**Jeff Hobbs** - So, this is the VCE Texts and Traditions Implementation Webinar for the new study design that comes in next year and runs for five years. Today, we're going to be going over the new study design, and then next week, we're going to go over some advice for teachers, and how to implement the study design. So, it's a two-part journey. Before we start, the VCAA and all of us always like to respectfully acknowledge the traditional owners of the land upon which we are on. I'm currently on Gunaikurnai land, and I'm sure many of you are on Murrurundi land, but most of us are in the Kulin nation, so we pay respect to their elders of the past, the present and those we teach, who are obviously the future.

During the session today, if you would like to ask questions, there's a little box, down in the right-hand corner of your screen. Please ask all panellists and we'll answer questions if we get time at the end of today's session. But a lot of those questions we will put aside for next week. Some questions, it may be that we will just email you an answer, as we will be able to record those questions and who asks them at the time. So please feel free to use that as the questions come to you, type them in and Leonie, who is our curriculum manager, will be looking after all of those. And thank you Leonie for all the work you've done on this revision of the study design. As I've already said, the webinars start today, and then there's another one at the same time next week where we look at the learning activities. There is that link and I believe that link is available on the registration page as well, for you to be able to send in questions. They must be submitted by nine o'clock on Monday, so that people have time to collate them, and I'll have a look at those and see whether I can answer them. If some of them are tradition specific, I may reach out to some of the members of that tradition to answer those questions, as well. So please have your questions in by Monday or type them in today.

So generally speaking, what we've really done with the new study design is cleaned it up a little bit. We've changed some of the language to make it more simple, taken away a lot of the theological jargon to try and make it more accessible to teachers and students. We've also looked to, especially in units three at three and four, at developing exegetical skills, rather than assuming them. And we've looked at how those skills might be developed if teachers teach units one and two, for example at year 11, and move those skills into three and four. But of course, three and four can be taught as standalone, without any need for those previous studies. We've made sure three and four work together as a sequence, and that when we get to it, you'll see how you'll start teaching unit four really during the time of unit three, and unit four is about assessing some of that and building upon that information. So, we hope that this new study design is more slim line, that it's more user friendly. Teachers hopefully will be able to work with it better. We've certainly listened to teachers in the writing of this new study design, and hopefully you'll see some of your suggestions if you made them come up here, in a way that makes it a lot more, what you are doing already, there.

One thing if you read the new study design closely, is you might notice that the words sacred and religious have been added a great deal, to describe the scriptures. It's just to ensure that new teachers especially recognise that this is a study of a religious script, and that we are looking at how a tradition makes that script sacred. A few little additions to the key skills and key knowledge, so that they work together perhaps a little bit more effectively than they had, especially in the area of exegeses. And across units one to four, students will study how those sacred texts are important within the religious tradition. So, because it's called texts and traditions, we really have tried to tie those texts and traditions together as we're going through. One thing that you will notice if you look at the Text and Traditions page on the VCAA site, is that there's a little section called glossary of command terms, and I believe that's on for every subject. And the idea is that the VCAA hope that we will come to a common understanding of some of those basic terms that we use to instruct students.

So, describe, analyse, all those terms that we often use when we're asking students to do things. This hopefully gives them a common understanding of what they are actually meant to do when those words appear. And those words are quite strong in a lot of the key skills as we go through. So hopefully you'll see that, and of course they appear in the exam as well. So hopefully as students become more clear on what those terms mean, and as teachers become more clear on what those terms mean, we hopefully will see students improving their answers.

So, what I'm going to do for the next, next I guess half hour, or more than half an hour, is to the Texts in Traditions. Looking at the people who've registered for this, we have probably a 50-50 split between people who are teaching units three, four, and people who are teaching units one and two. Obviously, if you're only three-four, you can tune out for a little while as I work through one and two, and if you're only teaching one and two, once I'm through those, unless you have questions, you may just want to go and get a cup of coffee, but please feel free to stay for the ride and we'll see how we go as we work through these. The outcomes, obviously if you've looked at the new study design, you'll see that some of them have changed and some of them haven't. And what we've done is worked on teacher feedback to try and decide how to work with those outcomes within these. None of the units have really changed in the nature of what those units are asking.

So, unit one is about texts in the tradition of whatever tradition you choose. It doesn't necessarily have to be Islam, Judaism or Christianity. You may choose to work in with other texts as well, as you're working through units one and two. Obviously, units three and four are fixed to particular set texts, as published in the bulletin and the start, in the webpage. I will work through each of these changes. I just need to get rid of my own face here, so I can see what this is saying. What I'll do is I'll just work through each of the changes, and look at how that might be used, but please remember that next week, we're actually going into specific examples.

Firstly, the main change in area of study one, unit one, is that unit one used to ask us, start with literature forms, and what we found is that a lot of teachers found that their students really needed to be introduced to the texts, what it was that made this text sacred to the tradition. And as someone who's taught unit one for many, many years, I know that I did that almost despite the study design. So, what we've done is made it a part of the study, rather than making it despite the study. So, the main area of study in area of study one, is that we're going to look at the development and acceptance of the text.

So, for example, in the Christian tradition, we would look at what is the Bible? Where did the Bible come from? And how did it come to be sacred? When was the canon created? What made the Bible the Bible? This is a new set of knowledge to what we've taught in the past. It will look at some of the councils that maybe got together and put the Bible together. You could even go up to the reformation and look at why people have argued over particular texts being in or out of the Christian Bible. If you're a Jewish teacher, you may look at the Council of Jamnia and say what happens that actually made the Jewish texts become the Jewish text? How did they grow out of the exile? How did they come to be a set of texts at that time? In the Islamic tradition, you may well look at how the revelation of the Quran happened over a period of time, in different places, and how the new community, after the death of the prophet, came to accept that text as being sacred and any arguments or controversy that may have happened over the acceptance of that text and the later tradition that followed with that.

Obviously, the acceptance of every text has had its controversies, and so it is really up to the teacher, but you may want to go into some of those things, as to how did we end up with four gospels? Why did we have the books in the particular order? You may want to look at translations, and how translations in some ways have changed what the texts are about. So that's something I think a lot of teachers have done in the past, but we haven't really had it in the study design. Once we know the text from the outside, then we go to look at the text from the inside. So, area of study two hasn't changed a great deal. We've just cleaned up some of the actual language of it, so that hopefully new teachers can come to it and not feel that they don't understand what they're being asked. I know that quite often teachers, especially with units one and two are thrown in it at the last minute in particular schools, and I would hope that they would be able to go to the new study design and make sense of it.

Obviously, every teacher needs a little bit of background knowledge, so even the word exegesis is something that not everyone is familiar with, outside of Text and Traditions, but hopefully as you read through that, you would come to an understanding of what exegesis requires. I do believe that VCAA are giving us some time later this year, to look out exegesis specifically, and so VATTT, the Victorian Association of Teachers, Text and Traditions will publicise that, it will also come out in bulletins and things like that. So please, keep your eye open for that and we'll try and help people understand exegesis in area of study two of unit one, but also in units three and four, as we go through. As we move through unit one, I think the thing that students really enjoy the most is this last area of study. How has the later tradition looked at various texts, and how have they used those texts? Sometime in context and sometimes out of context. It's a chance to show some films, show some art and some music. There's a whole range of things that people can do with this section of unit one.

One thing you will find is that the word analyse has been put in there, so that students can really come to a depth of understanding, rather than just reporting what they've seen. They can start to ask questions about why have these changes happened, and even evaluate what some of those changes have been. So, while there hasn't been a lot of change to unit one, probably the biggest change is that first area of study. It's certainly I think a study that we've cleaned up a bit, and hopefully will be a lot more user friendly for teachers. As we move on to Unit two, not a lot of changes have happened. When we looked at teacher feedback on unit two, it was almost unanimous that people just liked teaching unit two the way that unit two is.

A couple of things however have been clarified and one of those is that any idea or theme that is being studied, really should come out of the text. Rather than taking an idea or theme, and then trying to force it into the text, as we've found some schools are trying to do, which I think is a confusing way to approach these themes. The idea or theme should arise from the text. Now that still means that a lot of the popular ones, like ecology or environmental studies, the role of women and authority, can all certainly come out of the text and can be studied. There are perhaps some of the more theological ones, where people have gone to, let's say the nature of Jesus, and gone back into the text, and sometimes that hasn't worked as well. So hopefully it's a lot clearer as to where those themes and ideas should come from. As you can see, if you read through those outcomes, they're not a great deal different to what we had in the previous study design, but what it looks at is how did the texts come to be?

Now if you're teaching unit one and then unit two, a lot of that outcome one is already covered in unit one. You don't have to repeat it for unit two, you can take for granted that the students know that, and then start to look at what is the religious tradition's relationship to society, how has that text expressed that tension between society as a whole and a particular religious tradition in that, or in some cases how has the religious tradition basically been reflected in society? Moving on to outcome two, the students should be able to understand how authority comes from those texts, and how particular religious traditions refer to texts and use texts to justify their point of view. For example, just this week, the Catholic Bishops of Australia have come out with a statement on gender and inclusivity of gender differences within our Catholic schools, and within that they refer, especially to Genesis, and use the texts to justify their position.

It could be very likely that that would be one of the issues that you would take up, and you could look at how the Catholic Bishops of Australia attribute a particular authority to that text in doing that. Outcome three is where we compare two or more religious traditions. And so, in doing that, quite often I think most schools take their dominant tradition to be the one that they start with. So Catholic schools take Christianity, Jewish schools take Judaism, Islamic schools take the Quran, but then you are free and encouraged to take any other religious tradition that you wish, for a comparison of how different texts influence particular social issues, and how that may change the way that people in different parts of the world might respond to something. Obviously, you could look at another major world religion, or you could look at something that is perhaps maybe a little bit more obscure, but something that you might have a particular common interest in.

I know some schools allow students to choose what tradition they wanted, and that's perfectly fine as well. Some of the issues that people look at, and this is actually in the study design, are social structures, how do we organise both religious structures and social structures based upon texts? The idea of justice in the world. I've already mentioned authority, the environment, racism, gender, role of women and others. And really this is a unit where teachers can pick what may be of interest to their students. Again, some teachers like to lead it with the whole class doing one issue. Others open it up for students to actually choose which issues they want to do.

So, units one and two, not a huge amount of change. I think that what you will find is that unit one tends to work more to the way most people have been teaching. And as I said, unit two really hasn't changed a great deal. When we move into units three and four, again you will see that there isn't a lot of change, especially in the structure, except for the way that unit four now has three outcomes, whereas previously it had two. And I know that that may have put a little bit of panic into some people's minds. Hopefully what I can do is explain that it isn't any extra in the workload. It just clarifies what students are doing. And I think leads into the exam a lot more closely.

So, outcome one of unit three is pretty much as it was. It's the background to the tradition. It looks at sociocultural traditions and historical contexts that influence the early tradition. Outcome two, students actually look at where did this text come from? How is this text set up and why was this text written for, or revealed for its original audience? And again, depending upon which tradition you come from, that would have many different responses. In next week's session we will look at examples of all of these four particular traditions and hopefully it will become a little bit clearer, especially if you're a new teacher, to Text and Traditions. On outcome three, we introduce exegesis to the students, and there is a change, especially in the assessment, and I'll get into some of that a little bit later on, as we go through.

So, to look at area of study one, the background of the tradition, not a lot of change. It is really important however, that the background that is taught feeds into a student's understanding of the set text that they're going to be studying. Some of the feedback that we got, was that some teachers are teaching some historical background that doesn't really help a student understand the text that they're eventually going to be studying.

So, if you're doing Christianity, you don't have to cover the entire history of Judaism for them to understand what the Christian text is doing. What you need to do is teach 'em things that are relevant to the particular text that they're going to be studying. So, I teach Luke's Gospel. I quite often jump into Leviticus, because I think a lot of Leviticus feeds itself into Luke's gospel, but I spend next to no time, in fact no time at all, on something like the 10 Commandments, 'cause the 10 Commandments aren't referred to in Luke's Gospel.

So, it's important that you have some sense of the history that you are teaching, feeding into what the students are going to be doing in the set text. When we move to area of study two, the idea of the purpose of the text has replaced the idea of themes. I think very, very strongly, we got feedback from teachers, that they felt it strange to be teaching themes this early in the course, when students hadn't really come to a deep knowledge of the text.

If I was teaching English, I wouldn't ask my students to be writing on the themes of the book, before we actually read the book. Now it's the same with Text and Traditions. We were asking students to write about themes before we'd actually led them through the text. And so, most of those thematic essays that they were writing for unit three, area of study two, tended to be very vague and very generic, where leaving themes to later on, and next week I'll talk about structure of the course and how that might work well. But instead, we are focusing on why was the text created? What is the purpose of the text for a particular audience, at a particular time in history? In that way, we're hoping that really what students are coming up with in area of study two, is an introduction to the text, in the way that you would read an introduction to most of the commentaries, where they go into audience, authorship, structure of the text, purpose of the text and how that purpose fulfils the needs of participants at a particular time in history.

When we move into area of study three, interpreting texts, this is an introduction to exegesis, a little bit of tweaking with words happened here, but the big difference is in assessment. And when I get up to assessment, hopefully you will see that that those changes become pretty clear. As has happened for really the last few study designs, we basically asked teachers to continue their teaching through unit three, into unit four. And in doing that, they will continue working through the set text or especially the passages for special study. And will develop their students understanding of exegesis and how to write exegesis but will also continue to work on the thematic unfolding.

So, as you're teaching outcome three of unit three, and outcome one of unit four, most teachers are working through the passages for special study, and they're building the students understanding of those actual passages, but also the development of an idea, belief or theme, as it has grown over that text. That will eventually come to fruition, in what is the new outcome two of unit four. So, outcome one is exegesis, that's the same as it was in previous study design. The new outcome is outcome two. On completion of this unit, the students should be able to discuss themes arising from the passages for special study, and analyse their social, cultural, religious and historical context, and the importance of those themes to the original audience. When we look at assessment, the assessment for outcome two is very, very similar to what is the essay in the exam of the current exam. When we move to outcome three, that is the text in the later tradition.

So, if you remember the tech, the units that we're teaching at the moment, outcome two of unit four at the moment looks at the theme in the text, and then at the later tradition. And it has caused a little bit, little bit of confusion. If I can just jump back a slide, the text that the theme that you may look at in outcome two, is basically the theme that arises from the list that the VCAA come up with each year, and just published in the bulletin. The theme for outcome three can be different. So, I'll just run through that in a little bit more detail. The assessment for outcome one of unit four, is now substantially different to unit three outcome, sorry, that should be unit three, outcome three. I'm sure we've been through many drafts of that, and I never picked that up. But assessment is now substantially different to unit three, outcome three, and builds on the key knowledge and skills that have been developed in outcome three. But does it differently, and again, I'll get to assessment soon. Think I've covered most of that.

So, it's envisioned that students will build their knowledge of themes throughout the teaching of unit three and unit four. So, when you actually get to outcome two, they're pretty much ready to do it, because you've been going through it now for a few months. So, when we get to area of study two, it's entirely based on the text, with no mention or expectations of later tradition. So, in area of study two, you are looking at themes in the text as they are developed in the text. Those themes are provided by the VCAA each year, and anyone who's taught unit three and four would be well familiar with the set text, the passages for special study and the list of themes that appear in the bulletin. So, work on this outcome as you're going through would've been taught during unit three, outcome three and during unit four, outcome one.

So, as well as teaching exegesis and going into the text in detail, you're also looking at how these themes are developing across the text as a whole. What it would be hoped then, is that a student would be able to write an essay for area of study two, that pretty much covers the growing development of the theme throughout the text. They should be able to discuss themes arising from the passages, special study, analyse their social, cultural, religious and historical context. The type of questions that we have in the exam for the essay, are the type of questions that I think teachers would be setting for SACs, when it comes to sort of the course. It is a summation in many ways of everything that has been taught in the course so far.

So, what you will find, is that probably halfway through term three of your teaching, you might give an exegetical SAC, then a week of teaching to remind them of the themes and how they've developed, and then gives them a thematic SAC for area of study one, and then area of study two. Then we jump to area of study three, and for this we're looking at the later tradition, how a theme that arises from the set text, has been treated by the later tradition. Now this theme could be the same theme that you have discussed in area of study two, or it could be a totally different one.

For example, for area of study two, if you're teaching Luke, you may pick, let's say something like the identity of Jesus. However, for area of study three, you might want to do social justice. However, you could continue with the identity of Jesus. But instead of looking at it in the text now, you're now looking at how the later tradition has taken that idea, arising from the set text and looked into it. This doesn't make the course longer. In fact, the course is pretty much the same. I think it just makes the assessment more relevant and builds on that idea of themes as the culmination of your learning, rather than the introduction of your learning. I think that covers that slide.

So, when we get into assessment, generally speaking, outcome one is the same as it always has been, and basically report on what they have learned, about the background to the tradition. How you do that, a wide range of things are done. Some teachers run little quizzes, short answer questions, some people get them to write an essay or a report. I've often had my students give oral presentations with a written report, that they then distribute to the other students, so that they can share their learning with each other. Outcome two doesn't have themes in it anymore. So again, an essay, extended responses, short questions, even an introduction to a textual commentary might be the way that you would get students to report on outcome two. And they're really looking at the background to the actual writing, development, revelation and acceptance of the text, within the original community. For outcome three, you will note that they're no longer writing a full exegesis. What is suggested is that they write the preparation for an exegesis.

So, what you're doing is developing students skills. In outcome three of unit three, you might get them to annotate a passage, you might get them to write the framework of an exegesis, or you might get them to write a series of notes that they would use for a particular exegesis. They're not actually doing the writing of the exegesis. This is then planning an exegesis, and we will give them feedback on that. So not only is this an assessment of what they've learned, but it's an assessment that helps them then develop skills for the next unit. And hopefully that will ease the tension that some students have in how do we write an exegesis write off? We're really helping them through the development of an exegesis.

Of course, if you think your students are up to it, you could get them to move into an exegetical passage as well. You can always work within that, as you see your students skills develop. But I think that this is, a really good way to get students to feel more comfortable in the development of an exegesis in outcome three. Then when they get to outcome four, they're going to write their exegesis. It could be on the passage that they did in unit three, but I would probably say that, that I would probably get my students to move on and start to look at different passages, so that they can now plan an exegesis, and now they're writing the exegesis.

You could of course get the assessment from unit three feeding into the assessment for unit four, if you wish. You will notice that outcome is worth a lot more marks, for a lot better, significant number of marks more than the previous outcome suggested. So again, as they develop their skills and ability, the work that they're doing will pay off a lot more. Then outcome two, an essay based upon a theme that arises from the passage, and that really is very similar to the essays that they are writing currently in the exam. And so, you may well go back to past exams and look at the types of questions that are being asked there and set that type of question for students to do. And you'll notice that's worth 30 marks.

Outcome three is the type of thing that eventually has become what is question four in the current exam. I would say that outcome three would replicate the type of thing that you are doing in preparing them for the exam and how that question might, or how that outcome might be assessed in the exam. So, when the exam, practise exam, or sample exam comes out, we'll all get a chance to look at how that exam might have grown out of this new study design. And then we might go back and try and replicate or help students enter into the exam, by building up assessment through these, especially these three outcomes. And then if you have any questions, probably the biggest changes, how are we going to tackle outcome one of unit three, sorry, outcome one of unit one. And also, the changes to that structure in unit three and four.

They're certainly things that I'll be going into next week, when we look at how we're going to plan our courses and looking at the advice to teachers, which actually has some examples of the types of things you might do in the classroom. "Are year twelves advantaged in any way, because they studied the old state?" Oh, disadvantaged I think that might be. No, I don't think that if you did unit one or unit two this year, and you're moving into year 12 next year, I can't see that there would be any disadvantage at all. The only thing I think that unit one, especially now does is give people a sense of how the, how the texts came to be accepted.

And I know that sometimes, I've had students even towards the very, very end of teaching, and units three and four, go, "Why is this text so special?" And I think, we sometimes take for granted the sacredness of these texts and assume that students understand that. I think a lot of students come in and they study whatever it is that they're studying, and if they're not really a part of the growing tradition, they sometimes don't understand it. Obviously, if they've grown up in the Islamic faith or the Jewish faith, or the Catholic faith or another form of Christian faith. Sometimes they really understand the sacredness of the text. But I think that for students who sometimes aren't as engaged in their faith, that unit one, outcome one will help them understand that. But I think that they still develop exegetical skills this year in the old study design, that will feed into the exegetical skills of the new study design. If they've done unit one, it almost is a mini version of units three and four. If they do unit two, they've certainly looked at how a particular theme has been developed in the later tradition, and that feeds into outcome three of unit four. So, I think that jumping from old study design to new study design in this transition period will have no effect at all.

**Leonie Brown** - Jeff, if it's okay, I might just add a couple of things, with respect to the advice for teachers. So, we would aim at getting the advice for teachers out as soon as possible. So that's very much our priority. So, it's well on the way in terms of things, in terms of our timeline. So just stay tuned for that. And as Jeff suggested, please subscribe to the VCAA bulletin, because that's how we alert you to those sorts of things being produced. So, the advice for teachers, apart from the study design, is obviously a very large part of the support materials for this study design. Along with these webinars, you've also got, as Jeff's mentioned, the examination specifications.

So, the examination specification and trial sample questions, will be published on the Text and Traditions study page as soon as they're produced. And I know that they're a little bit further down the track. So please be assured that the examination specifications come from the study design. So, if you go through that study design, and study it carefully, you'll be well on the way to predicting what those examinations specifications will be. So that's part of it, but there won't be a trial paper as such will be just sample questions that demonstrate the differences from the previous study design to this. So, the current stages are this year, so that's coming up. So that's a little bit of information on the exam specifications. Thank you, Jeff, back to you if there's any more questions.

**Jeff Hobbs** - Okay, the other thing is that the Victorian Association of Teachers, of Texts and Traditions, or VATTT, runs a conference at the beginning of each year. And because obviously, it's a new study design, we'll be focusing on the new exam structure, especially if it's substantially different, as well as the advice to teachers, and helping teachers through that. So, it's totally relevant for teachers of units one and two. I noticed that there's a few people online at the moment who are just teachers of unit one and two.

Please feel free to subscribe to the VATTT mailing list or check it out on Facebook. Next week will also be recorded. Yes, that is just asked and this week as well. It does take a few weeks before those recordings appear on the VCAA website. So don't expect it up there tonight, both nights will be recorded and will appear. I'll move on to our very last slide, Leonie, who's been speaking to us and who's been helping us throughout the whole process of revising and then rewriting the study design, can be contacted here, and she may be a point of call for you to send in questions, but I think the best place is obviously through the Qualtrics process, and that that helps people at VCAA compile those and get them to me, so that I can prepare for next week's. That's all from me.

**Leonie Brown** - I would just like to thank everybody for taking the time to be a part of this live webinar. A very special thanks to Jeff who's incredibly generous with his expertise and his time. And I'd also like to put a shout out to Samantha Anderson, who's been fantastic support, particularly getting me into the meeting initially. So, thank you very much, Sam, for your support and the background, and please join us same time, same day, next week. Thanks everybody, bye.

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