**Tess -** Hi, my name is Tess, I'm a VCE Food Studies teacher, and today, we're going to look at using performance descriptors. The aims of this session are an overview of the assessment tools in VCE, focus on VCAA performance descriptors, and modifying and using VCAA performance descriptors. Regardless of whether the assessment tool being used is based on those developed by the VCAA, or by schools, it needs to assess student performance in the assessment task to assist consistent teacher assessment of student performance and support moderation within the student cohort.

The assessment tasks for Food Studies are designed by the study design. For each unit, the assessment tasks are listed on the following pages of the study design and must be referred to by the teacher when developing assessment tasks for their cohort. Schools can develop their own assessment tool as long as they are compliant with the VCE Food Studies Study Design, and VCE assessment principles. Assessment tools can include performance descriptors, assessment criteria, or rubrics, or checklists, or marking guides.

The assessment tasks and the assessment tools should be designed and developed together and done prior to the commencement of the teaching of the unit and area of study. Together, assessment tasks and the assessment tools will support the assessment of the outcome for each area of study, gathering evidence on student performance, determining individual student achievement on the task, determining levels of achievement, including study score, and teacher moderation of the cohort.

The VCAA has developed performance descriptors for each outcome for Units 3 and 4. These performance descriptors are found in the support material on the VCE Food Studies Study page. These performance descriptors are advisory and must be modified for each school's assessment tasks. The performance descriptors intend to provide advice, describe the performance qualities for each skill and concept, and illustrate progression, and support consistent teacher assessing.

Indicators identify more specificity to each performance descriptor. Each indicator in the VCAA performance descriptors does not necessarily reflect similar levels of difficulty. Teacher decision to determine the weighting of each indicator, and teachers may modify the indicators, or add more fine-grain descriptors to assessment tool, dependent on student cohort and assessment tasks.

You will also notice that some indicators merge at the higher levels of performance to illustrate the complexity of completing a skill that has several dimensions. Performance descriptors are written to the outcome statement. Select the relevant indicators that apply to your school's individual assessment tasks.

In VCE Food Studies, in Unit 3, there are two assessment tasks for each outcome. In Unit 4, there are two assessment tasks in Outcome 1, and one assessment task for Outcome 2. It is important to select relevant indicators and not over-assess. When using the VCAA performance descriptors, read across the row to ensure performance descriptors accurately reference the assessment task and that the assessment task provides opportunities for students to perform at their highest level. Modifying VCAA performance descriptors. Choose those performance descriptors most appropriate for the design of the assessment task and modify to meet task description.

For example, you may be assessing the key knowledge and key skill related to the utilisation of fat, so update the performance descriptors so it refers to fat rather than macronutrients. Or remove indicator related to food allergies if the assessment task only focuses on gluten as a food intolerance. Identify which qualities of performance are most aligned to the student cohort. When modifying VCAA performance descriptors, identify which qualities of performance are most relevant to the student cohort, use command terms from the key skills being assessed to ensure task provides opportunities for students to perform at their highest level. When designing assessment tasks, teachers decide how they wish to allocate marks for each selected performance descriptor.

Also, teachers may consider allocating different marks, and/or different weightings to each skill, determined by the level of difficulty of the skill and the task. The teacher has used a performance descriptor to develop an assessment tool to determine each student's level of achievement on the particular assessment task. Use the evidence collected on student performance to provide feedback to students once the assessment is completed. It is important to use the performance descriptors and evidence gathered on student performance to provide feedback to students about their understanding of the content being assessed in order to determine what areas they know well and what areas need improving.

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