Completing VCE units without calculation of a study score

Student and parent/carer factsheet

This factsheet helps guide students and parents to decide what type of assessment a student will undertake in the VCE. Some students can change their assessment under special circumstances and these are explained below.

**About the VCE**

The Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) is the final two years of formal secondary schooling and provides all Victorian students with opportunities to build skills and knowledge. It prepares students to participate in society and be active and informed citizens, engage in meaningful work, and develop personally, socially, and professionally.

It is also a time for important reflection and planning for future pathways to university, TAFE or Vocational Education and Training (VET) courses, apprenticeships, traineeships and employment.

To achieve your VCE you must successfully complete 16 VCE units including:

* three units from the English group, two of which must be a Unit 3 and 4 sequence
* at least three additional Unit 3 and 4 sequences.

**Assessment in the VCE**

There are two types of assessment in the VCE. They are ‘Satisfactory Completion’ and ‘Assessment of Levels of Achievement’

Assessment for 'Satisfactory Completion’ decides **if** you have successfully completed the unit. All VCE students complete this type of assessment. ‘Assessment of Levels of Achievement’ decides **how well** you have completed the unit.

**Satisfactory Completion (S)** - To successfully complete a VCE unit, you must show that you have met the unit outcomes. Evidence that you have met the unit outcomes is gained through the work you produce for the assessment tasks. Your teacher will assess your work to decide if you will receive an S (satisfactory).

**Assessment of Levels of Achievement** – How well you meet the unit outcomes is decided through school-assessed coursework (SACs), school-assessed tasks (SATs), and external assessments (examinations) where the level of achievement is represented in a grade or score. SACs, SATs and examinations contribute to the calculation of a study score, which can contribute to an Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR).

The VCE includes an option for specific students to not have a score recorded for levels of achievement of school-based assessment. In these cases, you are still required to complete all course work including school-based assessment to get an ‘S’ for ‘Satisfactory Completion’. School-based assessment also gives your teachers a clear understanding of what you can do, which is important if you need a written reference going into tertiary education.

It is the level of achievement of school-based assessment that gains you a study score. Satisfactory Completion of a unit does not give a study score and is referred to as ‘Completing VCE units without calculation of a study score’. School staff sometimes call this ‘unscored VCE’. That does not mean there is no assessment of your learning.

**What do I need to consider before completing a VCE unit without calculation of a study score?**

1. All students are encouraged to complete VCE units with calculation of a study score. except students enrolled in the VCE Vocational Major (VM), which is assessed differently. This is because a study score provides a more detailed record of what you have achieved for each study and can contribute towards the calculation of an Australian Tertiary Admissions Rank (ATAR). Also, studying for scored assessments and examinations builds a stronger knowledge base for future learning.
2. Scores for at least four studies (including a VCE English) are required to receive an ATAR. An ATAR is generally a requirement for university entry. TAFEs do not require an ATAR.
3. You may decide after considering your personal circumstances and consulting with your teachers, school staff and parents or carers to complete one or more VCE units without calculation of a study score.
4. You or your teachers or counsellors may choose to discuss this option if you are experiencing any of the personal circumstances listed below. School staff such as career counsellors and VCE coordinators will provide appropriate course counselling before any decision is made regarding completing VCE units without calculation of a study score. Each school will have a clear process that includes meetings between school staff, you and your parents or carers. A clear process will best support you in your chosen pathway and career goals.
5. Personal circumstances which may make this an appropriate option include:

* illness and absence
* mental health and wellbeing issues
* clear and supported post-school aspirations that do not require an ATAR, for example an offer of an apprenticeship
* other specific personal circumstances.

If you have a clear and supported post-school pathway that does not require an ATAR, which could include an early entry offer from a university or an apprenticeship or traineeship offer. You should consider delaying the decision to do VCE units without calculation of a study score to allow for a possible change of mind or change in circumstances.

If you choose to complete VCE units without calculation of a study score you are required to meet all the unit outcomes. This means completing all set coursework and assessments to a satisfactory standard.

You should check whether your study and career goals require an ATAR prior to making this decision. Further information on tertiary entrance requirements is available on the [Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre (VTAC) website](https://vtac.edu.au/).

**When can I decide to complete VCE units without calculation of a study score?**

You can decide to complete a VCE unit without calculation of a study score at any time during the study of Units 3 and 4. Consider this with other options for completing the VCE (such as undertaking the [VCE VM](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/curriculum/vce/Pages/AboutVCEVocationalMajor.aspx)) or accessing other support options such as [Special Provision, Interrupted Studies and Compassionate Withdrawal.](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/administration/special-provision/Pages/OtherCircumstances.aspx)

Work with your school and parents or carers to decide if this is the right option for you. Your school will help you make an informed decision through consultation, getting your informed written consent and providing ongoing support.

Visit the [VCAA website](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/assessment/vce-assessment/Pages/Index.aspx) for more detailed information about completing the VCE.