

BHCS Pathways Policy

PURPOSE

The final years of secondary schooling can be quite daunting. At BHCS we aim to provide options for our students. Our desire is to educate the whole person. In acknowledging that each person is fearfully and wonderfully made (Psalm 139:14), we want to provide education options as diverse as our students are.

These options include but are not restricted to:

- VCE (Assessed & Non-Assessed)
- VCAL (Intermediate & Senior)¹
- VET (both onsite and offsite)

The purpose of this document is to lay out the process of pathway selection, from acceleration in Year 10 through to VCE and VCAL choices.

ACCELERATING IN A VCE SUBJECT

Year 9 students are introduced to VCE during Term 3 of their Year 9 via information sessions. Although VCE may still be some time off, students may choose to accelerate in a VCE subject in Year 10. Accelerating provides a couple of outcomes; it gives students a taste of a VCE subject and also allows them to spread the workload across 3 years.

The decision whether or not to accelerate is based on the following considerations:

1. The student is considering VCE as their pathway. It is important to note that choosing an accelerated subject does not rule out the ability to select VCAL in Year 11 or 12
2. The student must be achieving a B+ in English, plus an average of B+ across Science, Mathematics and History/Geography
3. An endorsement from English Teacher and/or Homegroup Teacher

¹ VCAL will be transitioning to VCE Vocational Major (VCE VM) over the course of 2023-2025. The information in this policy is current for 2022.

VCE or VCAL?

The choice between VCE and VCAL is based on the preferred learning style of the student and the desired outcome. A student who prefers a 'hands-on' learning environment would be best suited to VCAL, as VCAL students learn by doing. Effort and application is essential for a VCAL student. A VCAL student completes their senior years with a VET Certificate, two years of work placement and the Year 12 VCAL Certificate. On completion of VCAL, students can move into apprenticeships, TAFE, university or the workforce.

Case Study 1: Academic student who wants to go into a Trade

John is an academically able student who had the choice of either VCAL or VCE, however, John knew that he was a practical, hands-on learner. He also knew that he wanted to become an electrician. By choosing VCAL he is able to undertake work experience in his chosen field and begin his pre-apprenticeship training, whilst completing his Year 12 certificate.

Case Study 2: A student who doesn't fit the traditional classroom style of teaching

Julia has found school challenging for many years. The traditional approach of sitting in class, following direction from teachers in areas she thought were not relevant has been a struggle. Julia is a changed person in VCAL as she is involved in projects that interest her. She finds worth and purpose in the classroom work, whilst at the same time learning valuable life skills in her work placement and at TAFE.

A student who is a more academically focused learner would be more likely choose the VCE Pathway. VCE continues with the learning style that students are familiar with in secondary school. VCE has a 'study ready' focus for students. Students are able to choose their subjects and specialise in areas of interest and passion. Students who prefer the more traditional, familiar classroom environment will be comfortable in VCE. A VCE student must have good time management and study skills. This approach prepares students for entry into further study, university or the workforce.

SUITABILITY FOR VCE

For students who are achieving grades of D or below in core subjects, a meeting will be held with all stakeholders to discuss the suitability of the student for VCE. A student who struggles with Year 10 level work is likely to find the challenges of VCE overwhelming.

CHOICES WITHIN VCE

English or English Language

This choice will be guided by the student and the English teacher. English Language is a subject that requires high level analytical skills and is best suited to students who are curious about language and feel confident in essay writing. In order to move into English Language a recommendation must be made by the current English Teacher. To be considered for English Language the student must be achieving at least a B+ in Year 10 English.

Mathematics Choices

Foundation Maths in Year 10: Students who undertake Foundation Maths in Year 10 cannot go on to General Maths in Year 11. The course in Year 10 is practically based and will not prepare them for General Maths in the following year.

Maths Methods: Students who wish to study Maths Methods in VCE must be in Year 10 Maths Methods. A recommendation from the current math teacher is also required.

Other considerations:

It is strongly recommended that a student who undertakes Physics also studies Maths Methods.

A limit of two 'Folio' subjects is advisable due to the intense workload associated with creating a folio. Folio subjects include Visual Communication Design, Studio Arts, Product Design Technology and Media.

PATHWAY SELECTION TIMELINE

Year 9

- VCE and VCAL/VET Coordinators talks with students about options and expectations for acceleration
- Students are encouraged to attend the Pathways Information Evening held in Term 3

Year 10

- VCE and VCAL/VET Coordinators talks with students about Pathways options at end of Term 2.
- Students are encouraged to attend the Pathways Information Evening held in Term 3.
- Each student is interviewed by either VCE and VCAL/VET Coordinators, or Careers Advisor midway through Term 3.

FURTHER REFERENCES

- [VCAA VCE and VCAL Administrative Handbook](#)
- [BHCS VCE and VCAL Handbook](#)