

Preparing for Unit 3 and 4 Examinations

As the curriculum and school-based assessments for students undertaking Units 3 and 4 are coming to an end, the focus will soon be shifting to the end of year examinations. Performance based subjects, as well as Languages, will begin their external assessments from Monday 3rd October. Written examinations starting with English, start Wednesday 26th October.

1. **The 2022 examination timetable can be accessed with the following link:**
<https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/administration/Key-dates/Pages/VCE-exam-timetable.aspx>
2. **VCAA examination rules can be accessed here:** <https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/assessment/vce-assessment/Pages/ExaminationRules.aspx>
3. **Further information for each subject, including exam specifications, past exams and external assessment reports can be accessed here:** <https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/assessment/vce-assessment/past-examinations/Pages/Index.aspx>

Students are encouraged in continuing to prepare carefully, completing summaries and revision questions, practicing past examinations and consulting with their teachers in the lead up to their end of year examinations. Ensuring a balanced and disciplined approach continues to be essential when preparing for exams, including regular exercise, healthy eating and sleep. When study, students need to give 110%. They need to do it in a focused and structured way, avoid any kinds of distractions and use the time they have by undertaking study techniques that work. Retrieval practice (completing practice exams) and spaced / distributed practice (short more regular study sessions over the course of the week) are two of the most effective study techniques based on educational research.

In the lead up to end of your exams, we are pleased to offer students a range of amazing opportunities so they are well prepared for their end of year examinations.

1. Subject Exam booklets

- All Unit 3 and 4 students will receive an exam booklet for each of their subjects that are bound together for easy use, comprising of 5 practice exams (solutions for these 5 exams will be accessible on Microsoft Teams in the Year 12 Team).
- **Students are expected to complete a *minimum 5 practice exams* for each subject prior to each end of year examinations** and use these booklets during structured exam revision classes for the first three weeks in Term 4 and at home when undertaking self-directed revision and study.
- These free exam booklets are an invaluable resource and vital for students in preparing for the end of year exams.
- Teachers will welcome and supply students with further exams upon request.
- Students will collect exam booklets in Explore in week 10, or from Senior School.

2. Week 1 Holidays- Knox Schools Exam Revision Sessions (19/9 – 23/9)

- The Knox Government Secondary Schools are working in partnership to provide an End of Year Exam Revision Program for students undertaking VCE Units 3 and 4 during week 1 of the holidays.
- The purpose of these sessions is to:

- Build upon the knowledge and essential skills gained throughout the year to maximise their exam performance.
- Enhance their examination techniques including how to get the most out of reading time, problem solving and how to effectively construct responses
- Develop successful study habits to enter examinations with confidence.
- Receive comprehensive resources.

Students have been given the opportunity to sign up for these exam revision sessions during week 7 and week 8 of Term 3. Log in details will be provided to all students who signed up via email prior to each online session. All printed out resources for each exam revision session will be distributed throughout week 10.

Dates and Session Times					
	Monday 19 September	Tuesday 20 September	Wednesday 21 September	Thursday 22 September	Friday 23 September
Session Times	9.30am -11.30am Health	9.30am – 11.30am Legal Studies	9.30am -12.00am Chemistry	9.00am – 11.00am Further Maths	9.00am -12.00pm Physics
				OR 9.00am – 11.30am Specialist Maths	9.00am -12.00pm Psychology
	Break	Break	Break	Break	Break
	1.00pm – 4.00pm Biology	1.00pm – 3.30pm Business Studies	1.00pm – 3.30pm Maths Methods	12.30pm – 3.00pm Physical Education	1.00pm – 3.00pm Studio Arts
		OR 1.00pm – 3.30pm Food Studies			

Week 2 Holidays- Sitting of Practice Exams (Mon 26th, Tues 27th and Wed 29th September)

- Unit 3 and 4 students, including Early Start VCE students will sit practice exams in a formal and timed setting over two sessions on Monday 26th, Tuesday 27th and Wednesday 28th of September.
- **Students are expected to formally sit and attend at least three sessions over the three days.**

When: Monday 26th – Wednesday 28th September

Where: Senior School, including F1, F2, F3 and F4 if required.

Why?

- To provide an opportunity for students to demonstrate knowledge and skills through retrieval practice to determine what they know and don't know. This specific feedback will help guide revision and study in the lead up to exams. It will reinforce learning and fill knowledge gaps.
- To replicate the format and experience for sitting exams in a timed and formal setting.
- Provide more time for teachers to spend on quality instruction and feedback, rather than sitting exams during class time.
- Help ease anxiety and increase mental stamina. Knowing what to expect on an exam and being well prepared will boost confidence and help alleviate negative thoughts and feelings.
- Retrieval practice (completing practice exams) is one of the most effective study techniques based on educational research.

Expectations:

- Students will sign up for sessions via Compass (accept or decline which minimum three sessions they will attend)
- **Students are expected to formally sit and attend at least three sessions over the three days (must sit three exams)**
- **Students are required to bring their subject exam booklet to each exam session.** Copies of exams will not be available due to the considerable cost of photocopying approx. 25 exams per student.
- All practice exams will take place in the Senior Centre
- All practice exams will be timed in the same timeframe as external exams
- Students must arrive 15-20mins before each exam session time.
- Students are required to bring all appropriate materials e.g., writing implements, calculator etc to each exam.
- All students are required to follow exam rules, protocols, and processes, as per the VCAA requirements.
- Teachers will provide feedback to each completed exam and/ or unpack this exam with students in class during Term 4 scheduled classes. This will be the focus of term 4 classes and therefore it is crucial that students attend practice exams in week 2 of the holidays.

Week 2- Practice Exam Timetable

	Session 1	Session 2
Monday 26th September	English Exam EAL Literature English Language Chinese 9:00am – 12:15pm	Business Management Legal Studies Geography Accounting History 1:15pm – 3:30pm
Tuesday 27th September	Biology Chemistry Physics Chemistry Psychology Environmental Science 9:00am – 11:45am	Further Mathematics Maths Method Specialist Maths 12:45pm – 3:00pm
Wednesday 28th September	Physical Education Theatre Studies Applied Computing HHD Music Media 9:00am – 11:15am	Visual Communication Product Design and Technology Studio Arts Systems Engineering Food studies 12:15pm – 2:00pm

Thursday 28th and Friday 29th September

- A number of teachers and subjects have also made themselves available to provide intensive exam revision workshops. Students of these subjects are strongly encouraged to attend.
- The program for these two days will be communicated to students and parents via Compass or Teams soon. All events will be available in more detail on Compass soon.

Term 4- Week 1, 2 and 3

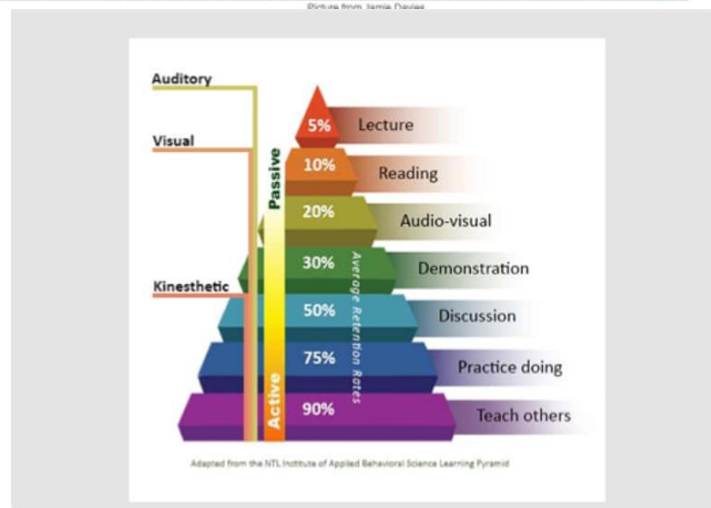
- Scheduled classes will continue to run during week 1 – 3 for all VCE students.
- Teachers will be running revision sessions and workshops up until the last day of scheduled classes on Thursday 20th October
- VCE Early Start students are to undertake study in the library from Monday 24th October.

Top tips when preparing for exams

- Get prepared by setting up a good place to study. Is my study place free from distractions?
- Take control of your calendar. Be organised, stick to a study plan and routine.
- Stay motivated and disciplined. When you're studying it helps to keep in mind your reasons for doing all this hard work.
- Don't leave things to the last minute. Start now!
- Do your best and never give up. When you study, give 110%. Do it in a focused and proper way, avoid any kinds of distractions and use the time you have by undertaking study techniques that work.
- Distributed practice and retrieval practice (completing practice exams without resources is a form of retrieval practice). The learning doesn't happen during the practice exam, the learning comes after the exam when you are evaluating, assessing, and getting feedback. After you finish a practice exam, note down any content area / knowledge and skill from your developmental rubric/s. This will help navigate your revision and study or check in with your teacher or peer.
- Stay positive and set small goals and milestones.
- Don't procrastinate
- Draw on the study techniques and advice provided in Explore 'Science of Learning'.
- Be ready to teach what you have learnt. This is a good indicator that you have a great understanding of the course content leading into your final exam
- Sleep, eat well and stick to your exercise routine.

Technique	Effectiveness	Description of Technique
Practice Testing	High	Self-testing or using past-exam questions while learning.
Distributed practice	High	Developing a schedule of revisions / learning activities over time.
Elaborative Interrogation	Moderate	Thinking about 'why' you have answered a question or creating an explanation for a response.
Self-explanation	Moderate	Linking new information to known information or using applied questions (problem based learning).
Interleaved Practice	Moderate	Developing a schedule that mixes different techniques during a period of study.
Summarisation	Low	Writing summaries of concepts / area of study.
Highlighting	Low	The use of highlighters or underlining while read / rereading.
Keyword Mnemonic	Low	Use of key terms / acronyms / images to associate with concepts to be learned.
Imagery	Low	Attempting to form mental images of materials while reading.
Rereading	Low	Revisiting text that has already been read.

Table 1: Learning techniques and their effectiveness adapted from Dunlosky et al (2013) pg 6.



If you have any questions, students are encouraged to reach out to their subject teacher or a member of the Senior School team.

Happy studying!

David Black and Tanya Moran

Senior School Leaders