**VCE Media (2018–2023)**

School-based assessment report

GENERAL COMMENTS

This report provides advice for the first year of implementation of the [*VCE Media Study Design 2018–2023*](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Documents/vce/media/MediaSD_2018.pdf). The *VCE Media Study Design* is the key document for planning, teaching and assessing VCE Media. The [VCE Media Advice for teachers](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Pages/vce/adviceforteachers/media/introduction.aspx) provides teaching and learning advice for Units 1 to 4 and assessment advice for school-based assessment in Units 3 and 4. The VCAA also publishes the *Administrative Information for School-Based Assessment* via the [VCE Media](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Pages/vce/studies/media/mediaindex.aspx) study page. These are important resources for schools when it comes to administering VCE Media.

All official communications regarding the *VCE Media Study Design* are provided in the *VCAA Bulletin*. It is recommended that teachers subscribe to the *VCAA Bulletin* to receive updated information regarding the study. Schools are required to alert teachers to information in VCAA Bulletins, especially concerning assessment schedules. Important Administrative Dates and assessment schedules are published on the School administration page of the VCAA website.

The 2018 School-based Assessment Audit showed that schools were generally well prepared for the beginning of the reaccredited *VCE Media Study Design*.

For Unit 3, schools had selected appropriate products for Area of Study 1 Narrative and ideology, that met the requirements of the study and developed students’ understanding about ‘stories’ and the societies that shape them.

For Unit 3, Area of Study 1, *Narrative and ideology*, most schools chose to assess students using the task type short responses. While many schools chose to use short responses, the study design lists alternative task types: a written report, an essay, structured questions, an annotated visual report, an oral report and a presentation using digital technologies. Teachers may also assess students using a combination of these task types. There were many good examples of School-assessed Coursework (SAC) that showed a close reading of the key knowledge and key skills for this area of study. A number of schools purchased commercially produced tasks. While these resources can be used for a school’s teaching and learning program, they must be substantially modified when used for school-based assessment to ensure that students’ work can be authenticated. Students may have an unfair advantage if they obtain this task prior to assessment, whether by purchasing it directly or obtaining copies from friends at other schools. In addition, commercially produced tasks must be checked against the requirements of the VCE study design.

When designing SAC tasks, schools must consider the key knowledge and key skills for each outcome and design SAC tasks that meet the needs and abilities of their students. Teachers should assess the full range of key knowledge and key skills, providing students with the opportunity to demonstrate the depth of their learning.

In Unit 3, Area of Study 2, *Media production development*, most schools audited showed that in their approach to the School-assessed Task (SAT), the incorporation of the research portfolio and production experiments in an authentic way would contribute to the overall quality of student productions. Timelines submitted in the audit showed that schools were generally prepared for the tasks required in Unit 3 and were aware of the deadline for submitting scores for Criteria 1–4 for the SAT.

In Unit 3, Area of Study 3, *Media production design*, most schools were aware of the documentation required for the outcome including visual and written representations.

Many schools engaged in cross-marking of SAC tasks and the SAT through formal and informal partnerships with other schools. The VCAA strongly encourages schools to undertake cross-marking of the students’ SAT.

For Unit 4, many schools purchased commercially-produced tasks. While these resources may assist teaching and learning, they must be substantially modified when used for school-based assessment to ensure that students’ work can be authenticated.

In Unit 4, students undertook the production and post-production of a task that was planned in Unit 3. The majority of schools acknowledged the changes to this task in the reaccredited study design, adjusting timelines to give students a chance to document and seek feedback on the development of their product.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Unit 3: Media narratives and pre-production

**Outcome 1**

*Analyse how narratives are constructed and distributed, and how they engage, are consumed and are read by the intended audience and present day audiences.*

The reaccredited *VCE Media Study Design* includes the requirement that at least one media product for study in Area of Study 1 must have been released in the five years prior to the commencement of the year of study. Most schools had selected at least one contemporary product to demonstrate the concepts of narrative and ideology. While schools have the option to study print or photographic products for Outcome 1, most schools chose either film or television products. Teachers used these products as vehicles to explore a range of ideologies related to gender, feminism, liberalism, power, race, technology, equality, anti-authoritarianism, families and poverty. Responses to the audit indicated that schools have generally addressed the following in Area of Study 1: emphasis on audience, including the relationship between media narratives and audiences; audience engagement with, consumption and reading of media narratives; and how audiences from different periods of time engage with, consume and read media narratives.

Assessment

SAC tasks received for Outcome 1 generally demonstrated that teachers have read the *VCE Media Study Design* closely and created tasks that addressed the key knowledge and key skills required for the outcome.

Short response was the most common task type used to assess this outcome. Schools should note that this Outcome can be assessed with a combination of the following task types: a written report, an essay, short responses, structured questions, an annotated visual report, an oral report and/or a presentation using digital technologies.

**Outcome 2**

*Research aspects of a media form and experiment with media technologies and media production processes to inform and document the design of a media production.*

Many schools demonstrated they had addressed the requirements for a research portfolio. When developing material for the SAT, teachers are strongly encouraged to read Area of Study 2 and 3, Outcome 2, Outcome 3, and the *Administrative Information for School-based Assessment* on the VCE Media study page on the VCAA website. These documents provide a guide for administering the research portfolio in a way that will genuinely contribute to the effectiveness of a student’s production. Most schools recognised the importance of having a clear connection between research, experiments, the media production design and a student’s final product. Research portfolios were generally a combination of written and visual documents. Students were either asked to present their research in folios or digitally. It is clear that a range of resources, including professionally produced media products (such as films, podcasts and magazines), textbooks, video essays and curated exemplars from past students was used.

**Outcome 3**

*Develop and document a media production design in a selected media form for a specified audience.*

In Outcome 3, students are required to develop plans for video, print or photography productions. For this outcome, schools generally developed booklets to guide students through the pre-production process, often including examples from past students or the VCE Season of Excellence.

Narrative is the key concept that distinguishes Media from other art forms studied in VCE. As a consequence, the production that students produce for the SAT must have a narrative. Given this requirement, many teachers asked that students explicitly outline the narrative in their planning documentation and include the audience, intention and their planned use of codes and conventions.

Audit responses generally indicated the importance of production and post-production roles, tasks and timelines. In many cases, it was evident that schools had emphasised the importance of maintaining production notes and journals before students embarked on the production itself.

The *VCE Media Study Design* states that schools have a duty of care for students undertaking productions outside the classroom. In a number of cases, schools incorporated risk assessment into the pre-production process. Students were encouraged to consider copyright and other permissions in their planning as well as sourcing original, public domain, creative commons and royalty free music for their productions.

Schools had a range of strategies to ensure that students had access to their media production design during the production of their SAT. In some cases, copies were made of the media production design. An increasing number of schools allowed students to create a digital media production design so that the documentation could be used throughout the production process without work being lost or damaged. Schools must be able to authenticate the student work in digital form without it being changed throughout the process. In terms of scanned plans or digital plans, some schools indicated that they printed copies of these so that students could easily annotate their work during the production process.

**Assessment**

Responses indicated that schools use the VCAA assessment criteria and descriptors that were published in the *2018 Administrative Information for School-based Assessment* to make judgments about student performance on Criteria 1-4. Moderation, through informal school partnerships, was often cited as a way to ensure fair and consistent application of the criteria to assess student work.

Teachers should be aware that the *Administrative Information for School-based Assessment* includes the scope and nature of the task for each outcome, the Authentication Record Form and the Teacher Additional Comment Sheet. It was clear that schools were using the Authentication Sheet and the Teacher Additional Comment Sheet to monitor student productions and ensure that this task was administered equitably. A number of strategies were used to authenticate work including: observing student work in class; providing regular feedback to students; staying in close communication with students throughout the pre-production, production and post-production process; regularly signing and dating student work; making copies of completed media production designs; monitoring progress through secure cloud sharing options and viewing rushes and rough cuts.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Unit 4: Media production and issues in the media

Outcome 1

*Produce, refine and resolve a media product designed in Unit 3.*

**Task type: School-assessed Task (SAT)**

* A media product developed from the media production design produced in Unit 3.

Unit 4, Outcome 1 involves the production and post-production of the media product planned in Unit 3. The media production process is outlined on Page 10 of the Cross-study specifications in the *VCE Media Study Design*. The process includes seeking feedback on iterations of the product and documenting its development and refinement. Schools typically supported production and post-production with a range of resources, particularly websites and videos. During production and post-production, many schools required students to keep records in the form of notes, photographs and screenshots. Schools should note that pre-production, production and post-production processes must be documented for assessment and authentication purposes. Many teachers set an early deadline for completion of the production, allowing time for students to receive feedback from a range of sources, including their teacher and peers. This feedback was often facilitated by a test screening or exhibitions. Feedback was documented in a number of ways, including both written and online surveys created by teachers and students. Students should demonstrate the further refinement they made to the product in response to the feedback. The evidence of the refinement could be demonstrated through documentation in the production plan or a production diary.

The assessment criteria and descriptors published annually in the *Administrative Information for School-based Assessment* must be followed to make judgments about student performance on all criteria for the SAT. Most schools indicated that moderation, through informal school partnerships, was a way to ensure fair and consistent application of these criteria and to achieve an objective judgment about the score of SATs.

Schools were required to use the Authentication Form and Additional Comments Sheet in the *2018 Administrative information for School-based Assessment*, to authenticate, monitor student productions and ensure that the SAT was administered equitably. A number of strategies were used to authenticate work, including: observing student work in class; providing regular feedback to students; staying in close communication with students throughout the production and post-production process; regularly signing and dating student work; making copies of completed media production designs; using digital copies of student work to monitor progress; viewing rushes and rough cuts; and documenting the production and post-production process.

Outcome 2

*Discuss issues of agency and control in the relationship between the media and its audience.*

The student’s performance on the outcome is assessed using one or more of the following:

* a written report
* an essay
* short responses
* structured questions
* an annotated visual report
* an oral report.

In the reaccredited *VCE Media Study Design*, ‘Agency and control in and of the media’ focuses on the dynamic and changing relationship between the media and its audiences, which encourages students to examine the complexities of contemporary media use.

When exploring the dynamic and changing relationship between media and audiences, schools examined contemporary changes in consumption such as binge watching. Ideas of increased audience agency were often explored by examining fandom, participatory culture and Web 2.0. Schools are encouraged to further explore the complexity of this relationship. Although audiences have increased agency and the space between producers and consumers has become closer, platforms for participation are largely owned and regulated by powerful organisations that serve commercial interests.

Schools examined a range of ethical and legal issues in the media, such as piracy, copyright, remix culture, the ‘Cambridge Analytica’ scandal and fake news. When exploring regulation, most schools examined how existing forms of media regulation, such as the ACMA and Australian Classification Board, are being challenged by new media technologies. Schools are reminded that in order to avoid authentication problems, the issues studied should be updated each year.

Assessment

SAC tasks submitted for Outcome 2 generally demonstrated that schools created tasks which addressed the key knowledge and key skills for this outcome. Many schools used essays, short responses and structured questions when assessing student learning for Outcome 2.

When writing questions for SAC tasks, schools often used thinking taxonomies to pose questions of increasing complexity, allowing students to demonstrate their knowledge and depth of understanding.

A number of schools purchased commercially produced tasks. While these resources can be used for a school’s teaching and learning program, they must be substantially modified when used for school-based assessment to ensure that students’ work can be authenticated. Students may have an unfair advantage if they obtain this task prior to assessment, whether by purchasing it directly or obtaining copies from friends at other schools. In addition, commercially-produced tasks must be checked against the requirements of the VCE study design.