VASS Imports

Importing Student Data to VASS

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# VASS Student Personal Details Import File Structure

The same file structure applies to both the Import Students and the Amend Students imports.

An import file can contain either Student Personal Details or Student Programs for one-year level only or for multiple year levels but NOT both Student Personal Details and Student Programs at the same time.

Each of the 24 fields must be present in the file. Where data is not available for a field and it is not a mandatory field, then the field should be left empty but NOT omitted.

There must be one record (line) for each student, i.e., 60 students’ equals 60 records (lines) in the file.

A new student record is created if there is no VCAA Student Number in the file and no existing student with exactly the same Family Name, First Name, Gender or Date of Birth.

The correct Date of Birth must be used to prevent the creation of duplicate students on the system. The Date of Birth must be in the Australian format (DD/MM/YYYY or D/MM/YYYY or DD/M/YYYY or D/M/YYYY).

A bad file will be declared if the date entered is not a valid date, e.g., May 32, or February 29 but the year of birth is not a leap year.

If more than 1.5% of the students in the file (to a maximum of 6) have the same Date of Birth, there will be a message in the import error report to alert the user, but the records will be processed.

There are three possible course codes:

* VCE – All students undertaking a VCE, VET or VPC/VCAL program must have a course code of ‘VCE’. International Baccalaureate students must also have a course code of ‘VCE’.
* PDO – Year 10 students entered onto VASS for the purposes of the On Track Project, and so without a program, should have a course code of ‘PDO’ (Personal Details Only).
* GAT – The course code of ‘GAT’ is for students at overseas schools undertaking the GAT only.

The Address Lines are for the students’ POSTAL ADDRESS and not their Home Address. The data in the first Address Line should not be repeated in the second Address Line.

The Student Personal Details import sets the four consent flags (Consent for Copyright, Media Release, Awards Processing and On Track Release) to ‘No’. These flags must be subsequently amended according to the Student Personal Details form that the student has signed.

The VCAA uses the Australia Post preferred format for the suburb/location name. Abbreviations are not used, i.e., Mount is spelt fully and not abbreviated to Mt and the direction follows the suburb name, i.e., Ballarat East and not East Ballarat. Either of these types of errors will cause the student’s data to be placed on the Import Hold Table as the suburb/location name will not match the postcode. The suburb/location name must be corrected before saving the student to the VCAA database.

VASS will only accept either a pipe or tab delimited text file containing the correct number of fields with the appropriate type of data in each field. Other types of file formats such as: Excel, Word or Access cannot be used as they contain hidden formatting which will cause the file to be rejected.

An import file must NOT contain any blank lines and must NOT contain a header row.

The import file name must NOT contain any brackets or other special characters. The file name or file path must NOT be over 30 characters in length.

Importing Student Personal Details is a two-step process. The Validation step checks the data for accuracy and completeness and the Update step loads the data onto the VCAA database.

The Validation step checks that the file matches the VASS file specifications: a Pipe or Tab delimited text file with the correct number of fields; no fields exceed the maximum allowed length; an acceptable date format; the correct type of data in each field, etc. If the file or any record in the file fails any one of these checks then the validation process will stop at that point, the file will be rejected and will be given a BAD FILE status.

When a file has been given a BAD FILE status it is not possible to proceed with the import. The data in the file must be corrected and the corrected file revalidated.

On completion of each stage of the import process an Import Report is produced. This report lists any problems encountered with the incoming data and is accessed from the [View Import Report] button on the Import Retrieval screen. This report must be checked to determine if any difficulties were encountered with the records in the file.

Not all incorrect data will produce a BAD FILE status. If a record in the import file contains data that already exists in the database for the current year, then that RECORD will be rejected but a BAD FILE status will not be declared. Other records in the file will be imported if the Update step occurs.

The External Student Identifier field on VASS is the student identifier used by the school’s local student management system. For Government schools this is the student’s CASES21 ID. The External Student Identifier is not a mandatory field, but it is useful data to include in the Student Personal Details import as it is used along with the student’s name to match the student in a Student Program import or in an Amend Student import without having to enter the VCAA Student Numbers into the school’s local Student Management System.

The import process deals with telephone numbers in the following manner:

* Any characters following a forward slash are discarded.
* Any illegal character is replaced with a space. Legal characters belong to the set -, 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, space. Examples of illegal characters include:
	+ any letter of the alphabet, a forward slash, brackets, etc.
* Any sequence of multiple spaces is replaced by a single space.
* Any leading or trailing spaces are removed.
* The first three characters are removed if they are ‘03’ then a space.
* The resulting sequence of numbers is truncated to 15 characters.

**Figure 27:** Sample Student Details Import in Excel with a header row (which must be deleted before importing file)

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| **Field (Column)** | **Maximum no. of characters** | **Details** |
| Course Type (A) | 3 | **Mandatory.** Can be ‘VCE/VCAL’ or ‘PDO’ (personal details only) |
| DET School Code (B) | 10 | **Mandatory** if VCAA School Code is blank. Can be found on the **SCHOOL ADMIN > Modify School Details** or **SCHOOL ADMIN > View School Details** screen of VASS. Excel tip: Mark as text to preserve the leading zero. |
| VCAA School Code (C) | 5 | **Mandatory** if DET School Code is blank. Can be found on the **SCHOOL ADMIN > Modify School Details** or **SCHOOL ADMIN > View School Details** screen of VASS. Excel tip: Mark as text to preserve the leading zero. |
| VCAA Student Number (D) | 9 | **Optional.** Alphanumeric. If entered it must be a valid Student Number. |
| External Student Identifier (E) | 12 | **Optional.** Alphanumeric. If included it can be used to identify the student instead of the Student Number in the programs and amend student import. |
| Family Name (F) | 25 | **Mandatory.** Can only contain letters, hyphen, apostrophes and single spaces. Must contain at least one character. |
| First Name(G) | 15 | **Mandatory.** Can only contain letters, hyphen, apostrophes and single spaces. Must contain at least one character. |
| Second Name (H) | 15 | **Optional.** Can only contain letters, hyphen, apostrophes and single spaces. |
| Student Email Address (I) | 100 | **Optional.** If entered, must include “@” character. Recommended that the student email address is a personal address, and the student will have access to it beyond their final year of schooling. |
| Address Line 1 (J) | 25 | **Mandatory.** The postal address to which end of year results are sent. Must contain at least one numeric character. |
| Address Line 2 (K) | 25 | **Optional.** This must not be the same as Address Line 1. |
| Suburb/Location (L) | 30 | **Mandatory.** Alphabetic only. The Australia Post approved format MUST be used: suburb name followed by the direction, e.g. ‘Kew East’ and not ‘East Kew’, the word ‘Mount’ and not abbreviated to ‘Mt’. |
| State/Country (M) | 17 | **Optional** if the postcode is a valid Australian postcode. If entered must be NSW, NT, QLD, SA, TAS, VIC or WA. Must be present if the postcode is \*\*\*\*. |
| Postcode (N) | 4 | **Mandatory** for Australian addresses. Use \*\*\*\* for overseas addresses. |
| Telephone Number (O) | 15 | **Optional.** May only contain numbers, hyphens and spaces. Excel tip: Mark as text to preserve the leading zero if the area code or a mobile telephone number is entered. |
| Date of Birth (P) | 10 | **Mandatory**. Must contain numbers and forward slashes only and be in DD/MM/YYYY, D/MM/YYYY, DD/M/YYYY or D/M/YYYY format. Excel tip: Mark column as text to preserve format. |

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| **Field (Column) cont:** | **Maximum no. of characters** | **Details** |
| Gender (Q) | 1 | **Mandatory.** Must be F, M or X |
| Year Level (R) | 2 | **Mandatory**. Must be in the range: 7 to 12. |
| Home Group (S) | 8 | **Optional.** Must be alphanumeric. |
| Previous Family Name (T) | 25 | **Optional.** Can only contain letters, hyphen, apostrophes and single spaces. |
| Previous First Name (U) | 15 | **Optional.** Can only contain letters, hyphen, apostrophes and single spaces. |
| Previous Second Name (V) | 15 | **Optional.** Can only contain letters, hyphen, apostrophes and single spaces. |
| General Declaration (W) | 1 | **Mandatory**. If not ‘Y’, the student will not be imported. |
| Victorian Student Number (X) | 9 | **Mandatory.** Must be the valid VSN for the student |

**Table 2:** The VASS Student Personal Details Import file structure