

# Seymour College VCAL Handbook



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### **About Seymour College**

*Seymour College is an F-12 and Special Education College located in Seymour, Victoria.*



*At Seymour College, we believe everyone has the right to an effective, safe and secure learning environment where we can develop to our fullest potential. We promote high standards of behaviour and achievement by being independent, curious, passionate, reflective, creative and critical thinkers. We believe that learning is at the centre of our endeavours and we recognise different ways of learning, knowing and thinking.*

*At Seymour College the core values of Respect, Inspire, Excel guide our behaviours. This means we learn collaboratively, appreciating individuality, diversity and community. We are respectful, truthful and honest as we care for each other, the local and global environment, sharing responsibility and committing to developing each other and ourselves, so we can contribute positively to society.*

### **Co-coordinators' message**

*Seymour College aims to provide an education that will equip students with the necessary academic training, as well as embedding the values of respect, inspire and excel in everyday life, to enable students to take their meaningful place in society.*

*The college promotes academic excellence within a caring environment, where all students have the opportunity to develop to their full potential and where academic excellence is formally acknowledged and celebrated.*

*This handbook outlines in detail much about the nature of the college and its aims. It will provide you with the relevant information that will allow you and your child to make a positive start next year, particularly at the senior level. If however you require further information please contact the college.*

**Emmi Hoefchen**

**VCAL Co-ordinator**

### **Who is the VCAL suited to?**

**VCAL could be considered by students who:**

- Are interested in apprenticeships or traineeships
- Do not want to go to University
- Do not require an ATAR score
- Want a Year 11 and/or Year 12 Certificate
- Want to stay at school to complete their secondary education
- Are more attuned to applied "hands on" learning
- May want to go out to work when they finish school
- Wish to pursue Higher Education at TAFE
- Want to develop more confidence in the workplace
- Want to gain maturity before they take future steps



### What is VCAL?

*The Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) is a hands-on option for students in Years 11 and 12. The VCAL gives students **practical work-related experience**, as well as literacy and numeracy skills and the opportunity to build personal skills that are important for life and work. Like the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE), VCAL is an accredited secondary certificate.*

The VCAL is a recognised applied learning program for students in Years 11 and 12 who are interested in taking up a traineeship, apprenticeship, TAFE studies or employment after Year 12.

The VCAL curriculum is based on outcomes and competencies which are evidenced through projects and practical applications both at school and within industry training.

It offers opportunities for experiential learning and skill development through activities that are structured and sequential in their learning outcomes.

The program design has high relevance to personal strengths,

develops resilience, confidence and self-worth, and strengthens connections with the community.

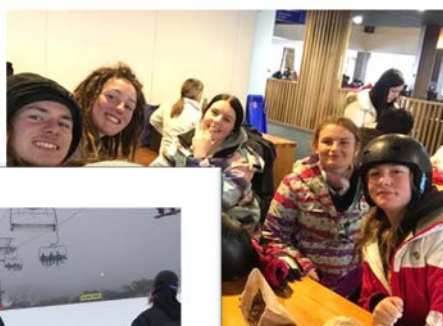
The VCAL curriculum is available at three levels – Foundation, Intermediate and Senior.

### Aims of the Qualification

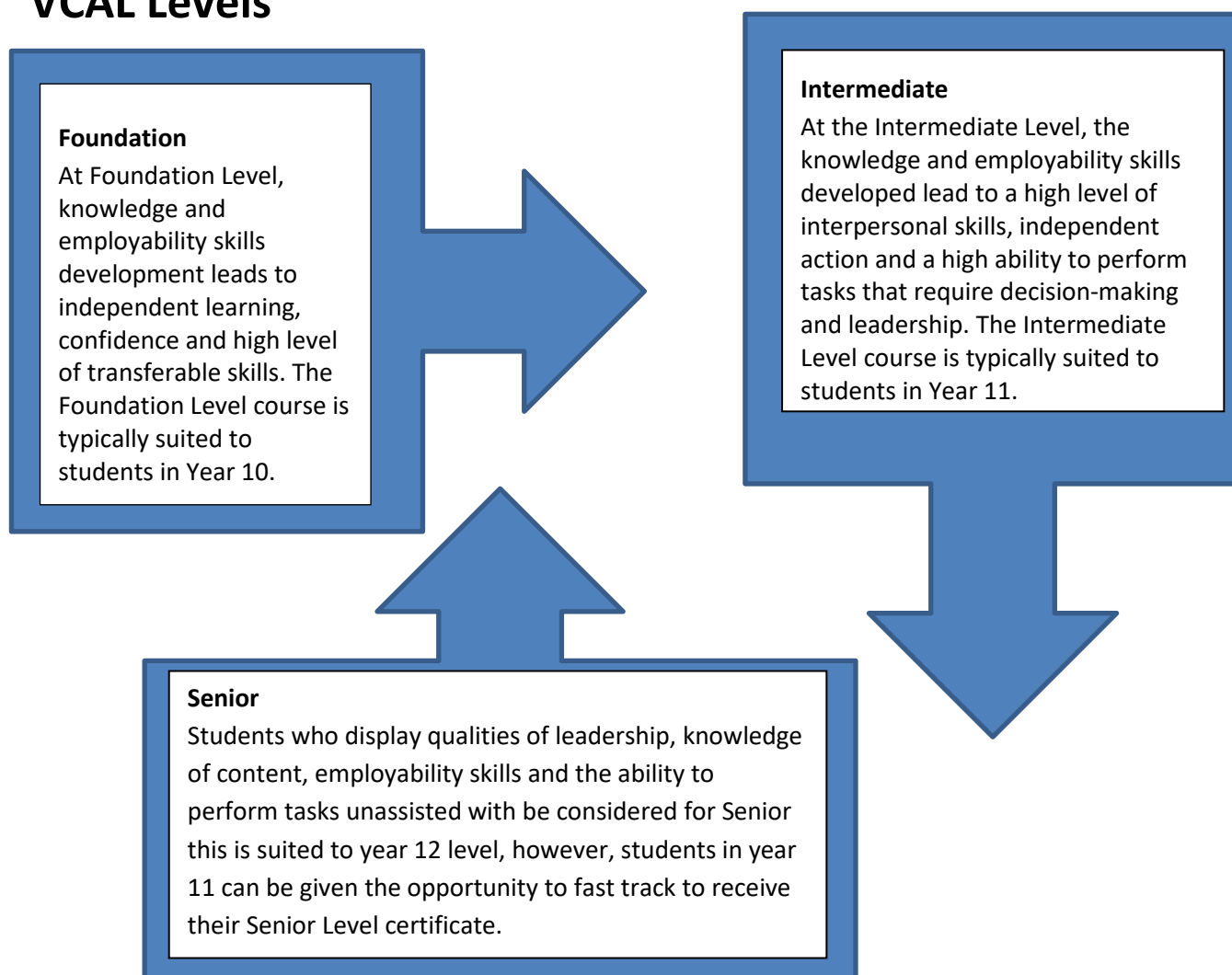
The VCAL qualification aims to

- Further students Literacy and Numeracy Skills
- Develop pathway knowledge to enable students to make informed choices regarding work and further education.
- Pursue the development of knowledge and employability skills that help prepare the student for employment
- Develop skills of participation and teamwork required in the broader context of family, community and lifelong learning.

The development of knowledge and skills is targeted for each student so that they are able to make informed vocational choices within the specific industry sector and/or to facilitate pathways to further learning.



## VCAL Levels



### Successful Completion of VCAL Certificate

Students typically complete a VCAL certificate at any level **within one year**. In order to be awarded the certificate a student must complete all outcomes and units, across five subjects of; Mathematics, Literacy, Personal Development, Work Related Skills and Industry and Enterprise.

### VET/SBAT in the VCAL

The aim of the VCAL is to provide students with a hands-on practical learning experience which prepares students for work or further industry training upon completion. Students are **required** to undertake a Vocational Educational subject (VET) or a School Based Apprenticeship (SBAT) certificate as part of their VCAL certificate. Please see your VET Coordinator and pick up the VET handbook for more information.



### Assessment

*There are no formal exams in the VCAL. Since the VCAL curriculum is competency based and underpinned by the philosophy of practical hands-on learning, students are assessed in various methods including but not limited to the following:*

- *portfolio*
- *class work*
- *reflective journals*
- *video/photographic production*
- *oral presentations*
- *written text*
- *performance or practical tasks*
- *observations*

#### Folio of Evidence

A 'Folio of Evidence' must be submitted at the end of each semester for verification of the evidence that demonstrates competency for each VCAL unit.

**It is the student's responsibility to assemble and maintain this 'Folio of Evidence' for each VCAL unit, by keeping and filing all pieces of work when it is assessed and returned to the student.**

Assessment check lists will be issued to enable students to assemble and maintain their 'Folio of Evidence' for each VCAL unit.

A 'Folio of Evidence' should include:

- All assessment tasks.

- All classroom learning activities.
- Photo journal of activities.
- Power-point presentations, posters.
- School recognition of student participation, college newsletters, photographs.
- Community recognition, newspaper articles, photographs, club activities.
- Recreational/sporting club recognition, awards, activities, teams.
- Current school reports and awards.
- VET - statement of attainment.
- Any other documentation that highlights personal development or work related activities.

#### Student Digital Portfolio

All VCAL students are expected to prepare a Digital Portfolio to showcase their work. The digital portfolio template given to the students is based on eight employability skills recognised by employers as desirable skills, competencies and attitudinal values required in the workplace.

The digital portfolio is a useful tool that students can use at employment interviews. To this end, students are expected to prepare for several practice sessions throughout the year where they can present their work to a third party.

#### Grading

Within the VCAL program students do not receive a summative assessment expressed as a letter grade. Grading is based on the level of competency achieved. There are three levels of competency defined as follows:

- Not Evidenced
- Beginning Evidence
- Competent

Students' reports will have S/N which will reflect competencies attained.

#### Fees

There are no VCAL fees; however, please note material fee for VET may apply. Please see our VET Co-ordinator.

## Frequently Asked Questions

*The delivery of VCAL is based on adult learning principles. These include, but are not limited to the following educational values.*

- *Course content is negotiated to build on the students' interests, abilities and strengths*
  - *Focus on 'hands-on' practical learning*
  - *Focus on the integration of learning across the students' program*
  - *Formal and informal recognition of student achievement*
  - *Flexible, safe-paced learning*
  - *Flexible delivery approaches*
  - *Focus on building student confidence and resilience*
  - *Instil active community participation*
  - *Promoting protective and safe student behaviours*
  - *Development of partnerships in the delivery of programs*
- Number of Schools and Students across the state completing VCAL*

### **How long would the VCAL take me to complete?**

You can receive a VCAL Certificate and Statement of Results at the end of each year when you successfully complete your VCAL program for the level you have chosen.

### **What do you get after successfully completing the VCAL?**

When you successfully complete your VCAL program you will receive a VCAL Certificate for either Foundation, Intermediate or Senior level, depending on the VCAL level you chose to complete.

You will also get a Statement of Results, listing all VCE, VCE VET and VCAL units, and a Statement of Attainment for any units completed at TAFE.

### **I have already started a VET certificate. Will this count towards my VCAL?**

Yes. You should speak with the VET Coordinator to work out how much of your prior study counts towards your VCAL and to plan the remainder of your VCAL program.

### **I have already done a VCE subject. Will this count towards my VCAL?**

Yes, if you have an 'S' result for the VCE unit it will count towards your VCAL. You should speak with the VCAL Coordinator to plan the remainder of your VCAL program.



### FAQ CONTINUED

#### **Can I swap to the VCE if I change my mind?**

This will definitely be considered by the Coordinator. You should discuss this with the Careers Co-ordinator if you decide to take this option.

#### **Can I work part-time and/or continue an apprenticeship while enrolled in the VCAL?**

You can gain recognition and credit for part-time work while enrolled in the VCAL. This work can include: part-time apprenticeship or traineeship, part-time work, work placements or work experience.

#### **What Types of Subjects make up the VCAL?**

- Literacy and Numeracy Skills
- Industry and Enterprise Skills
- Work Related Skills
- Personal Development Skills

#### **Are there any entry requirements?**

Yes.....

- All students must submit an application form.
- Be interviewed by the VCAL panel.
- Must have spoken to the co-ordinator to organise their VET/SBAT placement.

**What are the VCAL levels?** The VCAL has three levels – Foundation, Intermediate and Senior. You would start VCAL at the level that matches your literacy and numeracy ability. Each level represents one year of study. Senior VCAL equates to Year 12.

## **Future Pathways**

*Students completing a VCAL certificate **do not** receive an ATAR (previously known as “ENTER”) score; therefore the VCAL does not provide immediate progression to university.*

*Students who complete the VCAL at the Foundation, Intermediate and Senior levels are able to further their studies at a Technical and Further Education institute (TAFE), start an apprenticeship or go directly into employment.*

*Those students, who complete a TAFE Diploma or Advanced Diploma, may be eligible to pursue studies at university level.*

### **Why would I choose to do the VCAL instead of the VCE?**

The VCE is a good option for students who would like to go on to further education at university. However, you might feel that this is not the right option for you.

Just like the VCE, the VCAL is an accredited senior secondary school qualification undertaken in Years 11 and 12. The VCAL is based on hands-on learning, also known as “applied learning”.

If you choose to do the VCAL instead of the VCE, you will gain practical experience and ‘employability’ skills, as well as the skills you will need to go onto further training in the workplace or at a TAFE.

### **When can I do the VCAL?**

You can begin your VCAL program in Years 11 or 12.

### **How long would the VCAL take me to complete?**

Regardless of the VCAL level you choose, your learning program would normally take one year to complete.

### **Can I get into university if I successfully complete the VCAL?**

If you are considering entering university straight from school, VCAL is probably not the best choice for you. Students planning to go straight into university usually follow VCE programs which allow them to gain an ATAR score from the Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre (VTAC). If you are studying a VCAL program at Senior level and you decide that you might be interested in going on to university, check with your teacher or careers counsellor because it is possible that some universities will consider students with a VCAL Senior certificate for admission.

Entry straight from school is not the only route into university. Some people study a vocational education and training course at TAFE while working, perhaps leading to a Diploma or Advanced Diploma, and then decide that they would benefit from a university course. VCAL would be a good start along this pathway.

### **What are my options once I have completed the VCAL?**

The VCAL will give you practical work-related experience and a qualification that will be recognised by TAFE institutes and employers. Together these will help you move from school into work, an apprenticeship or traineeship and/or further training at TAFE.

### **Will the VCAL get me ready to enter a trade?**

VCAL students will gain knowledge and skills that will assist their preparation into a trade, eg. Occupational Health and Safety.

### VCAL STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

*VCAL students will continue to be eligible for the Academic Achievement and Encouragement Awards and are also encouraged to excel in their VET and Structured Work Placement programs. Students are also required to abide by the Seymour College rules and protocols as well as any additional expectations at their VET school and Structured Work Placement.*

Parents and students are urged to familiarise themselves with the rules, guidelines and administrative requirement. There are also the following additional requirements for the VCAL cohort:

#### Structured Work Placement

1. Students are primarily responsible for obtaining a Structured Work Placement for each Semester. They are supported by the staff in the creation of a resume and the development of a range of techniques and skills for identifying potential employers.
2. In discussion with staff, including the Careers Co-ordinator, students are expected to negotiate who

should approach potential employers.

3. Students are required to complete the Structured Work Placement Agreement with their employer and register the agreement with the VCAL Coordinator prior to the commencement of their employment.
4. Students will participate in at least one Work Performance Review for each Structured Work Placement.

#### Uniform

1. Students are required to follow school policy regarding the appropriate wearing of the College uniform.
2. Students are expected to be appropriately attired and well groomed at their Work Placements. Jewellery, hair and footwear styles need to be selected in accordance with Occupation Health and Safety standards. Students should confirm the appropriate work dress standard with their Structured Work Placement Supervisor.

#### Attendance

Students attain competencies by repeatedly performing tasks at an expected standard. In order for students to achieve specific Certificates of Competency, mandatory/compulsory attendance is required for specific projects. In addition, a number of competencies require the completion of nominal hours, before

satisfactory attainment is awarded.

Students must attend a minimum 80% of classes in order for all competencies to be met.

#### Absences

1. Parents/guardians are required to notify the administration office of any absences.
2. Competency based assessments are conducted continually throughout the VCAL curriculum. Medical Certificates are required for absences.

#### Participation

1. VCAL Classes will require students to be involved in various activities. Students will need to plan, implement and manage events. Not only will students be assessed on their competencies, but their participation and use of class time.

**Students are expected to complete all set class work and assessment tasks in a timely manner, whilst displaying the school values of respect, inspire and excel.**

## **VCAL PROGRESS**

*The VCAL program spans the entire school year. The nature of the competency based assessment does not always fall into a clear semester length time frame. For some students, the VCAL program may be planned over two years or in some cases condensed into a short time frame provided all course requirements are met. To assist students to remain on task and assemble the evidence of competence required for assessment, the VCAL program is segmented into unit cycles, one per semester.*

*At the close of each cycle, students who are falling behind will be required to attend an interview with parents to discuss their progress. Progress reports are issued at the end of terms 1 and 3; unit completion reports are issued at the end of terms 3 and 4.*

### **Performance Review Panel:**

Students who have shown little inclination to keep up with work or whose attendance is unjustifiably poor may be called before this panel. It will be composed of the relevant level coordinator, VCAL coordinator and the Campus Principal or delegate. The student's parent(s) should also attend. Only coordinators will call panel meetings, but class teachers will be called upon to provide accurate details of attendance, work completed, behaviour, etc. A Performance Review Panel may stipulate certain means whereby the student is to improve his/her performance, a timetable by which such improvement is to occur, and possible further consequences. Its primary purpose is to assist the student in improving performance.

## **CURRICULUM COMPONENTS – CORE VCAL UNITS**

***Foundation** is offered to Year 10 students – core units include: Literacy, Personal Development, Numeracy, Work Related Skills and Industry and Enterprise*

***Intermediate** is offered to Year 11 students- core units include: Literacy, Numeracy, Personal Development and Work Related Skills.*

***Senior** is offered to those students in Year 12 that have shown a high level of competency in Year 11. Core units include- Literacy, Numeracy, Work Related Skills and Personal Development.*

### **VCAL –Literacy Skills Reading and Writing**

In this unit students will develop the skills and knowledge to read and write a variety of texts. These will focus on everyday subject matter but will include some unfamiliar aspects or materials. Students will use the writing process to produce texts that link several ideas or pieces of information. At the end of the unit students will have demonstrated that they can read, comprehend and write a range of texts within a variety of contexts.

#### **Learning Outcomes**

You must show competence in all eight learning outcomes.

1. Writing for Self Expression.
2. Writing for Practical Purposes.
3. Writing for Knowledge.
4. Writing for Public Debate.
5. Reading for Self Expression.
6. Reading for Practical Purposes.
7. Reading for Knowledge.
8. Reading for Public Debate.

### **VCAL – Literacy Skills Oral Communication**

This unit will focus on the purposes of communication; developing an understanding of how language will vary with audience and purpose. Students will consider non verbal communication and its importance and further develop listening skills. At the end of the unit students will be able to use and respond to spoken language including some unfamiliar materials within a variety of contexts.

#### **Learning Outcomes**

Students must show competence in all three learning outcomes.

1. Oracy for Self Expression.
2. Oracy for Knowledge.
3. Oracy for Practical Purposes.
4. Oracy for Exploring Issues and Problem Solving.

### **VCAL – Numeracy Skills**

This unit will develop everyday numeracy skill to make sense of daily personal and public life. The maths includes measurement, shape, numbers, and graphs as applied to tasks which are a part of everyday routine. This will extend to applications not yet encountered in the workplace or community. At the end of the unit students will be required to attempt a series of operations or tasks with confidence, be able to select the appropriate method or approach required, and be able to communicate the ideas both verbally and in written form. They will be able to perform straightforward calculations either manually and/or by using a calculator.

### **Learning Outcomes**

Students must show competence in five out of the six learning outcomes.

1. Numeracy for Practical Purposes - Design
2. Numeracy for Practical Purposes - Measuring
3. Numeracy for Personal Organisation - Money and Time
4. Numeracy for Personal Organisation - Location
5. Numeracy for Interpreting Society - Data
6. Numeracy for Interpreting Society - Numerical Information

### **VCAL - Work Related Skills**

This unit will develop employability skills, knowledge and attitudes that are valued within the community and the work environment in preparation for entry into employment. Employability skills are those that reflect personal attitudes valued by employers. These include motivation, adaptability, enthusiasm, relationship management and work ethics. Students will undertake a course in occupational health and safety, a prerequisite for work placement.

### **Unit 1 Learning Outcomes**

Students must show competence in all six learning outcomes.

1. Learn about basic conditions and entitlements of a specific industry.
2. Obtain and communicate information in response to a work related OH&S issue.
3. Develop knowledge and understanding of OH&S in a work related context.
4. Identify problems or safety hazards that can affect the safety of the work environment.
5. Contribute to team objectives to achieve safe work procedures.
6. Use information and communications technology in relation to a work related activity.

### **Unit 2**

#### **Learning Outcomes**

Students must show competence in all six learning outcomes.

1. Learn to analyse and organise information for a work related goal.
2. Communicate information and ideas for a work related goal.



3. Plan, organise and manage activities for a work related goal.
4. Identify and solve problems for a work related purpose.
5. Work with others and in teams for work related goal.
6. Use information and communications technology in relation to a work related activity

### **VCAL – Personal Development Skills**

This unit will develop self-esteem and personal qualities. The emphasis is on valuing personal achievement and contributions for the benefit of community to ensure personal growth. This course of study will involve leadership, teamwork skills, accepting responsibility for goal attainment and reflecting on knowledge and skills for decision making and problem solving. Students can be given credit for involvement in other local programs eg. SES, CFA, Duke of Edinburgh Awards, Landcare Programs and Victorian Youth Development Program.

#### **Unit 1 Learning Outcomes**

Students must show competence in all five learning outcomes.

1. Plan and organize a complex activity.
2. Demonstrate self-management skills for goal achievement.
3. Demonstrate knowledge, skills and abilities in the context of an activity or project.
4. Describe leadership skills and responsibilities.
5. Utilise interpersonal skills to communicate ideas and information.

#### **Unit 2 Learning Outcomes**

Students must show competence in all five learning outcomes.

1. Identify planning and organisation skills relevant for the management of health or community activity.
2. Demonstrate skills relevant to complex problem solving.
3. Demonstrate knowledge and skills related to a hobby, study or interest
4. Utilise research and development skills to present information to an audience.
5. Use spoken language and active listening skills to communicate ideas and information.

### **Assessment Methods**

Students will be assessed by presenting written or oral work showing understanding of the learning outcomes. This may include teacher observations, evidence accumulated through program participation, awards from recognised programs, self-assessment inventories, testimonial letters from mentors, reflective diaries, newspaper articles that document the community project and PowerPoint presentations.

*VCAL Initial Expression of Interest*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_

What are your goals for once you have finished your schooling? *E.g. Apprenticeship in Automotive, TAFE course, University, work in a particular industry*

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Do you currently have a part-time/casual job?: YES / NO

If yes, please provide details of the type of work and name of employer.

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Provide details of any other relevant work experience, including Year 10 Work Experience.

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Provide details of any community, sporting, or recreational activities you participate in.  
*E.g. volunteer work, football/basketball, scouts/guides, drama/dancing, cadets, etc*

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Provide details of school-based activities you have been involved in.  
*E.g. Peer support, Student Leadership, SRC, Sporting Teams, Production, Camps, etc*

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Provide details of any Recognised Prior Learning (RPL) you have achieved.

First Aid:

Work Related Certificates:

Other:

Describe how you function in unfamiliar situations, or how confidently you communicate with people you do not know well. Provide an example, if you can think of one.

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In any subject, what was your favourite assessment task that you completed? Why?

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Explain why you want to enrol in VCAL at Seymour College next year.

*You may like to refer to your career goals or learning style in your answer.*

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If you are successful in your application, would you like to start a School Based Apprenticeship or TAFE?  
(Please circle your preference)

School Based Apprenticeship

TAFE

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Declaration: I support my child's 'Expression of Interest' in VCAL.

Parent Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Comments:

## Student Contract

### Student Contact Details

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ VCAL Level: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (Home): \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_

VET/SBAT Course: \_\_\_\_\_

Seymour College VCAL program provides students with:

- A hands on, applied learning program
- An opportunity to develop practical employability, literacy and numeracy skills.
- A flexible program that combines school with VET/SBAT or work.

I wish to be enrolled in VCAL at Seymour College and give an undertaking that;

I will **attend all** sessions in VCAL & VET/SBAT. *(A medical certificate must be supplied for absences).*

I will notify the school immediately (by 9.00am) if I do not attend one of my VET/SBAT days. *(You cannot achieve a VCAL certificate without the required VET/SBAT certificate)*

I will be **punctual** to classes and all VCAL & VET/SBAT activities.

I will work to the **best of my ability**.

I will **follow all teacher instructions**.

**I will not distract other students** or jeopardise their learning.

I will use technology **appropriately** and keep a digital copy of work in my VCAL folder on the school network.

I will **represent the school** appropriately at all external activities.

I will seek assistance when needed and the co-ordinator immediately if I am unable to fulfil the obligations of this contract, for any reason.

**I understand that if I do not adhere to these conditions, I will be exited from the VCAL program.**

Student's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/guardian's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

VCAL Coordinator's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Seymour College RESPECT INSPIRE EXCEL**

#### **FURTHER REFERENCES**

VCAL teaching staff should refer in all matters of course planning and assessment to the following:

1. ***VCAL Curriculum Planning Guide***, 2010 reprint (VCAA)
  - Provided to all class teachers by the VCAL Co-ordinator as print copy
  - Also available at [www.vcaa.vic.ed.au](http://www.vcaa.vic.ed.au)
2. ***VCAL Unit Assessment Planning Guide***, 2010 reprint
  - Provided to all class teachers by the VCAL Co-ordinator as print copy
  - Also available at [www.vcaa.vic.ed.au](http://www.vcaa.vic.ed.au)

