

# VCAA Rules for the conduct of VCE external assessments

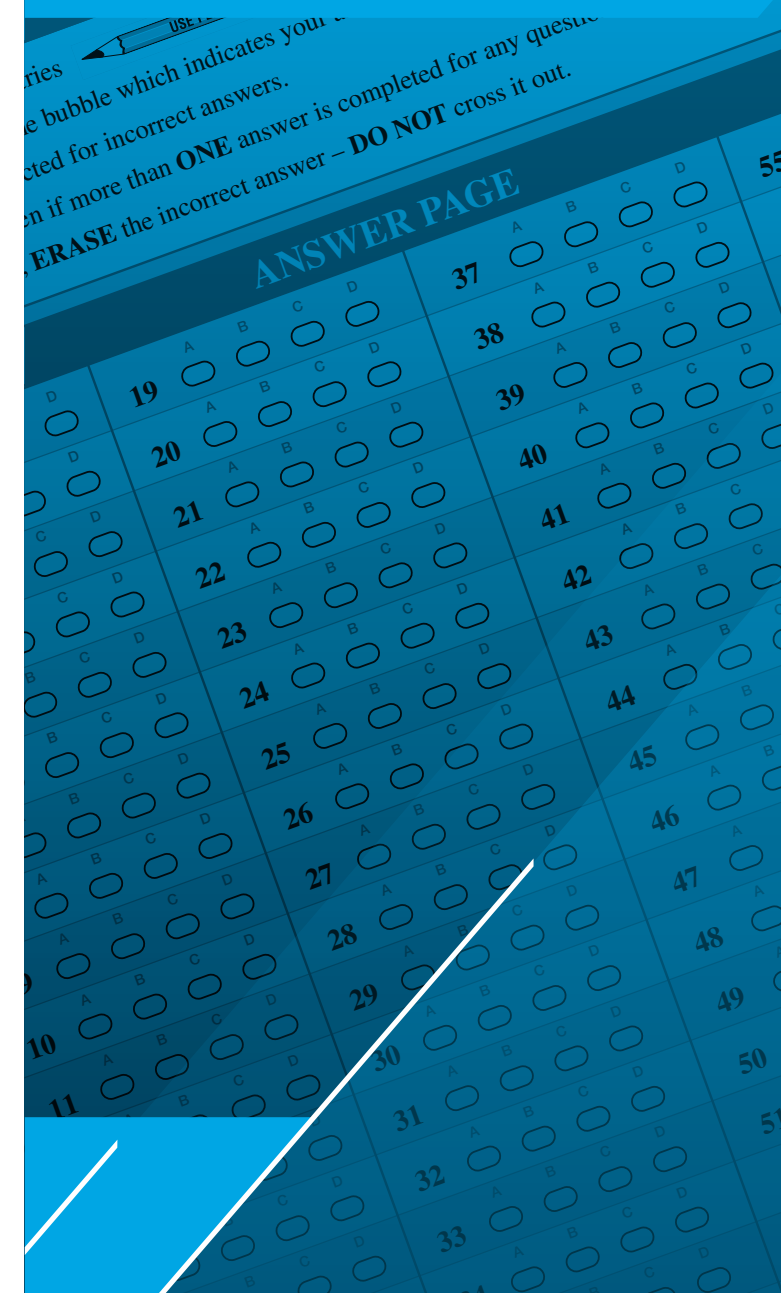
VCE external assessments include the GAT, written, aural, electronic/digital, oral and performance examinations, and the Extended Investigation oral presentation.

Students are required to observe the following rules for the conduct of VCE external assessments conducted by or on behalf of the VCAA, as well as the day-to-day rules of their school and the venue.

VCAA rules shall apply with appropriate and reasonable modifications to students with disabilities or other impairments.

All supervisors are issued with directions for the administration of the VCE external assessments and are required to report all alleged breaches of these rules to the VCAA. Supervisors have the right to check any authorised materials that are taken into a VCE examination room.

1. Students must not cheat or assist other students to cheat, including taking any action that gives or attempts to give them or another student an unfair advantage in a VCE external assessment.
2. Students must not allow, induce or assist any other person to present for a VCE external assessment in their place.
3. Students must not present for a VCE external assessment in another student's place.
4. Students must not present for a VCE external assessment under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
5. Students must obey and observe all proper instructions or directions given by their supervisor.
6. Students must provide reasonable assistance to any investigation by the VCAA in relation to a suspected breach of the VCAA rules.
7. Students attending a VCE external assessment may bring only materials and equipment approved for that external assessment into the examination room.
8. Students must not possess mobile phones and electronic devices that are capable of storing, receiving or transmitting information or electronic signals, such as recorded music and video players, organisers, dictionaries and computerised watches, during a VCE external assessment.
9. Students detected with any device defined in rule 8 must, upon the direction of a supervisor, surrender that device for inspection. Any confiscated device may be retained, pending any investigation into an alleged breach of VCAA rules. Students must provide reasonable assistance to the VCAA or its agents to enable the interrogation of the device.
10. Students must not bring into or possess in the examination room any drinks or food, except under special circumstances as approved and directed by the VCAA. Bottled water is permitted in the examination room under approved conditions.
11. Students must not communicate with any other student while the VCE external assessment is being conducted.
12. Students must not cause any nuisance, annoyance or interference to any other student during a VCE external assessment.
13. Students must not remove or tear out any part of a bound reference, question/task book, question and answer book or answer book, except where permitted, for example formula sheets.
14. Students must not remove any response material, used or unused, from the examination room.
15. Students must not begin to write or mark their paper or response material in any way, or use a calculator, until advised by a supervisor that writing may commence.
16. Students must raise their hand if they wish to communicate with a supervisor.
17. Students must not leave their place until permitted by a supervisor.
18. Students will not be permitted to leave the VCE external assessment before 30 minutes have elapsed from the start of writing time.
19. Students will not be permitted to leave in the last five minutes of the VCE external assessment.
20. Students must cease writing when instructed to do so by a supervisor.
21. Students must remain silent and seated in their place at the end of the VCE external assessment until response materials have been collected and checked, and an announcement is made permitting students to leave the examination room.
22. Students must not communicate with an assessor before, during or after a VCE external assessment, except when communication is necessary for the conduct of the assessment.



The **General Achievement Test (GAT)** is a three-hour test of your general knowledge and skills in:

- written communication
- mathematics, science and technology
- humanities, the arts and social sciences.

## Do I need to complete the GAT?

If you are a Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) or Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) student enrolled in either of the following, you are required to undertake the GAT, unless you have an exemption from the VCAA (via your school principal):

- VCE Unit 3–4 sequence
- VCE VET Unit 3–4 sequence.

Although the VCE (including VCE VET programs) gives you the flexibility to satisfactorily complete units without being assessed for levels of achievement in all or any graded assessments, you are still required to undertake the GAT.

International Baccalaureate (IB) students who are in their final year of IB studies in 2021 are also required to sit the GAT if they want a notional Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) calculated.

## Why do I have to sit the GAT?

The GAT is an essential part of the VCE assessment process.

While it is important that you attempt the GAT, the test does not count directly towards your VCE. However, GAT results may play a very important part in determining your final assessments for the VCE.

GAT results are used to check that your VCE external assessments and school-based assessments have been accurately and fairly assessed.

The GAT is used because its results are a good predictor of final assessment for VCE studies. If a student has done well in the GAT, they are likely to do well in their other assessments.

## What is the GAT?

There are two writing tasks and 70 multiple-choice questions.

You may complete the tasks in any order, but it is recommended that you complete the writing tasks first, then the multiple-choice questions. The following time allocations are recommended:

- Writing Task 1 30 minutes
- Writing Task 2 30 minutes
- Multiple-choice questions 2 hours

Answers to all tasks will be collected at the end of the three hours.

**Writing Task 1** presents written and graphical information in colour. You will be asked to write a piece that presents the main information in this material. You should not present an argument in your response. You will be assessed only on your writing skills and not any extra knowledge you may have about the material.

It assesses:

- how well you organise and present your understanding of the material
- how effectively you communicate the information
- how clearly you express yourself.

**Writing Task 2** presents statements about an issue. You will be asked to develop a piece of writing presenting a point of view on the issue, based on one or more of the statements. You can include other knowledge or information you may have to support your view. You should aim to present your reasons and arguments to support your view and to rebut opposing ideas. You should also aim to communicate clearly and effectively to the reader.

It assesses:

- the extent to which you develop your point of view in a reasonable and convincing way
- how effectively you express yourself.

**Multiple-choice questions** cover mathematics, science, technology, humanities, the arts and social sciences. There will be 70 questions in this section, which will take about two hours to complete. You should attempt every question. Marks will not be deducted for incorrect answers.

You must use a pencil on the answer page for multiple-choice questions. There will be instructions on how to shade the boxes to show your answers.

This section consists of groups of questions or units. Each unit will offer one or more pieces of information and a number of questions about that information.

## What can I take into the GAT?

You may take an English and/or bilingual printed dictionary into the GAT, but not a thesaurus or a combined thesaurus–dictionary. Electronic dictionaries and calculators are not permitted.

You will need pens, pencils and an eraser to complete the GAT. You must use either a blue or black pen to complete the two writing tasks and a pencil for the multiple-choice answer page.



## How can I prepare for the GAT?

No special study is required for the GAT.

The general knowledge and skills that are tested are those students have built up through their previous study in English, mathematics, science and social sciences. Each question provides all the information needed to work out the right answer.

The VCAA website has information about preparing for the GAT, including previous GAT papers, answers to multiple-choice questions, and step-by-step instructions for completing the GAT.



## Tips on doing the GAT

- Read all the information carefully.
- Read each question and try to pick out the key ideas and information.
- For the multiple-choice questions, try to quickly reject choices that appear to be wrong, then read the question again and select the answer most likely to be right.
- Attempt all questions and do not spend too much time on any one question. Questions can be revisited later.

## What about Special Examination Arrangements?

The VCAA recognises that some students with an illness, injury or disability may require Special Examination Arrangements to enable them to access questions and communicate their responses in the GAT. If you experience the onset of an illness or injury in the lead up to the GAT and require Emergency Special Examination Arrangements, contact your VCE coordinator who can submit an application to the VCAA.

## How will my GAT results be used?

### School-based assessment

The VCAA uses GAT results, along with VCE external assessments, to align each school's local graded assessment scores to the statewide scale. The VCAA applies a process known as statistical moderation to all school-based assessment to account for the differences in tasks and markings that may occur from school to school. This ensures the final results are comparable across the state and are fair to all students.

The statistical moderation process compares the level and spread of school-based scores with that of the same group for the external assessment and the GAT. Based upon this comparison, the alignment to a statewide scale is determined.

This process allows schools to take into account their unique needs when delivering the VCE and ensures fairness in the calculation of student study scores.

### VCE external assessments

The VCE external assessment marking process is rigorous, carefully and expertly conducted and designed to be fair to all students. VCE external assessments are assessed twice, by two different assessors. Each assessment is done separately and each assessor does not know the marks given by the other assessor. If there is insufficient agreement between them, the student's response is assessed by a third assessor.

When the assessment is complete, there is a final check to identify any students with scores that are significantly lower than expected. If your score for an external assessment is significantly different from the mark predicted by the GAT, the indicative grade given by your school and any other external assessment in the same study, your response will be assessed again by the chief assessor's panel.

### Derived Examination Scores

There is no Derived Examination Score (DES) for the GAT. Your GAT scores contribute to the calculation of a DES, if required.

## How will I get my GAT results?

GAT results will be reported to you as part of your final results package. A GAT statement will show raw scores out of:

- 40 for written communication
- 35 for mathematics, science and technology
- 35 for humanities, the arts and social sciences.

This statement will also report GAT results as a standardised score for each component. The standardised score will be calculated and reported using the same scale used for VCE study scores, that is, on a scale from 0 to 50 with a mean of 30 and a standard deviation of 7.

Both VCE and VCAL Statements of Results will show whether you sat for the GAT or if your absence was authorised. Your absence is only authorised if your school principal has obtained an exemption for you from the VCAA.

## Where can I find out more about the GAT?

- Visit the VCAA website for full details about Special Examination Arrangements, statistical moderation and GAT exemptions: [www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/assessment/vce-assessment/general-achievement-test/Pages/Index.aspx](http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/assessment/vce-assessment/general-achievement-test/Pages/Index.aspx)
- For further queries, contact the VCAA: (03) 9032 1700, 1800 134 197 or [vcaa@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:vcaa@education.vic.gov.au).