating to the trialing of AIM tests and the preparation of reports on the results of AIM testing. In addition, expert advice was given to outside bodies including the VTAC, the National Measurement Advisory Group and the Malaysian Ministry of Education.

Research outcomes were presented at national and international conferences, including the International Objective Measurement workshops and the International Statistics Institute. A major project investigating alternatives to the current method of reporting 'like school' data to schools is nearing completion, and consultation on the details of implementing a new method has commenced. Research on the success of Year 11 students undertaking VCE studies was completed, and a review of changes in the relationship between the GAT and achievement has commenced. Data collection has been completed for a major research project on the feasibility of extending the scales used to report literacy and numeracy beyond Years 3–7, and a research project aimed at establishing comparability of assessments conducted by the VCAA with international standards is nearing completion.

The VCAA conducted a major review and redevelopment of the VCE Data Service based upon user feedback collected over the previous year. The new service was launched in February 2005 following consultation with principals and key users, and staff from more than 100 schools attended individual consultations where they were able to discuss their school reports with VCAA staff. Participants' reactions to the many new features in the 2005 VCE Data Service have been very positive.

Organisational capability

To build infrastructure and capability for innovation and deliver improved services to clients.

During 2004–05, the VCAA instigated a number of initiatives to guarantee better services to its stakeholders and enhance its infrastructure and organisational capacity.

Innovation in information and communications technology

Assessment Processing System redevelopment

The VCAA is coordinating the redevelopment of the Assessment Processing System, the application that operates the collection and manipulation of student data. The project will significantly increase the VCAA's capability to manage student results and evaluate individual student achievement.

The project will be developed in two stages. The first stage defines comprehensive target architecture and confirms the scope of the business requirements; the second stage comprises a major tender for the design, building and phased deployment of the new system.

Project management and procurement

The VCAA has developed an online resource that integrates project management with Victorian Government mandatory procurement processes. This new resource provides a user-friendly tool through a linear process, supported by template and sample documents. Use of the resource will improve project outcomes and compliance with mandatory policies and procedures.

Objective training

The VCAA has introduced an electronic document management system to better manage the way in which it collects and stores both its electronic and paper records, creating a more efficient method of maintaining its records.

The software for the system, *Objective*, was piloted in 2004. During 2005, VCAA staff were trained to a level of proficiency that allowed them to provide advice to other business units and individual staff.

Public affairs and information services

The VCAA aims to provide the Victorian public with a high level of knowledge about the VCAA's policies, procedures and programs by delivering an efficient customer service to the educational sector and the wider community by telephone, facsimile, electronic and postal mail, and personal contact.

During 2004–05, the VCAA:

- responded to 5616 telephone calls and 2013 emails
- conducted the Post Results Enquiry Service jointly with the VTAC between 13 and 16 December 2004. During this four-day period a total of 4498 calls and 453 emails were received.

The VCAA provided advice to the media throughout the year. Prior to each of the two examination periods, the VCAA published a *Media Manual* for distribution to metropolitan and regional newspapers, detailing statistics and data available for media coverage.

The VCAA's policies and procedures were promoted at events such as expos, launches and the Plain English Speaking Award.

Publications

Major publishing support has been carried out for the following key projects over the last 12 months:

- publishing support for Standards materials for print, print distribution and online publishing, including *Introducing the Victorian Essential Learning Standards*, the *Victorian Essential Learning Standards Overview* booklet, *Introducing the Victorian Essential Learning Standards: Important Information for Parents*, *Student Learning DVD Resource*, and online support material for sample units, domains and levels documents

- development of the new *VCE Exams Navigator*, an expanded version of the student information booklet for VCE examinations, the GAT, special provision, examination timetables and rules
- redesign of the VCE and VCAL certificates and statements of results which facilitated the introduction of new security features.

Publishing support has also been provided for the following ongoing VCAA projects:

- compilation and publication of the monthly *VCAA Bulletin* to VCE and VCAL providers and the monthly *P–10 Supplement* to all Victorian primary and secondary schools
- completion over a 12-month period of an extensive printing and distribution schedule of reaccredited VCE study designs for 2005 and 2006, and VCE assessment handbooks
- publishing of the VCAA calendar for primary schools, and the VCAA calendar for secondary schools and VCE and VCAL providers giving important dates and information
- provision of in-house publishing services for AIM pen-and-paper tests, AIM link tests (Equating Tests project), AIM Online projects and AIM guides
- production support for the *Mathematical Methods (Computer Algebra System/CAS) – Teacher Support Resources 2004* CD-ROM project
- publishing support, printing and distribution of VET program booklets, information brochures, task samples booklets and the *Scored Assessment in VCE VET Programs Support Advice for Assessors*.

Online communications

The VCAA undertook the following online communications activities during the past 12 months:

- implemented a content management system to enable information on the VCAA website to be updated more regularly and easily
- conducted a continual user analysis
- developed a three-year online framework and strategy.

The implementation of the content management system saw the migration of 5500 pages from the corporate website into the system. In addition, training was conducted with 18 VCAA staff to enable them to better manage their online information, and provide them with tools to keep their information up-to-date.

Three user-analysis sessions were held during the year to ensure that the VCAA's online communications were meeting the public's demands. These sessions were conducted on the corporate website, the Standards website and the sessional staff management system website. Findings from these sessions have been used to assist the VCAA in modifying the websites to better meet public expectations.

A three-year online framework and strategy was developed. The strategy is to aid in aligning all future online communications with VCAA business growth, as well as ensuring public demands are met.

Organisation planning and accountability

During 2004–05, the Organisation Planning and Accountability Unit was established to oversee organisation planning and development, risk management and performance reporting.

The main work of the Unit is to:

- lead and manage strategic and business planning for the VCAA including the preparation of the three-year strategic plan
- implement the Risk Management Framework across the VCAA
- monitor and report organisational performance and risk management at Board and Executive levels
- manage the programs for the VCAA Strategic Leadership Group, executive forums, staff briefings and forums for selected stakeholder groups
- form action plans and performance standards to progress outcomes of specific performance audits
- manage the rollout of the annual Organisational Climate Survey for VCAA staff

- facilitate support and development opportunities and planning forums to promote organisational learning, well-being and performance
- brief education stakeholders on the outcomes of Board recommendations and key VCAA strategic and operational issues including whole-of-government issues.

International projects

The VCAA's international projects have grown significantly in the past year with in-principle approval granted for another eight proposals for the delivery of the VCE internationally. The VCAA's major international market is China.

The VCAA continued to deliver educational services to a number of schools overseas.

Projects were:

- delivery of the VCE through schools in China and Indonesia
- provision of CSF, AIM and GAT services to schools in Saudi Arabia and South Africa
- provision of examination equivalence and moderation services to schools in South Africa.

Details of these international projects are outlined below.

China

Tianjin Economic Development Area International School

The Peninsula School is an independent Victorian school licensed to deliver the VCE in China through the Tianjin Economic Development Area International School. The first group of VCE students from the Chinese school sat their VCE examinations in November 2004 with 50 per cent applying for Victorian tertiary education places. All applications were successful.

Haileybury College

Haileybury College commenced delivery of the VCE in 2005 at Li Hui Li High School and Qingdao No.19 Middle School in China. Students at both Chinese schools sat their first VCE examinations in June 2005.

Indonesia

Sekolah Global Jaya

Sekolah Global Jaya, an independent school in Tangerang, Indonesia, is a recognised VCE provider. Twenty-three students completed their VCE in November 2004 with most taking up places at universities in Victoria.

Sekolah Ciputra

Sekolah Ciputra in Surabaya, Indonesia, is the sister school of Sekolah Global Jaya. The school had eight students complete their VCE in November 2004.

South Africa

Crawford Schools

The VCAA evaluated examination papers in 16 subjects being taught at the Year 12 level at the six Crawford Schools in South Africa. Advice was provided to the schools on the equivalence of the South African examinations with the VCE examinations in similar subjects. A sample of end-of-year examination papers was marked by the VCAA for each subject to determine that the marking standards were also equivalent to those expected of VCE examinations.

Approximately 550 students from Crawford Schools sat the GAT in 2005. The schools consider the GAT a worthwhile educational exercise for their Year 12 students.

Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabian International School

The VCAA continued its partnership with the International Division of the Department of Education & Training and the Saudi Arabian International School in Riyadh, providing the CSF as the basis for their P-10 curriculum. The Saudi Arabian school expanded its program in 2004 to include Year 7 students in AIM testing. A total of 37 students took the AIM test in 2005.

Focus on people

VCAA staff are committed to providing the highest quality curriculum and assessment options to all Victorian students.

Curriculum Branch

The Curriculum Branch is responsible for the development and review of P–12 curriculum. This includes the CSF and the newly developed Victorian Essential Learning Standards in the compulsory years (P–10) and the VCAL and VCE in the post-compulsory years. The Branch develops resource materials and provides professional development to support teachers in their implementation of the curriculum and assessment of student work. Key learning area managers work across P–12. Small teams focusing on P–10, VCE, VCE VET and VCAL complement their work.

P–10 Curriculum Unit

The P–10 Curriculum Unit develops quality curriculum for the compulsory years of schooling and a range of curriculum and assessment support materials to assist teachers in the implementation of their teaching, learning and assessment programs.

The unit provides support services for the CSF and is responsible for the Victorian Essential Learning Standards.

Senior Secondary Curriculum Unit

The Senior Secondary Curriculum Unit manages the ongoing quality assurance requirements for annual delivery of the VCE curriculum, for example guidelines and procedures for text selection in VCE studies. The core work of the Unit is focused on the regular review, redevelopment and evaluation of individual VCE studies. Following the accreditation

of the curriculum by the Victorian Qualifications Authority, the Unit manages the transition and implementation support program to ensure that teachers are adequately prepared to introduce new curriculum and assessment requirements into their classrooms. A range of professional development activities and resources are managed by this Unit on an annual basis to support teachers during the transition and implementation period.

During 2004, the Senior Secondary Curriculum Unit assumed responsibility for the VCAL curriculum and assessment quality assurance, and developed principles and procedures for VCAL curriculum renewal.

VET Unit

The VET Unit is responsible for the development of programs and maintenance of the 27 VCE VET programs and 13 school-based new apprenticeships, and for providing advice to schools on the application of VET block credit.

The Unit provides detailed, accurate and timely advice to education and industry stakeholders and assists schools in the delivery of the VCAL.

VCE VET programs are developed and maintained through regular collaboration between the VCAA and industry, TAFE institutes, schools and education sector agencies. The Unit conducts regular professional development programs for teachers and trainers across all education and training sectors, and supports schools, TAFE institutes and industry to improve student participation and achievement in the senior secondary certificates.

Assessment Branch

The Assessment Branch is responsible for the development, production, conduct and marking of all VCE examinations and the Year 3, 5 and 7 AIM tests.

The Branch manages the quality assurance and moderation programs for school-based assessments of VCE assessment programs. In addition, the Branch is responsible for the collection and processing of students' enrolment data and assessment results for the VCE and VCAL and for the maintenance of student records. Under delegation from the Victorian Qualifications Authority, the Branch issues VCE and VCAL certificates to students. Technical and professional support is provided to the VCAA Board and schools on assessment and reporting issues and the Branch liaises with national and international bodies on these matters. The work of the Branch is shared across the VCE Examinations Unit, the Assessment Operations Unit, the P–10 Assessment Unit and the Student Records and Results Unit.

VCE Examinations Unit

The VCE Examinations Unit provides schools and students with valid and accurate external assessments. The Unit prepares and assesses all VCE written examinations, including VCE VET examinations, performance examinations in the Arts, oral examinations in LOTE studies and one computer-based examination in VET Multimedia. The Unit provides data used to prepare statements of results for VCE students and the final certificate on behalf of the Victorian Qualifications Authority.

Assessment Operations Unit

The Assessment Operations Unit manages the administration, security, conduct and processing of VCE examinations, AIM tests and school assessment coursework and visitation. The Unit undertakes a variety of tasks to do with the administration of examinations. These tasks include conducting Chief Supervisor and school personnel training for personnel new to their roles. The Unit also manages the VCAA Assessment Centre and warehouse facility.

P–10 Assessment Unit

The P–10 Assessment Unit is responsible for the implementation of assessment programs and resources that assist schools to measure and identify the proportion of students achieving national benchmark levels for reading, writing and numeracy. Test results provide detailed information for parents, teachers and schools that support learning and improve achievement in key areas. This is achieved through the administration of AIM pencil-and-paper tests, AIM Online and On Demand Assessment. In addition, the AIM Data Service and associated professional development activities support schools to identify areas for improvement at an individual, class or school level.

Student Records and Results Unit

The Student Records and Results Unit is responsible for record-keeping and reporting of enrolments and results for VCE and VCAL students. This work includes the administration of the VCE, VCAL and VET for all students, the calculation of study scores, statistical moderation, derived examination scores for eligible students, the provision of results to VTAC and the production of the *VCE/VCAL Administrative Handbook*.

The Unit provides results to students through a printed statement for all students, a certificate for eligible students, and an Internet, telephone and SMS service.

Policy, Measurement and Research Branch

The Policy, Measurement and Research Branch is responsible for the provision of research and measurement expertise to guide all aspects of the VCAA's work, and for the development of research and measurement capacity within the VCAA.

The Branch provides data for the purposes of informing government policy, monitoring progress towards government targets, informing the public and assisting in policy development within the VCAA. The Branch brings together the work of the Educational Measurement Unit and Strategic Reporting Unit.

Educational Measurement Unit

The Educational Measurement Unit provides specialist advice and support to the VCAA's assessment and reporting programs. This work includes provision of data analysis and advice relating to the trialing of AIM tests, preparation of reports on the results of AIM testing (including AIM Online) to parents, schools, education sectors and the Government, and contributing to the professional development of teachers in the use of AIM reports.

The Unit maintains the VCE Data Service as a means of empowering schools in the use of achievement data for school improvement, and provides professional development to assist schools and regional offices in analysing the data. The Unit assists and advises on measurement issues in relation to examination setting, data analysis, special consideration, statistical moderation and the maintenance of data quality.

Strategic Reporting Unit

The Strategic Reporting Unit contributes to the operations of the VCAA and the wider education community by providing research and information services to a range of clients, including internal units of the VCAA, parents and teachers about participation and achievement in senior secondary education. Information from the VCAA database is analysed to enable quality assurance of graded assessment conducted as part of the VCE, to monitor and evaluate government programs and policies, to calculate school funding for VET in Schools and the VCAL, and to enable accountability reporting to MCEETYA, the Department of Education, Science and Training and Department of Education & Training.

Corporate Services Branch

The Corporate Services Branch has operational responsibility for the delivery of key products and services of the VCAA, including corporate governance, organisation planning and accountability, finance, human resources and administration, contracts and project management, and information technology. It also has responsibility for executive services, public affairs, information services and production, and oversees the VCAA website and the VCE Season of Excellence program as well as international projects.

The main work of the Branch includes the preparation and monitoring of budgets, annual statements of accounts and human resource functions; maintenance of the VCAA's two locations; coordination of the management of VCAA contracts; provision of information technology services to the organisation; provision of corporate governance advice and administrative support to the VCAA Board, its members and committees, and senior management; communication of the VCAA's key activities to the public through the information services, website and publications; management of the delivery of the VCE and the AIM internationally; organisation planning and development, risk management and performance reporting.

Corporate Governance Unit

The Corporate Governance Unit provides administrative and policy support to the VCAA Board, its committees and to the VCAA's executive management. It is responsible for ensuring that the development of policy and procedures complies with all relevant legislation, Government guidelines and Ministerial directions. Specifically, the Corporate Governance Unit protects the legal and corporate interests of the VCAA in annual reporting, Freedom of Information requests, equal opportunity and anti-discrimination legislation, privacy legislation, intellectual property matters, international projects, Review Committee process and student appeals, procurement and project management.

Organisation Planning and Accountability Unit

The Organisation Planning and Accountability Unit was established during 2004–05 to oversee organisation planning and development, risk management and performance reporting.

The Organisation Planning and Accountability Unit manages a number of strategic functions by leading and managing the organisation's strategic and business planning processes; undertaking strategic assessments of organisational performance and risk; developing and facilitating organisational initiatives and processes to improve the strategic capacity of the organisation and to support its strategic directions; managing special projects of strategic importance that impact on the organisation; preparing high-level correspondence and reports for the Minister, Secretary, Board Chair, CEO and other statutory authorities and agencies.

Public Affairs and Information Services Unit

The Public Affairs and Information Services Unit is responsible for maintaining and developing effective relationships with the Department of Education & Training, the media and other key stakeholders. It also provides strategic advice to senior management on communications and public relations. The Unit oversees the activities of the VCE Season of Excellence, information services and online communications.

Finance, Human Resources and Administrative Unit

The Finance, Human Resources and Administrative Unit provides a range of financial, administration and human resource support functions which contribute to the efficient and effective delivery of the VCAA's services to students, teachers, schools, parents and the general community. The overarching responsibility of the Unit is to build infrastructure and capability for innovation, deliver improved services to clients, ensure the resources of the VCAA are effectively managed and provide support to the organisation's educational goals.

The Unit is responsible for one-on-one monthly management reviews of each Unit's financial statement, communicating monthly financial performance and position to the Departments of Education & Training and Treasury and Finance, and producing and distributing financial reports to managers. The Unit is also responsible for making creditor payments, and producing annual financial reports and financial audits. The work of the Unit also involves issuing payment summaries and group certificates, submitting PAYG and Business Activity Statements to the Australian Taxation Office and making superannuation guarantee contribution payments.

The Information Technology Service Delivery Group

The Information Technology Service Delivery Group provides technology services tailored to support the VCAA and other key educational stakeholders.

The Group's primary function is to support and maintain the software applications that have been specifically developed to assist the VCAA deliver outcomes across the Victorian P–12 education sector and to preserve the integrity and security of information held within the VCAA's databases.

It also provides application support of the Victorian Assessment Software System which is used in Victorian schools to administer the VCE, VCAL and VET student enrolments and final results (including the GAT).

The Information Technology Service Delivery Group has increased its capability to provide Help Desk facilities, as well as desktop and server administration and computer facilities management.

Ensuring the diverse nature of Australian society is reflected in all aspects of its operations.

The VCAA has an ongoing commitment to the principles set out in the Victorian Government's Valuing Cultural Diversity policy statement. The policy focuses on valuing, respecting and meeting the needs of our culturally and linguistically diverse communities and the needs of women, youth and Indigenous people.

Cultural and linguistic diversity

The delivery of culturally responsive, equitable programs is a core goal of the VCAA. The VCAA has an important role to play in ensuring that respect and appreciation for cultural and linguistic diversity are a normal part of all curriculum and assessment policies, programs and procedures. The VCAA aims to reflect the Government's multicultural policy for Victorian schools both in its interaction with schools and within its own administrative structures and procedures. The policy seeks to ensure that all school programs help students to develop:

- proficiency in English
- competency in a language or LOTE
- in-depth knowledge and awareness of their own and other cultures
- understanding of the multicultural nature of Australia's past and present history, and of the interdependence of cultures in the development of the nation
- skills and understandings that allow comfortable and competent interaction in intercultural settings

- an awareness of the reality of the global village and national interdependence in the areas of trade, finance, politics and communication, and that the development of international understanding and cooperation is essential.

The presence in our educational settings of people from a wide range of different backgrounds enhances the society, culture and economy. The VCAA's objective in this area is an education system in which intercultural awareness and skills become natural outcomes of schooling.

The focus in 2004–05 has been on curriculum reform at the P–10 level, ongoing monitoring and review at VCE level, the promotion of Indigenous languages, the production of implementation support materials and the provision of a range of professional development activities.

These initiatives have involved close liaison with the Ministerial Advisory Council on Languages other than English, English as a Second Language and Multicultural Education, the Victorian Aboriginal Corporation for Languages, the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Incorporated and other peak bodies, community representatives and those members of the VCAA working groups and committees who have specific multicultural expertise.

In 2004–05, the VCAA:

- developed a curriculum resource kit for schools with a staggered release over 2005, offering material on sport, the environment, cultural diversity and Victorian Indigenous culture so that students can gain a more meaningful experience of the 2006 Melbourne Commonwealth Games
- implemented four new LOTE studies in the VCE: Bosnian, Classical Hebrew, Punjabi and Yiddish, with the result that students are now offered a choice of 51 languages in the VCE

- developed new, all-inclusive VCE LOTE assessment handbooks for Auslan, Classical Greek, First Language, Second Language, Second Language Advanced, Latin and Indigenous Languages of Victoria
- provided an extensive professional development program around Victoria for schools on the use of LOTE assessment handbooks, including strategies for using performance descriptors in assessing school-assessed coursework
- developed the criteria governing eligibility of students to enrol in first and second language VCE courses, which were very carefully monitored, and conducted research into enrolments and outcomes in the third level of Chinese – Chinese Second Language Advanced – in order to ensure maximum fairness for all students
- provided a professional development program on VCE LOTE course writing for teachers and principals from approximately 80 single study providers
- conducted the P–10 LOTE Reference Group that worked on the Victorian Essential Learning Standards project, which resulted in the recommendation that a dimension be introduced into the LOTE domain called ‘Intercultural Knowledge and Language Awareness’ to measure student progress in learning about the influence of culture in their own lives and to promote openness to a variety of values and practices
- held a wide range of seminars and workshops on the implications of the new Victorian Essential Learning Standards for the teaching of LOTE at P–10
- provided a stand for two days at the Deafness Expo in the Melbourne Town Hall to offer information on Auslan courses and teaching materials.

Indigenous affairs

In 2004–05, the VCAA continued to offer extensive support to schools offering the new VCE Indigenous Languages study – Indigenous Languages of Victoria: Revival and Reclamation.

The VCAA Indigenous Languages Implementation Group continued to meet regularly to provide support for teachers of Indigenous languages through planning of professional development activities and the development of implementation support materials. Meetings were held with VIT officers to discuss career pathways and qualification requirements for teachers of Indigenous languages. Professional development sessions were provided for schools and communities currently offering or planning to offer the VCE Indigenous Languages of Victoria: Revival and Reclamation study.

Youth

To develop support for young people’s learning outcomes by developing more flexible resourcing models for education and training, the VCAA provided pathways for Indigenous students through access to mainstream qualifications by supporting schools that are implementing the VCE Indigenous Languages of Victoria: Revival and Reclamation study.

Women

The VCAA is committed to the promotion of equality for women, both in its communication with schools and within its own workforce. In developing educational programs that remain fair and accessible to all, the VCAA assures a commitment to equity and diversity at all times.

Celebrating excellence

The VCE Season of Excellence, the Plain English Speaking Award, the VCE Achiever Awards and the VCAL Achievement Awards celebrate student achievement.

VCE Season of Excellence

The VCAA manages an annual program of exhibitions, performances and screenings of work created by students from:

- VCE Studies: Art, Dance, Drama, Design and Technology, Food and Technology, Media, Music Performance: Group, Music Performance: Solo, Studio Arts, Theatre Studies, Systems and Technology, and Visual Communication and Design
- VCE VET Studies: Dance and VCE VET Multimedia.

Works and performers are selected from government, Catholic and independent schools.

Selection and audition panels comprised state assessors and state reviewers, representatives from subject associations and teachers. VCAA reviewers and teachers also worked with education staff to deliver education programs at Season events.

The VCE Season of Excellence provided a forum for the work of VCE students through exhibitions, performances and screenings in technology, design, multimedia, and the cinematic, visual and performing arts studies.

The Season presents:

- a representative sample of outstanding student work
- low-cost, accessible professional development for teachers and learning opportunities for students
- VCAA curriculum outcomes to the wider public

- associated education programs, including lectures, forums and online representations, which provide valuable resources for teachers and extensive curriculum and assessment advice for students.

Three hundred and four student artists, designers, filmmakers, musicians, dancers, actors and singers participated in Season 2005, with a total audience exceeding 350,000.

The Season consisted of the following program of events.

Top Designs: Melbourne Museum, 5 March – 10 July 2005

The exhibition presented work by 133 students from VCE Media, Design and Technology, Food and Technology, Systems and Technology, and Visual Communication and Design. Professor Di Fleming opened the exhibition and over 700 guests were entertained by a music group from Haileybury College.

Top Class

Ten Top Class concerts were presented over four weekends and compered by the Chief Assessor in each study:

- Dance and VET Dance, National Theatre, St Kilda, Saturday 19 March 2005
- Drama, National Theatre, Saturday 23 April 2005
- Drama and Theatre Studies, National Theatre, Saturday 30 April 2005
- Music Performance: Solo and Group, Iwaki Auditorium, Saturday 7 May 2005.

Top Arts: The Ian Potter Centre, NGV Australia, Federation Square, 1 April – 13 June 2005

Sixty-five artists exhibited work produced for VCE Art and Studio Arts. An 80-page, full-colour catalogue and online resources complemented the exhibition. The Minister for the Arts, Mary Delahunty, officially launched the exhibition.

Top Screen: Australian Centre for the Moving Image, Federation Square

Top Screen was officially launched on 3 May by documentary filmmaker, Scott Millwood, after a welcome by Aboriginal elder, Joy Wandin-Murphy.

Sixteen Top Screen sessions presented documentaries, short fictions, animations and experimental films created by VCE Media students.

Top Acts: Hamer Hall, Friday 27 May

The Minister for Education and Training launched the Top Acts concert. Thirty-six performers presented 21 solo and two group performances, selected from the ten Top Class concerts. An eight-page, two-colour program was published.

Achievements

A compilation of films, including interviews with each filmmaker selected for Top Designs and Top Screen, was produced by Schools Television and shown at Top Designs. Siobhan Maiden conducted the interviews, which were interspersed through the screening to create a valuable teaching resource.

Projections of student work onto large walls were included in Top Designs. This comprised films showing Systems and Designs models working, a slide show of food created for Food and Technology, and animations and websites created for Visual Communication.

Teachers accompanying groups were given free tickets to Top Class 2005.

A question-and-answer session with the state reviewer for VCE Dance and for VET Dance followed Top Class Dance on 19 March.

VCE VET Multimedia works were included in Top Screen in 2005. Five works were shown in the Memory Grid space in the Australian Centre for the Moving Image from 22 March – 12 May. Booked groups totalled 25.

VCAA Plain English Speaking Award

The VCAA Plain English Speaking Award is a statewide public speaking competition open to all Victorian students between the ages of 15 and 18. This Award began in Victoria in 1977 and soon after that all Australian States and Territories established their own Plain English Speaking Award with an annual national final.

The VCAA coordinated the Plain English Speaking Award for the second time in 2004. Student involvement increased by 22 per cent and school participation by 19.3 per cent from 2003.

In June 2004, 183 students from 99 schools participated in regional finals. Twenty-one finalists came to Melbourne for the state semi-finals and finals in July. Aaron Bloch, a Year 12 student from Melbourne High School, became the Victorian state finalist.

Aaron went on to speak at the national competition of the Plain English Speaking Award, which is hosted, in turn, by each of the States and Territories. The 2004 award was hosted by the Northern Territory.

VCE Achiever Awards

The VCE Achiever Awards commenced in 1997 and continue to be an award of high significance for students in Victoria. The awards recognise and acknowledge the efforts of VCE students in promoting community involvement in their local school and wider community in what is already a demanding period of their lives.

Each year the VCAA discovers talented and dedicated young people who strive to make a difference.

Students who qualify for these awards demonstrate leadership in such activities as assistance to people who are disadvantaged, fundraising, public speaking, volunteer work, involvement in media or sporting events and preservation of the environment.

Monthly award winners are presented with a trophy and certificate at Parliament House in November of each year. The overall winner of these awards receives a laptop computer donated by IBM Australia. The *Herald Sun* newspaper publishes a story on each of the monthly finalists.

The overall winner of the VCE Achiever Award for 2004 was Luke Bo'sher from Melbourne High School. Luke is passionate about youth issues and he has been involved with a large number of organisations which work to bring about positive change for young people.

VCAL Achievement Awards

The VCAL Achievement Awards recognise the outstanding achievements of young people who participated in the VCAL. The awards also recognise the contribution and achievement of VCAL teachers and partner organisations that have contributed to the development and delivery of innovative VCAL programs.

In 2004, there were a total of 44 VCAL Achievement Award winners including:

- nine individual student winners
- 20 students who were members of teams
- six partner organisations – Coles Myer, North Central LLENs, University of Ballarat, Shepparton City Council, Wanganui Park Secondary College and Rad.com
- eight teachers
- the Royal Automobile Club of Victoria, which was presented with the Chair's Award.

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Statement of financial performance for the year ended 30 June 2005

	Notes	Year ended 30 June 2005 \$	Year ended 30 June 2004 \$
Revenues from ordinary activities			
Operating appropriations	2	32,983,959	29,529,846
Capital grants	2	200,000	200,000
Special grants	2	1,380,200	–
DE&T allocation for long-service leave	3, 20a	2,495,599	–
APS development	4	3,500,000	–
Resources received free of charge	5	1,733,610	1,748,247
Interest		320,072	153,815
User charges	6	2,289,512	1,823,202
Proceeds from disposal of fixed assets	7	0	1,591
		44,902,952	33,456,701
Expenses from ordinary activities			
Employee benefits	8	22,957,040	19,651,410
Depreciation and amortisation	9	864,653	664,550
Supplies and services	10	15,435,500	14,232,160
Written-down value of assets disposed	7	3,399	5,410
		39,260,592	34,553,530
Net result for the reporting period		5,642,360	(1,096,829)
Total changes in equity other than those resulting from transactions with the Victorian State Government as owner		5,642,360	(1,096,829)

The above statement of financial performance should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Statement of financial position as at 30 June 2005

	Notes	Year ended 30 June 2005 \$	Year ended 30 June 2004 \$
Current assets			
Cash assets	12	4,166,834	3,775,465
Other financial assets	13	4,866,813	–
Receivables	14	1,037,533	913,957
Prepayments	15	188,791	160,955
		10,259,971	4,850,377
Non-current assets			
Receivables	14	2,495,599	–
Plant and equipment	16	447,784	837,005
Leasehold improvements	17	–	335,089
Motor vehicles	18	121,217	–
		3,064,600	1,172,094
Total assets		13,324,571	6,022,471
Current liabilities			
Payables	19	3,791,140	2,833,682
Provisions	20	1,176,331	995,774
Finance leases	21	19,349	–
		4,986,820	3,829,456
Non-current liabilities			
Provisions	20	2,495,599	2,095,852
Finance leases	21	102,629	–
		2,598,228	2,095,852
Total liabilities		7,585,048	5,925,308
Net assets		5,739,523	97,163
Net equity			
Contributed capital	22	4,698,492	4,698,492
Accumulated surplus/(deficit)	23	1,041,031	(4,601,329)
Total equity		5,739,523	97,163

The above statement of financial position should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Statement of cash flows for the year ended 30 June 2005

	Notes	Year ended 30 June 2005 \$	Year ended 30 June 2004 \$
Cash flows from operating activities			
Receipts			
Government contributions		38,014,850	28,904,146
Interest		307,279	153,878
User charges		2,630,824	1,067,946
Payments			
Employee costs		(22,217,528)	(18,680,108)
Supplies and services		(13,300,201)	(12,828,293)
Net cash inflow/(outflow) from operating activities	28	5,435,224	(1,382,431)
Cash flows from investing activities			
Payments for equipment		(162,468)	(532,136)
Proceeds from sale of equipment		0	1,591
Net cash (outflow) from investing activities		(162,468)	(530,545)
Cash flows from financing activities			
Repayment of finance leases		(14,574)	–
Net cash (outflow) from financing activities		(14,574)	–
Net increase/(decrease) in cash held			
		5,258,182	(1,912,976)
Cash at beginning of the financial year		3,775,465	5,688,441
Cash at end of the financial year	29	9,033,647	3,775,465

The above statement of cash flows should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Notes to the financial statements

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NOTE 1 Summary of significant accounting policies

This general-purpose financial report has been prepared on an accrual basis in accordance with the *Financial Management Act 1994*, Australian accounting standards, Statements of Accounting Concepts and other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board, and Urgent Issues Group Consensus Views.

It is prepared in accordance with the historical cost convention, except for certain assets and liabilities which, as noted, are at valuation. The accounting policies adopted, and the classification and presentation of items, are consistent with those of the previous year, except where a change is required to comply with an Australian accounting standard or Urgent Issues Group Consensus View, or an alternative accounting policy permitted by an Australian accounting standard is adopted to improve the relevance and reliability of the financial report. Where practicable, comparative amounts are presented and classified on a basis consistent with the current year.

For interim and annual reporting periods ending on or after 30 June 2005, AASB 1047 *Disclosing the Impacts of Adopting Australian Equivalents to International Financial Reporting Standards* requires disclosure of any known or reliable estimable information about the impacts on the financial report had it been prepared using the A-IFRS or if the impacts are not known or reliably estimable, a statement to that effect. Refer to note 32 for further information.

The Department of Education & Training (DE&T), over the past four years, has requested that the VCAA draw on accumulated reserves to fund operation activities. In support the Department has provided a letter of comfort agreeing to fund any operational shortfall for the 2005–06 financial year, should it occur, to enable the VCAA to meet its financial commitments as and when they fall due, subject to the VCAA achieving the outcomes agreed in the VCAA budget submission.

(a) Acquisitions of assets

The cost method of accounting is used for all acquisitions of assets. Cost is measured as the fair value of the assets given up or liabilities undertaken at the date of acquisition.

(b) Revenue recognition

Government grants are recognised as revenue in the period when the VCAA gains control of the contributions.

Fees from overseas students are recognised over the period that the service is provided.

Where student fees of a reciprocal nature have been received in respect of services to be delivered in the following financial year, such amounts are deferred and disclosed as fees in advance.

Publication and other miscellaneous revenue received is recognised as revenue on provision of service.

Interest received is recognised in the statement of financial performance when earned.

(c) Receivables

All debtors are recognised at the amounts receivable as they are due for settlement at no more than 30 days from the date of recognition.

Collectability of debtors is reviewed on an ongoing basis. Debts which are known to be uncollectable are written off. A provision for doubtful debts is raised when some doubt as to collection exists.

(d) Depreciation of plant and equipment

Depreciation is calculated on a straight-line basis to write off the net cost of each item of property over its expected useful life to the VCAA. Estimates of the remaining useful lives for all assets are reviewed at least annually.

The expected useful lives for the financial years ending 30 June 2005 and 30 June 2004 are as follows:

Plant and equipment	5 years
Computers	3 years

Where items of plant and equipment have separately identifiable components which are subject to regular replacement, those components are assigned useful lives distinct from the item of plant and equipment to which they relate.

Major spares purchased specifically for particular plant are capitalised and depreciated on the same basis as the plant to which they relate.

(e) Leasehold improvements

The cost of improvements to or on leasehold properties is amortised over the unexpired period of the lease or the estimated useful life of the improvement, whichever is the shorter. Leasehold improvements held at the reporting date are being amortised over five years.

(f) Leased non-current assets

A distinction is made between finance leases which effectively transfer from the lessor to the lessee substantially all the risks and benefits incident to ownership of leased non-current assets, and operating leases under which the lessor effectively retains substantially all such risks and benefits. Finance leases are capitalised. A lease asset and liability are established at the present value of minimum lease payments. Lease payments are allocated between the principal component of the lease liability and the interest expense.

The lease asset is amortised on a straight-line basis over the term of the lease or where it is likely that the VCAA will obtain ownership of the asset, the expected useful life of the asset to the VCAA.

Operating lease payments are charged to the statement of financial performance in the periods in which they are incurred, as this represents the pattern of benefits derived from the leased assets.

Other operating lease payments are charged to the statement of financial performance in the periods in which they are incurred, as this represents the pattern of benefits derived from the leased assets.

(g) Payable

The amounts represent liabilities for goods and services provided to the VCAA prior to the end of the financial year and which are unpaid. The amounts are unsecured and are usually paid within 30 days of recognition.

(h) Goods and Services Tax systems changes

Revenue, expenses and assets are recognised net of Goods and Services Tax (GST) except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable, in which case it is recognised as part of the cost of acquisition of an asset or part of an item of expense. The net amount of GST recoverable from, or payable to, the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) is included as part of receivables or payables in the statement of financial position. The GST component of a receipt or payment is recognised on a gross basis in the statement of cash flows in accordance with Accounting Standards AAS28 *Statement of Cash Flows*.

(i) Employee benefits

(i) Wages, salaries and annual leave

Liabilities for wages and salaries, including non-monetary benefits, annual leave and accumulating sick leave expected to be settled within 12 months of the reporting date are recognised in respect of employees' services up to the reporting date and are measured as the amounts expected to be paid when the liabilities are settled. Liabilities for non-accumulating sick leave are recognised when the leave is taken and measured at the rates paid or payable.

(ii) Long-service leave

The liability for long-service leave is recognised in the provision for employment benefits and measured as the present value of expected future payments to be made in respect of services provided by employees up to the reporting date. Consideration is given to expected future wage and salary levels, experience of employee departures and periods of service. Expected future payments are discounted using interest rates on national Government guaranteed securities with terms to maturity that match, as closely as possible, the estimated future cash outflows. The liability for long-service leave expected to be settled within 12 months of the reporting date is classified as a current liability.

(iii) Superannuation

The amount charged to the statement of financial performance in respect of superannuation represents the contributions made by the VCAA to the superannuation fund in respect of current VCAA staff.

The VCAA participates in several superannuation funds, which provide benefits upon the disability, retirement or death of employees (see note 20b).

(iv) Employee benefit oncosts

Employee benefit oncosts, including payroll tax, are recognised and included in employee benefit liabilities and costs when the employee benefits to which they relate are recognised as liabilities.

(j) Cash

For the purposes of the statement of cash flows, cash includes short-term deposits that are readily convertible to cash on hand and are subject to an insignificant risk of changes in value, net of outstanding cheques yet to be presented by the VCAA's suppliers and creditors (see note 12).

(k) Investments

Investments are recorded at cost and interest income is recognised in the statement of financial performance when receivable.

(l) Resources provided and received free of charge

Contributions of resources and resources provided free of charge are recognised at their fair value. Contributions in the form of services are only recognised when a fair value can be reliably determined and the services would have been purchased if not donated.

NOTE 2 Appropriations

	2005 \$	2004 \$
Operating appropriations		
Current year	32,983,959	29,529,846
Capital grants		
Other	200,000	200,000
Special grants		
Commonwealth Games funding	900,000	-
VCAL	396,000	-
Redevelopment of VCE Chemistry	64,200	-
Design in schools	20,000	-
	1,380,200	-

NOTE 3 Department of Education & Training allocation for long-service leave

DE&T allocation for long-service leave

2005 \$	2004 \$
2,495,599	–
2,495,599	–

During the 2004–05 financial year an agreement was reached with the Department of Education & Training to fund the non-current liability for long-service leave.

As a consequence revenue and a receivable are recorded in the accounts. Refer note 20.

NOTE 4 APS development

ERC grant – APS software development

2005 \$	2004 \$
3,500,000	–
3,500,000	–

At the commencement of the 2004–05 financial year \$3,500,000 was drawn down to cover the budgeted APS project costs. In accordance with accounting standards relating to revenue recognition the draw-down has been recognised

as contributing to the net operating result for the 2004–05 reporting period. \$3,200,000 of these funds are tagged grants but remain unspent at June 30 and costs will be brought to account in future periods.

NOTE 5 Resources provided and received free of charge

Property rentals and outgoings

2005 \$	2004 \$
1,733,610	1,748,247
1,733,610	1,748,247

These amounts relate to two separate building occupancy arrangements:

- a lease on the VCAA's assessment centre at Camberwell
- occupancy of 41 St Andrews Place, East Melbourne.

Property rentals and outgoings were paid on the VCAA's behalf by the Department of Education & Training. These amounts have been recognised in the statement of financial performance as expenditure offset by an increase to revenue as resources received free of charge.

NOTE 6 User charges

	2005 \$	2004 \$
Fee-paying overseas students	1,315,807	1,330,399
Publication sales – Study Designs/CSF material	56,005	70,589
Student services	204,460	191,599
VCE results hotline	53,107	53,343
Royalties	565,135	43,828
VCE Season of Excellence	52,621	60,144
Miscellaneous income	42,377	73,300
	2,289,512	1,823,202

NOTE 7 Disposal of fixed assets

	2005 \$	2004 \$
Equipment		
Proceeds from sale of fixed assets	–	1,591
Less written-down value of fixed assets disposed	3,399	5,410
Net (loss)/profit on disposal of assets	(3,399)	(3,819)

NOTE 8 Employee benefits

	2005 \$	2004 \$
Salaries and allowances	13,548,790	11,092,149
Fees for setting, vetting and assessing examinations	6,172,152	5,817,030
Associated salary oncosts	3,153,801	2,671,098
Other	82,297	71,133
	22,957,040	19,651,410

NOTE 9 Depreciation and amortisation provided

	2005 \$	2004 \$
Amortisation of leasehold improvements	335,089	217,356
Amortisation of motor vehicles	15,335	–
Depreciation of equipment	514,229	447,194
	864,653	664,550

NOTE 10 Supplies and services

Major items of expenditure included the following:

	2005 \$	2004 \$
Administrative expenses	659,900	550,869
AIM development	1,704,530	1,676,254
Computer and Internet expenses	461,378	544,178
Contractors and consultants	3,070,586	2,273,430
Bad and doubtful debts	29,910	20,000
Exam centre supervisor grants	2,080,420	1,741,880
Freight and cartage	520,626	558,232
Furniture and equipment	123,490	130,925
Hire and leasing of venues	151,855	222,978
Hospitality	283,389	198,848
Office supplies	160,129	147,447
Operating leases – motor vehicles	48,648	56,588
Printing and production	1,925,905	2,204,279
Property leases rentals and outgoings (see note 5)	1,733,610	1,748,247
Staff training	158,165	147,600
Teacher release and development grants	1,173,613	972,642
Travelling and personal expenses	365,742	301,826
Utilities	662,826	628,425
Warehouse rental and outgoings	120,778	107,512
	15,435,500	14,232,160

NOTE 11 Remuneration of auditors

Audit fees paid or payable to the Victorian Auditor-General's Office for audit of the VCAA financial report.

	2005 \$	2004 \$
Audit fees	23,600	24,000

Note 12 Cash assets

	2005 \$	2004 \$
Cash on hand	600	600
Cash at bank	4,166,234	3,774,865
	4,166,834	3,775,465

Refer note 4.

NOTE 13 Other financial assets

	2005 \$	2004 \$
Bank bills	2,465,949	–
Term deposits at cost	2,400,864	–
	4,866,813	–

(a) Bank bills are held for a 30-day period with the National Australia Bank and are valued at cost.

(b) Refer note 4.

NOTE 14 Receivables

	2005 \$	2004 \$
Current		
Fee-paying overseas students	583,325	511,183
Operating appropriation receivable	63,009	13,700
Other	411,199	410,483
	1,057,533	935,366
Less provision for doubtful debts	20,000	21,409
	1,037,533	913,957
Non-current		
DE&T allocation for long-service leave	2,495,599	–

NOTE 15 Prepayments

	2005 \$	2004 \$
Software maintenance	132,127	114,240
Administration	56,664	46,715
	188,791	160,955

NOTE 16 Plant and equipment

	2005 \$	2004 \$
At cost	2,660,523	2,668,441
Less accumulated depreciation	2,212,739	1,831,436
	447,784	837,005

Movements during the reporting period

Equipment	Opening WDV \$	Additions \$	Disposals \$	Depreciation \$	Closing WDV \$
At cost	837,005	128,407	(3,399)	514,229	447,784
Total	837,005	128,407	(3,399)	514,229	447,784

NOTE 17 Leasehold improvements

	2005 \$	2004 \$
At cost	1,086,778	1,086,778
Less accumulated amortisation	1,086,778	751,689
	0	335,089

Movements during the reporting period

Leasehold improvements	Opening WDV \$	Additions \$	Disposals \$	Amortisation \$	Closing WDV \$
At cost	335,089	–	–	335,089	–
Total	335,089	–	–	335,089	–

NOTE 18 Leased assets

	2005 \$	2004 \$
Motor vehicles at cost	136,552	–
Less accumulated amortisation	15,335	–
	121,217	–

Movements during the reporting period

Motor vehicles	Opening WDV \$	Additions \$	Disposals \$	Amortisation \$	Closing WDV \$
At cost	–	136,552	–	15,335	121,217
Total	–	136,552	–	15,335	121,217

NOTE 19 Payables

	2005 \$	2004 \$
Trade creditors	1,791,282	1,445,025
Accrued salaries	1,527,865	1,368,657
Fees in advance	471,993	20,000
	3,791,140	2,833,682

NOTE 20 Employee benefits

(a) Provision for employee benefits

	2005 \$	2004 \$
Current		
Long-service leave	263,499	223,210
Annual leave	912,832	772,564
	1,176,331	995,774
Non-current		
Long-service leave	2,495,599	2,095,852

(b) Government Employees' Superannuation Fund

No liability is recognised in the statement of financial position for the VCAA's share of the state's unfunded superannuation liability.

The state's unfunded superannuation liability has been reflected in the financial statements of the Department of Treasury and Finance.

However, superannuation contributions for the reporting period are included as part of salaries and associated costs in the statement of financial performance of the VCAA.

The name and details of the major employee superannuation funds and contributions made by the VCAA are as follows:

Payments to the State Superannuation Fund and the Victorian Superannuation Fund in

respect to ongoing staff employed by the VCAA were made by the Department of Education & Training. The Department was reimbursed an amount of \$1,251,419 at balance date for these contributions, which have been calculated at an average rate of 11.12 per cent of actual salaries.

In addition to the above, the VCAA paid contributions of \$594,135 direct to VicSuper, \$3251 direct to the Tertiary Education Super Scheme and \$3208 direct to the Spectrum Super Fund on behalf of eligible casual and sessional employees at a rate of 9 per cent pursuant to the provisions of the *Superannuation Guarantee Act 1992*.

The VCAA has no loans from the employee superannuation funds.

NOTE 21 Finance leases

	2005 \$	2004 \$
Current		
Motor vehicles under finance lease	19,349	–
Non-current		
Motor vehicles under finance lease	102,629	–

NOTE 22 Contributed capital

	2005 \$	2004 \$
Balance 1 July	4,698,492	4,698,492
Contributions of equity	–	–
Balance 30 June	4,698,492	4,698,492

NOTE 23 Accumulated surplus/(deficit)

	2005 \$	2004 \$
Accumulated deficit at the beginning of the financial year	(4,601,329)	(3,504,500)
Net result for the reporting period	5,642,360	(1,096,829)
Accumulated surplus/(deficit) at the end of the financial year	1,041,031	(4,601,329)

NOTE 24 Financial instruments

(a) Interest rate risk

The VCAA's exposure to interest rate risks and the effective interest rates of financial assets and financial liabilities, recognised at balance date, are as follows:

Financial instruments	Floating interest rate		Non-interest-bearing		Total carrying amount as per statement of financial position	
	2005 \$	2004 \$	2005 \$	2004 \$	2005 \$	2004 \$
(i) Financial assets						
Cash assets	4,166,234	3,774,865	600	600	4,166,834	3,775,465
Other financial assets	4,866,813	–	–	–	4,866,813	–
Receivables	–	–	3,533,132	913,957	3,533,132	913,957
Total financial assets	9,033,047	3,774,865	3,533,732	914,557	12,566,779	4,689,422
(ii) Financial liabilities						
Payables	–	–	3,319,147	2,813,682	3,319,147	2,813,682
Interest-bearing liabilities	121,978	–	–	–	121,978	–
Total financial liabilities	121,978	–	3,319,147	2,813,682	3,441,125	2,813,682
(iii) Weighted average interest rate						
Interest	5.4%	5.0%				

(b) Net fair values

The aggregate net fair value of financial assets and financial liabilities, recognised at balance date, are as follows.

	Total carrying amount and aggregate net fair value as per statement of financial position	
	2005 \$	2004 \$
(i) Financial assets		
Cash assets	4,166,834	3,775,465
Other financial assets	4,866,813	–
Receivables	3,533,132	913,957
Total financial assets	12,566,779	4,689,422
(ii) Financial liabilities		
Payables	3,319,147	2,813,682
Interest-bearing liabilities	121,978	–
Total financial liabilities	3,441,125	2,813,682

The following methods and assumptions are used to determine the net fair values of financial assets and financial liabilities.

Recognised financial instruments

Cash and investments: The carrying amount approximates fair value because of their short-term maturity.

Receivables and payables: The carrying amount approximates fair value.

(c) Credit risk exposures

The VCAA's maximum exposure to credit risk at balance date in relation to each class of recognised financial asset is the carrying amount of those assets as indicated in the statement of financial position.

Credit risk in trade receivables is managed in the following ways:

- payment terms are 30 days
- debt collection policies and procedures are employed.

NOTE 25 Disclosures relating to Ministers and Responsible Persons

In accordance with the Ministerial Directions issued by the Minister for Finance under the *Financial Management Act 1994*, the following disclosures are made regarding the responsible Ministers and the Responsible Persons for the reporting period.

(a) Responsible Persons

The persons who held the positions of Ministers and Responsible Persons at any time during the financial period are as follows:

Responsible Minister

Minister for Education and Training

Ms Lynne Kosky, MP

1 July 2004 – 30 June 2005

Acting Minister for Education and Training

Ms Jacinta Allan, MP

19 October 2004 – 28 October 2004
13 January 2005 – 25 January 2005
12 February 2005 – 21 February 2005

Accountable Officer

Ms Jennifer Jones

1 July 2004 – 30 June 2005

VCAA members

Mr Stuart Hamilton, Chair

1 July 2004 – 30 June 2005

Ms Esmeralda Bamblett

Mr Gerald Burke

Appointed 3 August 2004

Mr John Fry

Reappointed 1 June 2005

Ms Jennifer Haynes

Mr Grant Hehir

Mr John Maddock

Mr Garry McLean

Mr Peter McMullin

Reappointed 1 June 2005

Professor Robert Pargetter

Ms Catherine Pianta

Ms Joanne Roberts

Reappointed 1 June 2005

Ms Kylie Sanders

Resigned February 2005

Professor Sue Willis

Reappointed 1 June 2005

(b) Remuneration of Responsible Persons

The numbers of Responsible Persons are shown below in their relevant income bands:

Income	2005	2004
\$0	4	4
\$1–\$9,999	9	11
\$30,000–\$39,999	1	1
Total remuneration received, or due and receivable by Responsible Persons amounted to:	\$67,635	\$65,793

The remuneration of the Responsible Minister is reported separately in the financial statements of the Department of Premier and Cabinet.

(c) Retirement benefits of Responsible Persons

No retirement benefits were paid during the reporting period.

(d) Other transactions

Other related party transactions requiring disclosure under the Directions of the Minister for Finance have been considered and there are no matters to report.

(e) Executive Officers' remuneration

The numbers of executive officers, other than Ministers and Responsible Persons, whose total remuneration exceeded \$100,000 during the reporting period, are shown in the table below in their relevant income bands. Total remuneration includes bonus payments, long-service leave payments, redundancy payments and retirement benefits.

A review of the executive responsibilities resulted in a reclassification of executives from assistant general managers to general managers affecting the total remuneration payable to executives over the year. During the reporting period executives received an annual performance bonus.

Income band	Total remuneration		Base remuneration	
	2005 No.	2004 No.	2005 No.	2004 No.
\$110,000–\$119,999	1	–	1	–
\$120,000–\$129,999	–	–	1	2
\$130,000–\$139,999	–	1	1	2
\$140,000–\$149,999	1	1	1	–
\$150,000–\$159,999	2	2	–	–
\$190,000–\$199,999	–	–	1	1
\$220,000–\$229,999	1	1	–	–
Total numbers	5	5	5	5
Total amount \$	\$776,923	\$804,794	\$701,933	\$698,374

NOTE 26 Economic dependency

The VCAA is dependent on the State Government, through the Department of Education & Training for a significant volume of its operating revenue as disclosed in note 2.

During the 2004–05 financial year an agreement was reached with the Department of Education & Training to record a notional figure against debtors and revenue, to cover the non-current liabilities for employees' long-service leave.

NOTE 27 Segmental reporting

The VCAA operates predominately in the education sector and its primary responsibility is the development of curriculum and assessment for all Victorian schools.

NOTE 28 Reconciliation from operating result to net cash flow from operating activities

	Year ending 30 June 2005 \$	Year ending 30 June 2004 \$
Operating result	5,642,360	(1,096,829)
Non-cash flows in operating results		
Depreciation of equipment	514,229	447,194
Amortisation of leasehold improvements	335,089	217,356
Amortisation of motor vehicles	15,335	–
Written-down stock	–	4,005
Loss/(profit) on sale of assets	3,399	3,819
Bad debts	9,910	–
Provision for doubtful debts	20,000	20,000
Decrease/(increase) in assets		
Receivables	(2,649,085)	(300,608)
Inventories	–	50,882
Other current assets	(27,836)	10,555
Increase/(decrease) in liabilities		
Accounts payable	991,519	(1,338,663)
Annual leave provision	140,268	223,794
Long-service leave provision	440,036	376,064
Net cash inflow/(outflow) from operating activities	5,435,224	(1,382,431)

NOTE 29 Reconciliation of cash

For the purposes of the statement of cash flows the VCAA considers cash to include amounts on hand and amounts held in the bank and investment accounts.

Cash at the end of the reporting period as shown in the statement of cash flows is reconciled to the related items in the statement of financial position as follows:

	As at 30 June 2005	As at 30 June 2004
Cash on hand	600	600
Cash at bank	6,567,098	3,774,865
Other financial assets	2,465,949	-
Total cash at end of period	9,033,647	3,775,465

NOTE 30 Contingent liabilities and contingent assets

As at 30 June 2005	As at 30 June 2004
-	-

NOTE 31 Commitments for expenditure

As at 30 June 2005	As at 30 June 2004
-	-

NOTE 32 Impact of adopting Australian equivalents to IFRS

Following the adoption of Australian equivalents to International Financial Reporting Standards (A-IFRS), the VCAA will report for the first time in compliance with A-IFRS when results for the financial year ended 30 June 2006 are released.

It should be noted that under A-IFRS, there are no specific requirements that apply to not-for-profit entities that are not consistent with IFRS requirements. The VCAA is established to achieve the objective of government in providing services

free of charge or at prices significantly below their cost of production for the collective consumption by the community, which is incompatible with generating profit as a principal objective. Consequently, where appropriate, the VCAA applies those paragraphs in accounting standards applicable to not-for-profit entities.

An A-IFRS compliant financial report will comprise a new statement of changes in equity in addition to the three existing financial statements, which

will be renamed. The statement of financial performance will be renamed as the operating statement, the statement of financial position will revert to its previous title as the balance sheet and the statement of cash flows will be simplified as the cash flow statement.

However, for the purpose of disclosing the impact of adopting A-IFRS in the 2004–05 financial report, which is prepared under existing accounting standards, existing titles and terminologies will be retained.

With certain exceptions, an entity that has adopted A-IFRS must record transactions that are reported in the financial report as though A-IFRS had always applied. This requirement also extends to any comparative information included within the financial report. Most accounting policy adjustments to apply A-IFRS retrospectively will be made against accumulated funds at the 1 July 2004 opening balance sheet date for the comparative period.

The exceptions include deferral until 1 July 2005 of the application and adjustments for:

- AASB 132 Financial Instruments: Disclosure and Presentation
- AASB 139 Financial Instruments: Recognition and Measurement
- AASB 4 Insurance Contracts
- AASB 1023 General Insurance Contracts (revised July 2004)
- AASB 1038 Life Insurance Contracts (revised July 2004).

The comparative information for transactions affected by these standards will be accounted for in accordance with existing accounting standards.

In 2004, the VCAA allocated internal resources and engaged expert consultants to conduct impact assessments to identify key areas that would be impacted by the transition to A-IFRS.

As a result, the VCAA has taken the following steps in managing the transition to A-IFRS and has achieved the following scheduled milestones:

- established a steering committee to oversee the transition to and implementation of the A-IFRS
- established an A-IFRS project team to review the new accounting standards to identify key issues and the likely impacts resulting from the adoption of A-IFRS and any relevant Financial Reporting Directions as issued by the Minister for Finance
- participated in an education and training process to raise awareness of the changes in reporting requirements and the processes to be undertaken
- initiated reconfiguration and testing of user systems and processes to meet new requirements.

This financial report has been prepared in accordance with current Australian Accounting Standards and other financial reporting requirements (Australian GAAP). Following the completion of its business impact analysis and evaluation of policy alternatives, the VCAA has concluded that there will not be a significant impact on the VCAA's financial position and financial performance following the adoption of A-IFRS.

It should be noted that the actual effects of transition to A-IFRS may differ from that disclosed due to:

- change in facts and circumstances
- ongoing work being undertaken by the A-IFRS project team
- potential amendments to A-IFRS and UIG Interpretations
- emerging accepted practice in the interpretation and application of A-IFRS and UIG Interpretations.

**ACCOUNTABLE OFFICER'S AND CHIEF FINANCE AND ACCOUNTING OFFICER'S
DECLARATION**

We certify that the attached financial statements for the Victorian Curriculum Assessment Authority have been prepared in accordance with Standing Direction 4.2 of the *Financial Management Act 1994*, applicable Financial Reporting Directions, Australian accounting standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements.


We further state that, in our opinion, the information set out in the statement of financial performance, statement of financial position, statement of cash flows and notes to and forming part of the financial statements, presents fairly the financial transactions during the year ended 30 June 2005 and financial position of the Victorian Curriculum Assessment Authority as at 30 June 2005.

We are not aware of any circumstances which would render any particulars included in the financial statements to be misleading or inaccurate.

Stuart Hamilton
Chair



John Firth
Acting Chief Executive Officer



Jennifer Jones
Chief Finance Officer



Date: 16th September 2005



AUDITOR GENERAL
VICTORIA

INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT

Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority

To the Members of the Parliament of Victoria and Members of the Board of the Authority

Matters Relating to the Electronic Presentation of the Audited Financial Report

This audit report for the financial year ended 30 June 2005 relates to the financial report of Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority included on its web site. The Members of the Board of Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority are responsible for the integrity of the web site. I have not been engaged to report on the integrity of the web site. The audit report refers only to the statements named below. An opinion is not provided on any other information which may have been hyperlinked to or from these statements. If users of this report are concerned with the inherent risks arising from electronic data communications they are advised to refer to the hard copy of the audited financial report to confirm the information included in the audited financial report presented on this web site.

Scope

The Financial Report

The accompanying financial report for the year ended 30 June 2005 of Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority consists of the statement of financial performance, statement of financial position, statement of cash flows, notes to and forming part of the financial report, and the supporting declaration.

Members' Responsibility

The Members of the Board of Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority are responsible for:

- the preparation and presentation of the financial report and the information it contains, including accounting policies and accounting estimates
- the maintenance of adequate accounting records and internal controls that are designed to record its transactions and affairs, and prevent and detect fraud and errors.

Audit Approach

As required by the *Audit Act 1994*, an independent audit has been carried out in order to express an opinion on the financial report. The audit has been conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards to provide reasonable assurance as to whether the financial report is free of material misstatement.

The audit procedures included:

- examining information on a test basis to provide evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial report
- assessing the appropriateness of the accounting policies and disclosures used, and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by the members
- obtaining written confirmation regarding the material representations made in conjunction with the audit
- reviewing the overall presentation of information in the financial report.



AUDITOR GENERAL
VICTORIA

Independent Audit Report (continued)

These procedures have been undertaken to form an opinion as to whether the financial report is presented in all material respects fairly in accordance with Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements in Australia, and the financial reporting requirements of the *Financial Management Act 1994*, so as to present a view which is consistent with my understanding of the Authority's financial position, and its financial performance and cash flows.

The audit opinion expressed in this report has been formed on the above basis.


Independence

The Auditor-General's independence is established by the *Constitution Act 1975*. The Auditor-General is not subject to direction by any person about the way in which his powers are to be exercised. The Auditor-General and his staff and delegates comply with all applicable independence requirements of the Australian accounting profession.

Audit Opinion

In my opinion, the financial report presents fairly in accordance with applicable Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements in Australia, and the financial reporting requirements of the *Financial Management Act 1994*, the financial position of Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority as at 30 June 2005 and its financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended.

MELBOURNE
16 September 2005



JW CAMERON
Auditor-General

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APPENDIX 1

2004–05 VCE Study Review committees

VCE Accounting Review Committee

Mr Daryl Bennett	Marcellin College
Mr Greg Gould	Methodist Ladies' College
Mr Tim Habben	Melbourne Grammar School
Mr Keith King	Diamond Valley College
Ms Vicki Baron	Haileybury College
Ms Sasha Mildenhall	Taylors Lakes Secondary College
Ms Anne Mirtschin	Hawkesdale College
Ms Meri Rametta	Victorian Commercial Teachers' Association
Mr Anthony Simmons	Penleigh and Essendon Grammar School
Mr Stan Traianedes	Hall Chadwick
Ms Helen Yee	Deakin University
Mr Simon Phelan	Elizabeth Murdoch College

VCE Dance Review Committee

Ms Meredith Blackburn	Victorian College of the Arts
Ms Karen Crump	Traralgon Secondary College
Mr Luke Delecca	Haileybury College
Ms Faye Johnson Ross	Private provider
Ms Cheryl Kaloger	Private provider
Ms Adrienne Leitch	Private provider
Ms Michelle Ludecke	Sacred Heart Girls' College
Ms Pauline Ryan	Private provider

VCE Design and Technology Review Committee

Mr Chris Arnold	Kangan Batman TAFE
Ms Linda Brown	Melbourne Girls' College
Ms Carol Busetti	Private provider
Mr David Cowley	Geelong Grammar School

Mr Selby Coxon Monash University
 Ms Debra Doyle Galen College
 Mr Aldo Marotta University High School
 Mr Julian Pratt RMIT University
 Ms Lyn Schroeder Bendigo Senior
 Secondary College
 Mr Greg Wallis Western Heights College
 Ms Dawn Zillman Kingswood College

Mr Adrian Janson Melbourne High School
 Ms Charmaine Taylor Sunbury Downs
 Secondary College
 Mr Robert Timmer- Brighton Secondary
 Arends College
 Dr John Turner Presbyterian Ladies'
 College
 Ms Margaret Uren Ferntree Gully College
 Ms Judy Zuccon Aquinas College

VCE Drama Review Committee

Ms Kate Donelan The University of
 Melbourne
 Mr Peter Elliott Pascoe Vale Girls
 Secondary College
 Mr Eli Erez Bialik College
 Mr Claude Ferrarese Our Lady of Mercy
 College
 Ms Maureen Hartley La Mama Theatre
 Mr Philip Norman The Arts Centre
 Ms Marita Ruda Vermont Secondary
 College

VCE Systems and Technology Review Committee

Ms Kate Baulch Thinking It Over
 Consultancy
 Mr Dean Cahill Werribee Secondary
 College
 Mr Michael Caspar Mount Erin Secondary
 College
 Mr Bruce Eager Upwey High School
 Mr Kevin Farley Bendigo Senior
 Secondary College
 Mr Peter Middleton Wantirna College
 Mr Shane Murphy Kardinia International
 College
 Mr Allan Ross Nagle College
 Mr George Spiridis St Bede's College
 Mr Kevin Van Leeuwen Chisholm Institute
 Mr Arnis Vejins Holden Limited
 Mr Paul Wellington Monash University

VCE English/ESL Review Committee

Ms Annette Whiter Victorian Qualifications
 Authority
 Mr Ross Huggard Cranbourne Secondary
 College
 Ms Lynn Smailes Gladstone Park
 Secondary College
 Mr Bradley Wells Scotch College
 Mr Paul Martin Aquinas College
 Dr Catherine Beavis Deakin University
 Ms Dee Rackham Box Hill College of TAFE
 Mrs Elizabeth Buckley Taylors College
 Ms Rosemary Catholic Education
 McLoughlin Office
 Ms Marion Meiers ACER

VCE Theatre Studies Review Committee

Mr Mark Bailey Swinburne Senior
 Secondary College
 Ms Fiona Bennet Sandringham College
 Ms Bronwyn Bye Caulfield Grammar
 School
 Mr Rob Galbraith Firbank Grammar School
 Ms Robyn Kay Loreto Mandeville Hall
 Mr Richard Sallis The University of
 Melbourne
 Ms Sue Tweg Monash University
 Ms Meg Upton Malthouse Theatre

VCE Information Technology Review Committee

Mr John Bell Monash University
 Ms Felicia Brown Microsoft
 Ms Antonia Caridi Ave Maria College
 Mr Bruce Copland Department of
 Infrastructure
 Ms Claudia Graham Overnewton Anglican
 Community College

APPENDIX 2

Other statutory reporting requirements

Environmental management strategy

In 2004–05, the VCAA established an Environmental Management Strategy (EMS) Committee and adopted a number of EMS activities that promoted recycling, increased staff awareness and reduced waste within the organisation.

The VCAA continued to promote sustainable practices by adopting a waste-disposal system that reduced the quantity of waste sent to landfill by 50 per cent.

Energy usage

Period	No. of days	Total kWh	Max. demand kW	Contract demand kW	Green energy use kW
30 June 2004 – 31 July 2004	31	18,749.70	53.70	85.50	937.50
31 July 2004 – 31 August 2004	31	18,161.70	53.70	85.50	908.10
31 August 2004 – 30 September 2004	30	17,616.00	55.80	85.50	880.80
30 September 2004 – 31 October 2004	31	18,641.70	69.30	85.50	932.10
31 October 2004 – 30 November 2004	30	19,137.90	74.40	85.50	957.00
30 November 2004 – 31 December 2004	31	18,634.20	77.05	85.50	931.80
31 December 2004 – 31 January 2005	31	18,266.40	84.15	85.50	913.20
31 January 2005 – 28 February 2005	28	17,094.00	78.47	85.50	854.70
28 February 2005 – 31 March 2005	31	18,132.60	85.44	85.50	906.60
31 March 2005 – 30 April 2005	30	17,341.20	71.66	85.50	867.00
30 April 2005 – 31 May 2005	31	17,967.90	63.00	85.50	1,796.70
June estimate using May figures		17,967.90			1,796.70
Total		217,711.20			12,682.20

Consultancies and major contracts

Consultancies in excess of \$100,000

Consultant	Particulars	Amount paid	Future commitments as at 30 June 2005
ISM Consulting Asia Pacific Pty Ltd	Provision of information technology architectural services to support the proposed Assessment Processing System Redevelopment project	\$143,500	\$16,000

Consultancies less than \$100,000

Number engaged	5
Total cost	\$174,810

Competitive neutrality

In a report to the Department of Education & Training on the National Competition policy, the VCAA was identified as not subject to the Competition Code. The report found that the VCAA had little, if any, potential to be involved in anti-competitive practices. Although the VCAA's activities are mainly regulatory in nature, the VCAA is empowered to charge fees for the services it provides under section 7(1)(b) of the *Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority Act 2000*.

Building Act 1993

The building occupied by the VCAA at 41 St Andrews Place is a government-owned building. A formal occupancy arrangement with the Department of Education & Training is current. The VCAA is committed to providing a safe and secure building for staff and visitors and full compliance with the provisions of the *Building Act 1993*.

The VCAA extended the lease of its Camberwell site to October 2006. The VCAA has occupation of a single warehouse facility to cater for the organisation's storage needs.

Public accountability and compliance

Under the accrual output-based appropriation, budgeting, performance monitoring and reporting model introduced by the Government in the 1998–99 budget, accountability for departments and government agencies commenced with the publication of budget portfolio financial statements in the annual Budget Paper No. 3 and ended with the publication of actual results in respective annual reports.

The VCAA, in conjunction with the Department of Education & Training, reported its performance against outputs on a quarterly basis and its financial aggregates on a monthly basis to the Department of Treasury and Finance.

Industrial disputes and time lost due to injury

Industrial disputes

There were no staff hours lost due to industrial disputes during the financial year.

Industrial accidents

There were no staff hours lost due to industrial accidents during the reporting period.

APPENDIX 3

Workforce statistics

Staff in the VCAA on pay by sex and classification, June 2004–05

Classification	2004			2005		
	Males	Females	Total	Males	Females	Total
EO2	1.0	–	1.0	1.0	–	1.0
EO3	3.0	1.0	4.0	3.0	1.0	4.0
VPSG6	7.0	9.0	16.0	10.4	9.0	19.4
VPSG5	17.0	29.8	46.8	23.0	36.2	59.2
VPSG4	7.0	13.1	20.1	6.0	13.9	19.9
VPSG3	13.6	26.6	40.2	14.8	28.7	43.5
VPSG2	13.0	20.8	33.8	10.0	19.4	29.4
Graduate		–	–	1.0	–	1.0
Total	61.6	100.3	161.9	69.2	108.2	177.4

Occupational health and safety objectives

The VCAA's occupational health and safety (OHS) objectives can be listed as follows:

- to prevent injury and illness from occurring in the workplace
- to maintain the good health and wellbeing of all staff
- to comply with all statutory requirements of Acts and Regulations, codes of practice and standards.

To fulfil these objectives the VCAA:

- consulted with employees on health, safety and wellbeing issues directly as well as through their health and safety representatives and employee representative on issues affecting them
- implemented issues resolution procedures, including the Workplace Consultative Committee processes
- developed and applied OHS policies, procedures and practices in accordance with statutory requirements and accepted health and safety standards
- integrated OHS compliance, awareness and prevention strategies into the VCAA workplace policies and procedures

- provided instruction, information and training for two VCAA staff members to enable them to perform their OHS roles and responsibilities
- implemented effective reporting, recording and investigation procedures for workplace injuries, illnesses and incidents
- reduced health, safety and wellbeing risks through a documented process of hazard identification, risk assessment and control.

Major initiatives in 2004–05 were as follows:

- OHS representatives continued to meet regularly with the Workplace Consultative Committee to ensure that OHS requirements were met for all staff
- two VCAA staff members attended Victorian Employers' Chamber of Commerce and Industry OHS training courses
- regular OHS inspections of the workplace were conducted to identify any potential problems or issues
- OHS information was included on the VCAA's Intranet, including details of OHS representatives on the VCAA Workplace Consultative Committee, dates of meetings and minutes of previous meetings, and links to other useful OHS information
- free influenza immunisation shots were offered to all staff

- a review of qualified first aid officers was conducted and preparations put in place to ensure adequate support of qualified staff
- a staff well-being survey was distributed to all staff for ideas and suggestions and as a result an allocated space has been set aside for staff
- training was offered to VCAA fire wardens.

OHS performance targets

OHS performance met or exceeded its targets in 2004–05. During the reporting period the VCAA received no standard claims and no Improvement and Prohibition Notices were issued to the VCAA. The target for 2005–06 is to reasonably maintain this standard.

Workplace Consultative Committee

The Workplace Consultative Committee was established in 2004 as a forum to identify and resolve staff-related issues including accommodation, OHS, professional development and training, planned changes to structures and programs and human resource-related activities.

The Committee meets monthly to develop and recommend policies and practices to promote a healthy and mutually supportive work culture and environment within the organisation, provide a consultation forum for staff and management and act in an advisory capacity to executive management.

The VCAA participated in the Department of Education & Training-wide survey 'Your Job, Your Say'.

As a result of recent surveys, the VCAA Workplace Consultative Committee has established subcommittees to examine ways in which staff well-being can be improved, individual and group achievements recognised, and communication within the organisation improved.

Merit training

The Merit Protection Board provided training in merit-based selection for VCAA staff.

Twenty-one VCAA staff completed the accreditation training during the reporting period. When added to the 78 members of staff who have already received training, this makes a total number of 99 members of staff now fully trained in merit-based selection procedures.

A merit protection-accredited person is required to be included on all selection panels and in many other situations where personnel decisions are made.

Professional development and training

VCAA staff participated in professional and training activities as part of the individual learning and development planning process.

The following are examples of courses made available to staff during the reporting period:

- activity-based costing
- asset managers workshop
- certificate course for OHS representatives
- conflict management skills for women
- Department of Education & Training business writing (Introduction and Advanced)
- EDMS and Objective
- Ethical Purchasing Policy Buyers workshop
- Gaining the Edge
- Giving and Receiving Constructive Feedback
- Government Procurement strategy
- International Financial Reporting Standards
- Making an Impression: Positive Presentation Skills
- Microsoft Office applications and other computing courses
- Merit Protection program
- Negotiating Skills
- Preparing for Change in the Public Sector
- Prince 2 Practitioner
- Proactive Performance Management
- Procurement and Project Management
- Public Sector Human Resources Convention

APPENDIX 4

Freedom of Information

Publication requirements

The information required to be published pursuant to section 7 of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (FOI Act) follows, except for information required by that section, but which is published elsewhere in this report.

Queries about the availability of and charges for other material prepared under Part II of the FOI Act should be directed to the following address:

Manager, Corporate Governance
VCAA
41 St Andrews Place
East Melbourne 3002
Telephone (03) 9651 4311
or email <foi.vcaa@edumail.vic.gov.au>.

Categories of documents

The following are the general categories of documents maintained by the VCAA:

- correspondence, administrative and policy documents
- paper records are maintained on registered files
- minutes, agendas and papers.

Paper records of agendas, agenda papers and confirmed minutes of meetings are maintained in registered files. An index of outcomes is also maintained.

Personnel documents

Paper records on remuneration and appointments to the VCAA are maintained in registered files.

Accounting records

Accounting records are maintained on a computerised accounting system. The records deal with general ledger entries, accounts payable, payroll and other accounting functions. Paper records are also kept as registered files.

Student records

VCE and VCAL enrolment records, school assessment grades and examination grades for current and past students of Victorian Year 11 and 12 courses are maintained on the VCE Administrative Software System, a web-based system which provides direct communication between the VCAA and VCE and VCAL provider schools.

Other categories of documents maintained internally include records associated with curriculum and examinations. Some records will be protected from public release on the grounds of personal privacy, others by the restrictions placed on examination materials. Previous examination papers are published on its website.

Information provided by the VCAA about its operations covers VCE and VCAL areas of study, school assessment, examinations, curriculum and standards for P–10, the Victorian Essential Learnings Standards, the AIM, GAT and other more general information.

The VCAA sends the *VCAA Bulletin* to schools regularly and copies are available from the VCAA website. The VCAA also runs a telephone information service, produces CD-ROMs and videos, and responds to letters, emails and telephone calls from students, parents and teachers, as well as publishing previous VCE examination papers on its website.

Freedom of Information arrangements

Access to records

Access to some records held by the VCAA, such as VCE students wishing to obtain replacement statements and/or certificates, can be organised via established routine procedures. The VCAA's Information Services staff can provide initial

information to people regarding such protocols. Applicants seeking access to documents that are not the subject of VCAA access procedures should address their request to the authorised officer.

Requesting access under the FOI Act

Applicants are required under the FOI Act to submit applications requesting access to documents in writing in a way that clearly describes the document(s) sought. The request should specify that the application is made under the FOI Act and should not form part of a letter on another subject. The applicant should provide the following information:

- name
- address
- telephone number (where applicant can be contacted during business hours)
- details of document(s) requested
- the form of access required, that is copies of documents, inspection of files or other.

Fees

As from 1 July 2005 an application fee of \$21.00 will be required unless evidence of hardship is provided. Applicants are advised that other charges may be made in respect of requests for access to documents.

Appeals

Applicants may appeal against a decision made in response to requests for access to documents, for the amendments of records or against the cost levied for allowing access to documents. Information about the appropriate avenue of appeal will be conveyed to the applicant in the letter advising of the initial decision. Applicants are

advised to consult Part VI of the FOI Act for further information about appeal rights.

Correction of personal information

A request for correction or amendment of personal information in a document held by the agency must be made in writing. It should specify particulars of how and why the person making the request believes the information to be incorrect, incomplete, misleading or out-of-date. It should also specify the amendments they wish to make.

Summary for year ended 30 June 2005

In 2004–05, four requests were made under the FOI Act.

One request was granted in full. Partial access was granted to two requests, however with one of these requests documents could not be found or had been lost.

Where full access to documents was not granted, access was denied on the grounds that the material was exempt under section 30(1)(a) and section 34(4)(c) of the FOI Act in that they would disclose matters that were communicated in the course of and for the purposes of deliberative functions of the VCAA and the disclosure of which would be contrary to the public interest; and the purposes for which the documents were prepared had not been completed. Access to some of the documents was also denied on the grounds that the information requested was available through public access for a prescribed fee.

A fourth request was not completed within the reporting period.

APPENDIX 5

Additional information

Consistent with the requirements of the *Financial Management Act 1994*, the VCAA has prepared material on the following topics, details of which, if not published in the annual report, are available to the public on request.

Information retained by the VCAA includes details, where applicable, of:

- changes in prices, fees, charges, rates and levies
- major research and development activities
- major promotional, public relations and marketing activities
- shares held by senior officers as nominees or held beneficially in a statutory authority or subsidiary
- declaration of pecuniary interests
- OHS assessments and measures
- industrial relations issues

- major committees sponsored by the VCAA
- major external reviews carried out on the VCAA
- details of overseas visits undertaken, including a summary of the objectives and outcomes of each visit
- details of publications produced by the entity about the activities of the entity and where the publications can be obtained.

Enquiries regarding details of this information should be addressed to the following officer:

Manager, Corporate Governance
VCAA
41 St Andrews Place
East Melbourne 3002
Telephone (03) 9651 4311
Email <vcaa@edumail.vic.gov.au>

APPENDIX 6

Whistleblowers Protection Act 2001

The VCAA Board has nominated the Department of Education & Training as its agent to accept and investigate any disclosures made under the *Whistleblowers Protection Act 2001* concerning Board members and/or employees of the VCAA. The *Whistleblowers Protection Act 2001* Department of Education & Training Guidelines have been adopted as the appropriate procedures for managing disclosures made under the Act concerning Board members and/or employees of the VCAA.

The Department had not received any disclosures made under the Act in relation to the VCAA Board or VCAA employees, nor had the Ombudsman referred any disclosures made under the Act to the Department for investigation during 2004–05.

Department of Education & Training Guidelines

1 Objects of the Act

The *Whistleblowers Protection Act 2001* (the Act) commenced operation on 1 January 2002.

The purpose of the Act is to encourage and facilitate the making of disclosures of improper conduct by public officers and public bodies.

The Act provides protection to whistleblowers who make disclosures in accordance with the Act, and establishes a system for the matters disclosed to be investigated and rectifying action to be taken.

2 Statement of support to whistleblowers

The Department is committed to the aims and objectives of the Act. It does not tolerate improper conduct by its employees nor the taking of reprisals against those who come forward to disclose such conduct.

The Department recognises the value of transparency and accountability in its administrative and management practices, and supports the making of disclosures that reveal

corrupt conduct, conduct involving a substantial mismanagement of public resources, or conduct involving a substantial risk to public health and safety or the environment.

The Department will take all reasonable steps to protect people who make such disclosures from any detrimental action in reprisal for making the disclosure. It will also ensure natural justice to the person who is the subject of the disclosure.

3 Purpose of these procedures

These procedures establish a system for reporting disclosures of improper conduct or detrimental action by Department employees. The system enables such disclosures to be made to one of the protected disclosure officers or the protected disclosure coordinator. Disclosures may be made by employees or by members of the public.

These procedures complement the Department's established procedures for addressing complaints and are for use only where appropriate.

Employees and members of the general public should continue to raise issues in accordance with the consultative and complaint resolution procedures already in place unless the complaint meets the criteria specified in the Act to be considered a protected disclosure.

4 Definitions of key terms

4.1 A protected disclosure

For the purpose of the Act, a protected disclosure is a complaint, report or allegation of improper conduct or detrimental action, concerning matters which come under the Act, and is made in accordance with Part 2 of the Act.

A protected disclosure may also be referred to as a public interest disclosure where the disclosure shows or tends to show that the public officer to whom the disclosure relates:

- has engaged, is engaging or intends to engage in improper conduct in his or her capacity as a public officer

- has taken, is taking, or proposes to take, detrimental action in reprisal for the making of the protected disclosure.

4.2 Improper conduct

A disclosure may be made about improper conduct by a public body or public official. Improper conduct means conduct that is corrupt, a substantial mismanagement of public resources, or conduct involving substantial risk to public health or safety or to the environment. The conduct must be serious enough to constitute, if proved, a criminal offence or reasonable grounds for dismissal.

Examples

- To avoid closure of a town's only industry, an environmental health officer ignores or conceals evidence of illegal dumping of waste.
- An agricultural officer delays or declines imposing quarantine to allow a financially distressed farmer to sell diseased stock.
- A building inspector tolerates poor practices and structural defects in the work of a leading local builder.

4.3 Corrupt conduct

Corrupt conduct means:

- conduct of any person (whether or not a public official) that adversely affects the honest performance of a public officer's or public body's functions
- the performance of a public officer's functions dishonestly or with inappropriate partiality
- conduct of a public officer, former public officer or a public body that amounts to a breach of public trust
- conduct by a public officer, former public officer or a public body that amounts to the misuse of information or material acquired in the course of the performance of their official functions
- a conspiracy or attempt to engage in the above conduct.

Examples

- A public officer takes a bribe or receives a payment other than his or her wages or salary in exchange for the discharge of a public duty.
- A public officer favours unmeritorious applications for jobs or permits by friends and relatives.

- A public officer sells confidential information.

4.4 Detrimental action

The Act makes it an offence for a person to take detrimental action against a person in reprisal for a protected disclosure. Detrimental action includes:

- action causing injury, loss or damage
- intimidation or harassment
- discrimination, disadvantage or adverse treatment in relation to a person's employment, career, profession, trade or business, including the taking of disciplinary action.

Examples

- A public body refuses a deserved promotion of a person who makes a disclosure.
- A public body demotes, transfers, isolates in the workplace or changes the duties of a whistleblower due to the making of a disclosure.
- A person threatens, abuses or carries out other forms of harassment directly or indirectly against the whistleblower, his or her family or friends.
- A public body discriminates against the whistleblower or his or her family and associates in subsequent applications for jobs, permits or tenders.

5 The reporting system

5.1 Contact persons within the Department

Disclosures of improper conduct or detrimental action by Department employees may be made in the first instance to a protected disclosure officer.

All correspondence, telephone calls and emails from internal or external whistleblowers will be referred to the protected disclosure coordinator.

Contact details are provided on page 91.

5.2 Alternative contact persons

Disclosures about improper conduct or detrimental action by Department employees may also be made directly to the Ombudsman.

Disclosures about improper conduct or detrimental action by persons who are not Department employees should be made as follows:

Person who is the subject of the disclosure	Person/body to whom the disclosure must be made
Employee of a public body other than the Department of Education & Training	That public body or the Ombudsman
Member of Parliament (Legislative Assembly)	Speaker of the Legislative Assembly
Member of Parliament (Legislative Council)	President of the Legislative Council
Councillor (local government)	The Ombudsman
Chief Commissioner of Police	The Ombudsman or Deputy Ombudsman
Member of the police force	The Ombudsman, Deputy Ombudsman or Chief Commissioner of Police

6 Roles and responsibilities

6.1 Employees

Employees are encouraged to report known or suspected incidences of improper conduct, or detrimental action in accordance with these procedures.

All employees of the Department have an important role to play in supporting those who have made a legitimate disclosure. They must refrain from any activity that is, or could be perceived to be, victimisation or harassment of a person who makes a disclosure. Furthermore, they should protect and maintain the confidentiality of a person they know or suspect to have made a disclosure.

6.2 Protected disclosure officers

Protected disclosure officers will:

- be a contact point for general advice about the operation of the Act for any person wishing to make a disclosure about improper conduct or detrimental action
- make arrangements for a disclosure to be made privately and discreetly and, if necessary, away from the workplace
- receive any disclosure made orally or in writing (from internal and external whistleblowers)
- commit to writing any disclosure made orally
- impartially assess the allegation and determine whether it is a disclosure made in accordance with Part 2 of the Act (that is, a protected disclosure)

- take all necessary steps to ensure the identity of the whistleblower and the identity of the person who is the subject of the disclosure are kept confidential
- forward all disclosures and supporting evidence to the protected disclosure coordinator.

6.3 Protected disclosure coordinator

The protected disclosure coordinator has a central clearing-house role in the internal reporting system. He or she will:

- receive all disclosures forwarded from the protected disclosure officers
- impartially assess each disclosure to determine whether it is a protected disclosure
- refer all protected disclosures to the Ombudsman
- be responsible for carrying out, or appointing an investigator to carry out, an investigation referred to the Department by the Ombudsman
- be responsible for overseeing and coordinating an investigation where an investigator has been appointed
- appoint a welfare manager to support the whistleblower and to protect him or her from any reprisals
- advise the whistleblower of the progress of an investigation into the disclosed matter
- establish and manage a confidential filing system
- collate and publish statistics on disclosures made
- take all necessary steps to ensure the identity of the whistleblower and the identity of the person who is the subject of the disclosure are kept confidential
- liaise with the Secretary of the Department.

6.4 Investigator

The investigator will be responsible for carrying out an internal investigation into a disclosure where the Ombudsman has referred a matter to the Department. An investigator may be a person from within the Department or a consultant engaged for that purpose.

6.5 Welfare manager

The welfare manager is responsible for looking after the general welfare of the whistleblower.

A welfare manager may be a person from within the Department or a consultant engaged for that purpose.

The welfare manager will:

- examine the immediate welfare and protection needs of a whistleblower who has made a disclosure and seek to foster a supportive work environment
- advise the whistleblower of the legislative and administrative protections available to him or her
- listen and respond to any concerns of harassment, intimidation or victimisation in reprisal for making disclosure
- ensure the expectations of the whistleblower are realistic.

7 Confidentiality

The Department will take all reasonable steps to protect the identity of the whistleblower. Maintaining confidentiality is crucial in ensuring reprisals are not made against a whistleblower.

The Act requires any person who receives information due to the handling or investigation of a protected disclosure, not to disclose that information except in certain limited circumstances. Disclosure of information in the Act constitutes an offence that is punishable by a maximum fine of 60 penalty units (\$6000) or six months imprisonment or both.

The circumstances in which a person may disclose information obtained about a protected disclosure include:

- where exercising the functions of the public body under the Act
- when making a report or recommendation under the Act
- when publishing statistics in the annual report of a public body
- in criminal proceedings for certain offences in the Act.

However, the Act prohibits the inclusion of particulars in any report or recommendation that are likely to lead to the identification of the whistleblower. The Act also prohibits the identification of the person who is the subject of the disclosure in any particulars included in an annual report.

The Department will ensure all files, whether paper or electronic, are kept in a secure room and can only be accessed by the protected disclosure coordinator, protected disclosure officer, the investigator or welfare manager (in relation to welfare matters). All printed material will be kept in files that are clearly marked as a Whistleblower Protection Act matter, and warn of the criminal penalties that apply to any unauthorised divulging of information concerning a protected disclosure. All electronic files will be produced and stored on a stand-alone computer and be given password protection. Backup files will be kept on disk. All materials relevant to an investigation, such as tapes from interviews, will also be stored securely with the whistleblower files.

The Department will not email documents relevant to a whistleblower matter and will ensure all telephone calls and meetings are conducted in private.

8 Collating and publishing statistics

The protected disclosure coordinator will establish a secure register to record the information required to be published in the Department's annual report, and to generally keep account of the status of whistleblower disclosures. The register will be confidential and will not record any information that may identify the whistleblower.

9 Receiving and assessing disclosures

The Department may receive a range of complaints and grievances from staff and members of the public. Only some of these matters will be considered to be protected disclosures and therefore qualify for protection and investigation under the Act.

9.1 Has the disclosure been made in accordance with Part 2 of the Act?

Where a disclosure has been received by the protected disclosure officer he or she will assess whether the disclosure has been made in accordance with Part 2 of the Act and is, therefore, a protected disclosure.

9.1.1 Has the disclosure been made to the appropriate person?

For the disclosure to be responded to by the Department it must concern an employee of the Department. If the disclosure concerns an employee, officer or member of another public body, the person who has made the disclosure must be advised of the correct person or body to whom the disclosure should be directed. (See the table in 5.2.) If the disclosure has been made anonymously, it should be referred to the Ombudsman.

9.1.2 Does the disclosure contain the essential elements of a protected disclosure?

To be a protected disclosure, a disclosure must satisfy the following criteria:

- the disclosure was made by a natural person (that is, an individual person rather than a corporation)

- the disclosure relates to conduct of a public body or public officer acting in their official capacity
- the alleged conduct is improper conduct or detrimental action taken against a person in reprisal for making a protected disclosure
- the person making a disclosure has reasonable grounds for believing the alleged conduct has occurred.

Where a disclosure is assessed to be a protected disclosure, it is referred to the protected disclosure coordinator.

Where a disclosure is assessed not to be a protected disclosure, the matter does not need to be dealt with under the Act. The protected disclosure officer will decide how the matter should be resolved, in consultation with the protected disclosure coordinator. The following table indicates the alternative processes available within the Department for dealing with complaints.

Problem	Initial contact	Other options	Workplace policy
Parent's concern or complaint of a general nature (may concern students, teachers, educational matters or an action taken by the school or school council)	Principal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional Director 	Complaints, Unsatisfactory Performance and Serious Misconduct <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal Class Handbook • Teacher Class Handbook • SSO Handbook
Workplace conflict or grievance	Principal or Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Department of Education & Training's Complaints and Investigations Unit • Merit Protection Boards 	Complaints, Unsatisfactory Performance and Serious Misconduct <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal Class Handbook • Teacher Class Handbook • SSO Handbook Personal Grievances • Employment Conditions Guidelines for VPS Staff
Equal Opportunity concern	Principal or Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Department of Education & Training's Complaints and Investigations Unit • the Department of Education & Training's Diversity and Equity Unit • Merit Protection Boards • Equal Opportunity Commission 	Merit and Equity Policy
Occupational Health and Safety issue	Principal or Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workplace OHS representative 	OHS Guidelines
Ethical or other misconduct concern	Principal or Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Department of Education & Training's Complaints and Investigations Unit • Office of Public Employment 	VPS Code of Conduct
Complaints regarding administrative action by government bodies	The public body concerned	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Ombudsman 	<i>Ombudsman Act 1973</i>
Improper conduct or detrimental conduct	DE&T protected disclosure officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Department of Education & Training's protected disclosure coordinator • The Ombudsman 	Whistleblower Protection Act Guidelines

9.2 Is the disclosure a protected disclosure?

Where a disclosure has been assessed as a protected disclosure by the protected disclosure officer and consequently referred to the protected disclosure coordinator, the coordinator will confirm whether the disclosure amounts to a protected disclosure. This assessment will be made within 45 days of the initial receipt of the disclosure by the protected disclosure officer.

Where the protected disclosure coordinator concludes that the disclosure amounts to a protected disclosure, he or she will:

- notify the person who made the disclosure of that conclusion
- refer the disclosure to the Ombudsman for formal determination as to whether it is indeed a protected disclosure.

Where the protected disclosure coordinator concludes that the disclosure is not a protected disclosure, he or she will:

- notify the person who made the disclosure of that conclusion
- advise that person that he or she may request the Department to refer the disclosure to the Ombudsman for a formal determination as to whether the disclosure is a protected disclosure, and that this request must be made within 28 days of the notification.

In either case, the protected disclosure coordinator will ensure that the notification and the referral are made within 14 days of the conclusion being reached.

10 Investigations

10.1 Introduction

Where the Ombudsman refers a protected disclosure to the Department for investigation, the protected disclosure coordinator will appoint an investigator to carry out the investigation.

The objectives of an investigation will be:

- to collate information relating to the allegation as quickly as possible. This may involve taking steps to protect or preserve documents, materials and equipment
- to consider the information collected and to draw conclusions objectively and impartially

- to maintain procedural fairness in the treatment of witnesses and the person who is the subject of the disclosure
- to make recommendations arising from the conclusions drawn concerning remedial or other appropriate action.

10.2 Terms of reference

Before commencing an investigation, the protected disclosure coordinator will draw up terms of reference and obtain authorisation for those terms from the Secretary of the Department. The terms of reference will set a date by which the investigation report is to be concluded, and will describe the resources available to the investigator to complete the investigation within the time set. The protected disclosure coordinator may approve, if reasonable, an extension of time requested by the investigator. The terms of reference will require the investigator to make regular reports to the protected disclosure coordinator who, in turn, is to keep the Ombudsman informed of general progress.

10.3 Investigation plan

The investigator will prepare an investigation plan for approval by the protected disclosure coordinator. The plan will list the issues to be substantiated and describe the avenue of inquiry. It will address the following issues:

- What is being alleged?
- What are the possible findings or offences?
- What are the facts in issue?
- How is the inquiry to be conducted?
- What resources are required?

At the commencement of the investigation, the whistleblower should be:

- notified by the investigator that he or she has been appointed to conduct the investigation
- asked to clarify any matters and provide any additional material he or she might have.

The investigator will be sensitive to the whistleblower's possible fear of reprisals and will be aware of the statutory protections provided to the whistleblower.

10.4 Natural justice

The principles of natural justice will be followed in any investigation of a protected disclosure.

The principles of natural justice concern procedural fairness and ensure a fair decision is reached by an objective decision maker. Maintaining procedural fairness protects the rights of individuals and enhances public confidence in the process.

DE&T will have regard to the following issues in ensuring procedural fairness:

- the person who is the subject of the disclosure is entitled to know the allegations made against him or her and must be given the right to respond (this does not mean the person must be advised of the allegation as soon as the disclosure is received or the investigation has commenced)
- if the investigator is contemplating making a report adverse to the interests of any person, that person should be given the opportunity to put forward further material that may influence the outcome of the report and that person's defence should be fairly set out in the report
- all relevant parties to a matter should be heard and all submissions should be considered
- a decision should not be made until all reasonable inquiries have been made
- the investigator or any decision maker should not have a personal or direct interest in the matter being investigated
- all proceedings must be carried out fairly and without bias and care taken to exclude perceived bias from the process
- the investigator must be impartial in assessing the credibility of the whistleblower and any witnesses and, where appropriate, conclusions as to credibility should be included in the investigation report.

10.5 Conduct of the investigation

The investigator will make contemporaneous notes of all discussions and telephone calls, and all interviews with witnesses will be taped. All information gathered in an investigation will be stored securely. Interviews will be conducted in private and the investigator will take all reasonable steps to protect the identity of the whistleblower.

Where disclosure of the identity of the whistleblower cannot be avoided, due to the nature of the allegations, the investigator will warn the whistleblower and his or her welfare manager of this probability.

It is in the discretion of the investigator to allow any witness to have legal or other representation or support during an interview. If a witness has a special need for legal representation or support, permission should be granted.

10.6 Referral of an investigation to the Ombudsman

The protected disclosure coordinator will make a decision regarding the referral of an investigation to the Ombudsman where, on the advice of the investigator:

- the investigation is being obstructed by, for example, the non-cooperation of key witnesses
- the investigation has revealed conduct that may constitute a criminal offence.

10.7 Reporting requirements

The protected disclosure coordinator will ensure the whistleblower is kept regularly informed concerning the handling of a protected disclosure and an investigation.

The protected disclosure coordinator will report to the Ombudsman about the progress of an investigation.

Where the Ombudsman or the whistleblower requests information about the progress of an investigation, that information will be provided within 28 days of the date of the request.

11 Action taken after an investigation

11.1 Investigator's final report

At the conclusion of the investigation, the investigator will submit a written report of his or her findings to the protected disclosure coordinator. The report will contain:

- the allegation/s
- an account of all relevant information received and, if the investigator has rejected evidence as being unreliable, the reasons for this opinion being formed
- the conclusions reached and the basis for them
- any recommendations arising from the conclusions.

Where the investigator has found that the conduct disclosed by the whistleblower has occurred, recommendations made by the investigator will include:

- the steps that need to be taken by the Department to prevent the conduct from continuing or occurring in the future
- any action that should be taken by the Department to remedy any harm or loss arising from the conduct. This action may include bringing disciplinary proceedings against the person responsible for the conduct, and referring the matter to an appropriate authority for further consideration.

The report will be accompanied by:

- the transcript or other record of any oral evidence taken, including tape recordings
- all documents, statements or other exhibits received by the investigator and accepted as evidence during the course of the investigation.

11.2 Action to be taken

If the protected disclosure coordinator is satisfied that the investigation has found that the disclosed conduct has occurred, he or she will recommend to the Secretary the action that must be taken to prevent the conduct from continuing or occurring in the future. The protected disclosure coordinator may also recommend that action be taken to remedy any harm or loss arising from the conduct.

The protected disclosure coordinator will provide a written report to the relevant Minister, the Ombudsman and the whistleblower setting out the findings of the investigation and any remedial steps taken.

Where the investigation concludes that the disclosed conduct did not occur, the protected disclosure coordinator will report these findings to the Ombudsman and to the whistleblower.

12 *Managing the welfare of the whistleblower*

12.1 Commitment to protecting whistleblowers

The Department is committed to the protection of genuine whistleblowers against detrimental action taken in reprisal for the making of protected disclosures.

The protected disclosure coordinator is responsible for ensuring whistleblowers are protected from direct and indirect detrimental action, and that the culture of the workplace is supportive of protected disclosures being made.

The protected disclosure coordinator will appoint a welfare manager to all whistleblowers who have made a protected disclosure. The welfare manager will:

- examine the immediate welfare and protection needs of a whistleblower who has made a disclosure and, where the whistleblower is an employee, seek to foster a supportive work environment
- advise the whistleblower of the legislative and administrative protections available to him or her
- listen and respond to any concerns of harassment, intimidation or victimisation in reprisal for making disclosure
- keep a contemporaneous record of all aspects of the case management of the whistleblower including all contact and follow-up action
- ensure the expectations of the whistleblower are realistic.

All employees are advised that it is an offence for a person to take detrimental action in reprisal for a protected disclosure. The maximum penalty is a fine of 240 penalty units (\$24,000) or two years imprisonment or both. The taking of detrimental action in breach of this provision can also be grounds for making a disclosure under the Act and can result in an investigation.

12.2 Keeping the whistleblower informed

The protected disclosure coordinator will ensure that the whistleblower is kept informed of action taken in relation to his or her disclosure, and the timeframes that apply.

The whistleblower will be informed of the objectives of an investigation, the findings of an investigation, and the steps taken by the Department to address any improper conduct that has been found to have occurred. The whistleblower will be given reasons for decisions made by the Department in relation to a protected disclosure.

12.3 Occurrence of detrimental action

If a whistleblower reports an incident of harassment, discrimination or adverse treatment that would amount to detrimental action taken in reprisal for the making of the disclosure, the welfare manager will:

- record details of the incident
- advise the whistleblower of his or her rights under the Act
- advise the protected disclosure coordinator or Secretary of the detrimental action.

The taking of detrimental action in reprisal for the making of a disclosure can be an offence against the Act as well as grounds for making a further disclosure. Where such detrimental action is reported, the protected disclosure coordinator will assess the report as a new disclosure under the Act. Where the protected disclosure coordinator is satisfied that the disclosure is a protected disclosure, he or she will refer it to the Ombudsman. If the Ombudsman subsequently determines the matter to be a protected disclosure, the Ombudsman may investigate the matter or refer it to another body for investigation as outlined in the Act.

12.4 Whistleblowers implicated in improper conduct

Where a person who makes a disclosure is implicated in misconduct, the Department will handle the disclosure and protect the whistleblower from reprisals in accordance with the Act, the Ombudsman's guidelines and these procedures.

The Department acknowledges that the act of whistleblowing should not shield whistleblowers from the reasonable consequences flowing from any involvement in improper conduct. Section 17 of the Act specifically provides that a person's liability for his or her own conduct is not affected by the person's disclosure of that conduct under the Act. However, in some circumstances, an admission may be a mitigating factor when considering disciplinary or other action.

The Secretary will make the final decision on the advice of the protected disclosure coordinator as to whether disciplinary or other action will be taken against a whistleblower. Where disciplinary or other action relates to conduct that is the subject of the whistleblower's disclosure, the disciplinary or other action will only be taken after the disclosed matter has been appropriately dealt with.

In all cases where disciplinary or other action is being contemplated, the Secretary must be satisfied that it has been clearly demonstrated that:

- the intention to proceed with disciplinary action is not causally connected to the making of the disclosure (as opposed to the content of the disclosure or other available information)
- there are good and sufficient grounds that would fully justify action against any non-whistleblower in the same circumstances
- there are good and sufficient grounds that justify exercising any discretion to institute disciplinary or other action.

The protected disclosure coordinator will thoroughly document the process including recording the reasons why the disciplinary or other action is being taken, and the reasons why the action is not in retribution for the making of the disclosure. The protected disclosure coordinator will clearly advise the whistleblower of the proposed action to be taken, and of any mitigating factors that have been taken into account.

13 Management of the person against whom a disclosure has been made

The Department recognises that employees against whom disclosures are made must also be supported during the handling and investigation of disclosures.

The Department will take all reasonable steps to ensure the confidentiality of the person who is the subject of the disclosure during the assessment and investigation process. Where investigations do not substantiate disclosures, the fact that the investigation has been carried out, the results of the investigation, and the identity of the person who is the subject of the disclosure will remain confidential.

The protected disclosure coordinator will ensure the person who is the subject of any disclosure investigated by or on behalf of a public body is:

- informed as to the substance of the allegations
- given the opportunity to answer the allegations before a final decision is made
- informed as to the substance of any adverse comment that may be included in any report arising from the investigation
- has his or her defence set out fairly in any report.

Where the allegations in a disclosure have been investigated, and the person who is the subject of the disclosure is aware of the allegations or the fact of the investigation, the protected disclosure coordinator will formally advise the person who is the subject of the disclosure of the outcome of the investigation.

The Department will give its full support to a person who is the subject of a disclosure where the allegations contained in a disclosure are clearly wrong or unsubstantiated. If the matter has been publicly disclosed, the Secretary of the Department will consider any request by that person to issue a statement of support setting out that the allegations were clearly wrong or unsubstantiated.

14 Criminal offences

The Department will ensure officers appointed to handle protected disclosures and all other employees are aware of the following offences created by the Act.

- It is an offence for a person to take detrimental action against a person in reprisal for a protected disclosure being made. The Act provides a maximum penalty of a fine of 240 penalty units (\$24,000) or two years imprisonment or both.
- It is an offence for a person to divulge information obtained as a result of the handling or investigation of a protected disclosure without legislative authority. The Act provides a maximum penalty of 60 penalty units (\$6000) or six months imprisonment or both.
- It is an offence for a person to obstruct the Ombudsman in performing his or her responsibilities under the Act. The Act provides a maximum penalty of 240 penalty units (\$24,000) or two years imprisonment or both.
- It is an offence for a person to knowingly provide false information under the Act with the intention that it be acted on as a disclosed matter. The Act provides a maximum penalty of 240 penalty units (\$24,000) or two years imprisonment or both.

15 Review

These procedures will be reviewed annually to ensure they meet the objectives of the Act and accord with the Ombudsman's guidelines.

Contact details

Written disclosures should be marked confidential and addressed to the Protected Disclosure Officer at the appropriate regional or central Department office.

If making disclosures personally or by telephone individuals need to contact the appropriate central or regional Department office and request to speak to the Protected Disclosure Officer.

Conduct and Ethics Branch

GPO Box 4367
Melbourne Victoria 3001
Telephone: (03) 9637 2591

Protected Disclosure Coordinator

Manager, Conduct and Ethics Branch
Ground Floor, 33 St Andrews Place
GPO Box 4367
Melbourne Victoria 3001
Telephone: (03) 9637 2591

The Ombudsman Victoria

Level 22, 459 Collins Street
Melbourne Victoria 3000
Website: www.ombudsman.vic.gov.au
Email: ombudvic@ombudsman.vic.gov.au
Telephone: (03) 9613 6222
Freecall: 1800 806 314

APPENDIX 7

Privacy policy

The VCAA is committed to the privacy principles in all its data-gathering procedures.

Complaints handling procedures

Contacting the VCAA

The VCAA makes every attempt to settle queries or complaints about privacy through direct communication with the party involved. First contact is made through the Manager, Executive Services or via email <privacy.vcaa@edumail.vic.gov.au>.

If, through informal discussion, a complaint is not resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant, then a written complaint is lodged with the VCAA.

Lodging a complaint in writing

Written complaints are lodged with:

Manager, Corporate Governance
VCAA
41 St Andrews Place
East Melbourne 3002

Details provided in the complaint include:

- name and address of person lodging the complaint
- privacy concern(s)
- if applicable, how concern(s) could be remedied.

Confirmation from the VCAA

Within 14 days of receipt of a complaint, the Manager, Corporate Governance:

- confirms receipt of the complaint in writing
- informs the complainant that an investigation will be conducted and a response provided as soon as practicable, but in no more than 45 days from the day the complaint is received at the VCAA
- commences an investigation into the complaint.

Summary for the year

For the year ending 30 June 2005, no written complaints were lodged with the VCAA.

For further information regarding privacy legislation, refer to the Victorian Privacy Commissioner's website at <www.privacy.vic.gov.au>.

APPENDIX 8

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Acronyms and abbreviations

ACE	Adult community education
ACER	Australian Council for Educational Research
AIM	Achievement Improvement Monitor
APS	Assessment Processing System
CAS	Computer Algebra System
CSF	Curriculum and Standards Framework
EDMS	Electronic Document Management System
FTE	Full-time equivalent
EMS	Environmental Management Systems
ENTER	Equivalent National Tertiary Entrance Rank
FOI	Freedom of Information
GAT	General Achievement Test
ICT	Information and communications technology
LLEN	Local Learning and Employment Network
LOTE	Languages other than English
MCEETYA	Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs
OHS	Occupational health and safety
VCAA	Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority
VCAL	Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning
VCE	Victorian Certificate of Education
VET	Vocational Education and Training
VIT	Victorian Institute of Teaching
VPS	Victorian Public Service
VTAC	Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre



Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority

41 St Andrews Place

East Melbourne Victoria 3002

Telephone (03) 9651 4300

Facsimile (03) 9651 4324

Email vcaa@edumail.vic.gov.au

Website www.vcaa.vic.edu.au

Information Services

Melbourne callers (03) 9651 4544

Country callers Freecall 1800 134 197