

Victoria University Secondary College



Create The Future

Year 7-8 Handbook 2027



Create The Future

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Create The Future



Foreword

At Victoria University Secondary College the vision which our students, staff and parent / guardian community work towards each day, is

“Create The Future”

We work towards this vision by:

- Aspiring to **Achieve**
- Strengthening our **Community**
- **Respecting** Ourselves and Others

Our College Logo

The symbol is based on the appearance of a wreath. Wreaths are commonly associated with success and eternity. Each leaf of the wreath is intended to represent the school's success and the success of the students.

The flowing movements of the leaves stand for the progressive journey of students. This is accentuated by the dots on the side, which gradually enlarge to indicate students going through each year of secondary school.

The final leaf separated from the wreath symbolises the successful students brought up by the school, who enter and strengthen our community. The fact that leaves fly to new and unknown places relates to the multitude of students' aspirations beyond their secondary schooling.

Wreaths are also evergreen plants lasting throughout all seasons. The strength of these plants signifies the strength of the school community and the bond between teachers, students and their parents / guardians.



At Victoria University Secondary College we teach and learn within the College's core values.

We expect students to:

Create the Future

by

Aspiring to Achieve

Strengthening the Community

and

Respecting Themselves and Others

Message from the College Principal

Welcome to Victoria University Secondary College - a learning community where students are guided to discover their talents, set aspirational goals for themselves and grow and develop into independent, resilient and adaptable individuals.

Our vision at VUSC is for our students to be educated and enabled to Create the Future: their own future, their communities' future and the global future.

The Year 7 and 8 curriculum is grounded in the areas of Literacy and Numeracy, with Information Communication Technologies and AVID strategies also at the foreground of each subject area. Students undertake a breadth of discipline areas, allowing them to explore their interests.

Lifelong learning skills such as good organisation, strong work ethic and a desire to achieve their full potential are promoted throughout these years.

At Year 7, the focus is on the student and their transition from primary to secondary school. The Year 7 teaching team work closely with Grade 6 teachers to ensure the transition into Year 7 is a smooth and positive experience. Much care and thought is put into the placement of students into classes. Year 7 is administered by a Middle School Leader, Year Level Coordinators and the support of Home Group teachers.

Each student works with their Home Group teachers, meeting with them each Monday in their homeroom. The Home Group teacher also teaches that group throughout the week so that a strong and trusting relationship can be built. This enables teachers to take an active interest in each student's wellbeing and get to know their family. Students have the opportunity to attend a three day pastoral camp to help them strengthen newly formed friendships and familiarise themselves with their teachers.

Regards,

Elaine Hazim
College Principal



Our College

Transition to Year 7

The transition from primary school is seamless for our Year 7 students. Our orientation program brings Year 6 students into the College where they quickly begin to develop new friendships and familiarise themselves with their teachers. Students start the secondary school year with confidence, supported by the Middle School Leader and Year 7 Coordinator.

At Year 7, each student works with their Home Group teachers, meeting with them every Monday morning to participate in a session around building strong, respectful relationships and resilient and engaged learners. The Home Group teacher also teaches that group throughout the week so that a strong and trusting relationship can be built. This enables Home Group teachers to take an active interest in each student's wellbeing.

Each student is provided with a locker in a separate area to the older students within the College, as well as being situated close to all of their classes and school facilities such as the General Office and Canteen area.

Junior Campus in Deer Park (7, 8 and 9)

As students progress through Year 7 and 8, their curriculum is grounded in the areas of Literacy and Numeracy, with Information Communication Technologies also at the foreground of each subject area. Students undertake a breadth of discipline areas, allowing them to explore their interests. Lifelong learning skills such as good organisation, strong work ethic and a desire to achieve their full potential are promoted throughout these years.

Throughout Year 9, students have the opportunity to engage in exciting new programs within a range of electives and specialised classes. Students focus on developing their life skills by strengthening and engaging with the broader community. Students are also involved in a range of programs and initiatives designed to build their self-confidence, foster independent learning and develop a greater sense of respect for themselves as well as others. Through a teams approach, students prepare for the challenges and decisions they will make as they move into the final stages of their secondary education. The program ensures our students enter the Later Years with confidence and a clear sense of direction.

Senior Campus in Cairnlea (10, 11 and 12)

Victoria University Secondary College takes pride in guiding and supporting students as they travel through secondary school life and beyond. Our expert staff coordinates our Managed Individual Pathways (MIPS) and Careers programs. Together we help plan individual learning needs and preferences. Subject selection and VCE (Victorian Certificate of Education), VET (Vocational Education Training) and VCE Vocational Major programs are discussed with each student. Industry based work experience and structured workplace learning is also offered at all levels within the Later Years.

The Later Years staff work to ensure the individual success of every student, with extensive support for all to achieve their goals in the final years of their secondary schooling and beyond. They are supported by the Senior School Leader and Coordinators, with a separate study area and continual support programs in the areas of study techniques, well-being, additional tuition and careers advice.

Students have access to a wide range of aspirational opportunities and partnerships. These include:

- The Kwong Lee Dow Young Scholars Program
- The Hall & Wilcox Aspirations Program
- Victoria University
- The Beacon Foundation
- Western Chances Scholarship Program
- Orchestra Victoria
- Sport and Rugby Academy

As students progress through to post-compulsory education, we look at every opportunity to pursue tertiary studies, traineeships and apprenticeships. Each step provides exciting new possibilities for the future of each of our students.

This handbook contains all of the information that students and their parents / guardians need to know about the Year 7 and 8 learning program at Victoria University Secondary College in 2027. We have created a curriculum that provides students with a broad range of learning experiences and allows them to begin to sample a range of subjects in order to recognise their talents and identify their own personal interests and strengths for future pathways.

Student Responsibilities and Parent / Guardian Information

School-Wide Positive Behaviour Support

The College has a focus on positive behaviour to encourage students to do their personal best. Introducing, modelling and reinforcing positive social behaviour is an important component of a student's educational experience. Teaching behavioural expectations and rewarding students for following them is a much more positive approach than waiting for misbehaviour to occur before responding.

Aspire to Achieve · Respect Ourselves and Others · Strengthen the Community

	SAFE We Will...	RESPECTFUL We Will...	RESPONSIBLE We Will...
All Settings	• Keep our hands and feet to ourselves • Use facilities for their intended purpose • Follow staff instruction • Stay in designated areas • Sign out when leaving early	• Support and encourage others • Include others • Use our manners • Wait our turn • Walk between classrooms quietly	• Wear the correct school uniform • Attend school every day • Keep our mobile phones in our lockers • Arrive to school and class on time • Put our rubbish in the bin • Use equipment and facilities respectfully • Sign in when arriving late
Learning Spaces • Classroom • Library • Study Centre	• Keep our bag in our locker • Bring our planner to class • Leave class with a signed planner	• Ask to use others' equipment • Line up when waiting for the teacher • Be quiet when others are learning	• Arrive to class on time • Bring required equipment • Work to our full potential • Participate in class activities • Complete homework • Submit our work on time
Toilets / Changerooms	• Wash our hands	• Use the toilets for their intended purpose • Give others privacy	• Keep the toilets and changerooms clean
Yard / Lockers	• Use equipment appropriately • Keep the school a smoke free zone • Play sport in designated sporting areas • Report unsafe behaviour to a staff member	• Walk away from conflict	• Keep our locker secure • Eat food outside • Leave belongings in locker during breaks • Use our allocated locker • Go to our locker and then class when the first bell rings
Canteen	• Form a queue	• Order our own food	• Use the correct entry/ exit • Use our own money
Excursions	• Stay with our group • Follow the rules of Public Transport Victoria	• Follow excursion facilitators instructions	• Be organised for excursions • Arrive on time
Digital	• Keep our passwords private • Keep personal details to ourselves	• Seek permission before posting information or photos about others	• Use technology for intended purpose • Check compass daily • Have a charged laptop • Seek permission before using school name and logo

Uniform

College Blazer is compulsory for all students in Years 7 to 11. Students in Year 12 can choose to wear the College Blazer or the Year 12 College Jacket. The blazer and jacket must be worn every day to and from school including home group and periods 1 and 2.



Summer Dress



L/S Shirt - Stand Collar



S/S Hip Shirt



Pleated Front Trousers



Pleated Front Shorts



L/S Jacquard Blouse



S/S Jacquard Blouse



Box Pleat Skirt



Twill Blazer with Chest Pocket



Wool Blend Jumper



Sublimated Polo Shirt



Mesh Sport Shorts



Rugby Jumper



Microstretch Trackpants



Tie

UNIFORM	
SUMMER UNIFORM - To be worn Term 1 & 4 ONLY	WINTER UNIFORM – To be worn Term 2 & 3 ONLY
College Shorts or College Long Pants or College Summer Dress	College Long Pants or College Shorts or College Winter Skirt
College Short Sleeve Shirt or Blouse	College Long Sleeve Shirt or Blouse
College Jumper (Optional)	College Jumper (Optional)
College Puffer Jacket (Optional)	College Puffer Jacket (Optional)
College Tie (Optional)	College Tie
Plain Black Socks	Long Plain Black Socks or Black Tights
College Baseball Cap Only Permitted (To be worn in outdoor spaces only)	College Scarf only permitted
All Black Leather School Shoes or T-Bars that fully enclose the toes to be worn all year round. Slip on boots (that is, any shoe above the ankle) are not permitted to be worn.	All Black Leather School Shoes or T-Bars that fully enclose the toes to be worn all year round. Slip on boots (that is, any shoe above the ankle) are not permitted to be worn.

SPORTS UNIFORM	
COLLEGE SPORTS UNIFORM MUST BE WORN FOR ALL SPORT/PE CLASSES	
• College Track Pants	• College Micromesh Shorts
• College Polo Shirt	• Sport Footwear
• PE Jacket	

Students may wear plain black dress trousers or shorts in lieu of College bottoms (no logos, no other colours, no cargos/tracksuits/micromesh).

Student Planner

All students are required to purchase and use the student planner. This planner is to be used exclusively for school related matters. It is not a personal planner. If this planner is not maintained in good condition, free of stickers, graffiti and personal annotations, the planner must be replaced. Failure to bring the planner to class results in disciplinary consequences.

This planner is a very important document and our students are expected to take this to each class. The planner outlines important information. It contains detailed information on uniform requirements, school policies, student goals, study plans, class timetables and other information relevant to our students.

The planner is used to record homework for each class a student attends. If there is no explicit homework assigned students are to write RCN (Review Cornell Notes) or NH (No homework). Students record each piece of homework twice, once on the date it is given and once on the due date for that piece of work. They monitor their homework by ticking tasks once they have been completed. Planners are a key part of how students develop the organisational skills to help them succeed at school and beyond. Students will be explicitly taught how to use their planner effectively. Further information on using the planner is included in the planner.

The planner can be used as a means of communication with teachers, if parents / guardians wish to write messages back to the Coordinator, the Home Group Teacher or the Class Teacher.

Homework

Homework is an important part of education. It is designed to provide enrichment to class work, practice and revision. It may take a number of forms: finishing off class work, revising, completing set tasks, researching, redrafting, homework assignments or completing class assignments, practising an instrument and reading.

All students are expected to review their Cornell Notes taken during the day's classes every evening. This process may only take a few minutes for each class. Students will be taught the process of reviewing Cornell Notes over the course of their first semester at the College. All students are expected to do thirty minutes of reading each night, this might include reading with a parent / guardian, reading a school text or reading a book the student has chosen for fun. Students have regular library lessons to ensure they have an appropriate book to read.

Year 7–9 students are expected to complete at least 30–60 minutes of homework daily.

Lockers

All students are issued with a lock and locker at the start of the year. The cost for these is included in the Curriculum Contributions charge which is paid at the start of each year.

Students are required to keep their bags and mobile phones in their lockers at all times. They are not permitted to carry their bags or mobile phones into class or at recess and lunchtime.

For security reasons, students are not permitted to go to their lockers during class time.

Compass

The school uses a service to communicate with parents / guardians called Compass School Manager. Compass helps you communicate with the school and access information about your child and their learning. You can use Compass to:

- Check attendance and enter approved absences from school
- Update your contact details
- See what classes and events your child has this week
- See what assessment tasks and homework your child has
- View your child's assessment results two weeks after assessments are completed and see any teacher feedback
- Book parent-teacher conferences
- Access school reports
- Email Teachers
- View a summary of your child's attendance

You can access Compass through the link on the school website at www.vusc.vic.edu.au. Each family has a unique login and password which will be provided to you or can be reset at the front office of the school. Parents / Guardians have their own login which allows them to remove access other features which are not available to students. Compass can be accessed through a home computer or through an App downloaded to most mobile phones.

Absences/Attendance

All students are expected to be punctual and regular in their attendance. Students are required to maintain a minimum 90% attendance rate at school. Parents / Guardians are required to notify the College if their child is absent. If your child is absent from school and we have not been notified, parents / guardians will receive an automatically generated text message reminding you to contact the school and explain the absence. A follow up note and/or medical certificate must be given to the General Office upon the student's return.

Dental or doctor appointments should not be made during school times unless absolutely unavoidable.

If your child is away for an extended period of time, please contact your child's Coordinator.

If families are planning an extended absence from the school during the term students must contact their coordinators at least four weeks prior to their absence to complete a leave of absence form. This allows planning so that students will have a full program of work to complete while away. It is highly recommended that absences during term time be avoided wherever possible.

Sick Bay and First Aid at the College

First aid assistance is available to deal with minor injury or illness. It is College policy that if students require medication during the school day parents / guardians should notify the College and leave the medication at the General Office. A Medication Authority Form is required for prescription or over-the-counter medication at school, a Medication Authority Form must record or have written evidence that a health practitioner has authorised a medication and a Medical Authority form must be signed by the parent or carer. This form is available at the general office.

Students who feel ill must have their student planner signed to leave class and report to the General Office. The school will contact the parent or guardian before sending the student home. Students are not permitted to go home unless the school has contacted the parent or guardian. Students are not permitted to use mobile phones to contact parents / guardians if they are unwell, without permission from a staff member. Students will not be permitted to walk or catch public transport home but will only be allowed to leave school early in the company of a parent or guardian.

It is important that when students are enrolled at the school, emergency phone numbers are provided as well as a contact number for the parent/guardian. It is also important that these phone numbers are kept up to date and changes are noted through the General Office.

If contact is not possible it may be necessary to use a taxi or ambulance to obtain medical assistance; in this case the costs must be met by the parent/guardian. The costs can be significant; parent/guardians are urged to take out a subscription with the ambulance services.

Permission to Leave the School

Students are not permitted to leave the school grounds during the school day without official permission. If it is necessary for a student to leave the school during school hours, they need a parent / guardian note to be signed off by either their Home Group Teacher or Coordinator prior to submitting the note to the General Office.

Students may not leave school before the end of the school day except in the company of a parent or guardian.

Contacting the School

If you have any enquiries regarding your child's program or progress, please contact your child's Coordinator who will either answer your queries or direct you to the appropriate person.

Teacher Contact

Parents / Guardians are invited to contact teachers via the General Office, however if you wish to see a teacher, parents / guardians must ring and make an appointment. Please be aware that teachers are not always available as they have classes, meetings and other commitments during the school day.

School Detention

Official lunchtime detentions are run by Coordinators for lateness, uniform or missing laptops or planners.

Excursions/Sporting Events

All activities that involve students leaving the school grounds require parent/guardian permission through Compass. It is essential that Compass details are correct and that parents/guardians are familiar with the Compass Parent Portal. A notification is sent through the Parent Portal when excursion permission opens; parents/guardians have until one week before the excursion to consent online. If this is not done, students may miss the opportunity to be involved in the activity/excursion.

Textbooks

We are aware of the cost to our parents / guardians in educating their child. We take particular care not to have an extensive book list so that we can reduce the cost for our parents / guardians. It is important that all our students have the necessary textbooks for all their subject areas. E-books are available for several subjects and are cheaper than textbooks.

VUSC requires that each student have direct access to their own computer, that they take with them to all classes and then home to complete their work and to further their studies. VUSC recommends that parents / guardians purchase the prescribed computer through our nominated supplier as this represents the best value and support available. Full details will be outlined in a letter accompanying this handbook.

Curriculum Contributions and Other Contributions

Your ongoing support of payment towards our curriculum contributions and other contributions supports Victoria University Secondary College's goal of ensuring that your child reaches their full potential. Your contribution continues to help us support, enhance and improve the delivery of our Year 7 – 12 learning, literacy & numeracy program and other signature programs such as; AVID, SEAL & STEM. Furthermore it supports the school in delivering our co-curricular programs such as our college production, interschool sport, Lunchtime activities which includes board games and competitions, homework club, debating and public speaking. All of these programs go towards providing your child with above standard curricular and co-curricular activities. Upon DET's recommendation all schools are encouraged to provide free instruction to students to fulfil the standard Victorian curriculum. We thank you for your continued support for 2027.

Canteen

The College provides a complete canteen service to students and follows the Healthy Food program. Lunches can be pre-ordered in-person by students in the morning or purchased at the canteen at lunchtime. Drinks, fruit, rolls, sandwiches, salads, wraps, toasted sandwiches, hot food and daily specials are available at the canteen. There is no credit available for students who forget to bring their lunch or money. Students can see their Coordinator if they have forgotten their lunch.

Students are not permitted to go home or leave the College grounds at recess or lunchtime, or have food delivered by a delivery service.

Mobile Phones and Ear/Headphones

In accordance with the Department's Mobile Phones Policy issued by the Minister for Education, personal mobile phones, ear/headphones and smartwatches must not be used at school during school hours and should be kept in lockers. Smartwatches will be banned from 2027.

Please refer to the college's **Mobile Phone Policy** for further information.

Punctuality

We expect all our students to be punctual to school and class. Students are expected to be at school by 8:35am so that they can collect their books from their lockers.

Students who arrive late may face disciplinary procedures.

School Bell Times	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Home Group	8:50am - 9:15am	-	-	-	8:50am - 9:05am
Change	9:15am - 9:18am				9:05am - 9:08am
Period 1	9:18am - 10:27am	9:05am - 10:14am	8:50am - 9:59am	9:05am - 10:14am	9:08am - 10:17am
Change	10:27am - 10:30am	10:14am - 10:17am	9:59am - 10:02am	10:14am - 10:17am	10:17am - 10:20am
Period 2	10:30am - 11:39am	10:17am - 11:26am	10:02am - 11:11am	10:17am - 11:26am	10:20am - 11:29am
Lunch	11:39am - 12:24pm (45 mins)	11:26am - 12:18pm (52 mins)	11:11am - 11:41am (30 mins)	11:26am - 12:18pm (52 mins)	11:29am - 12:19pm (50 mins)
Period 3	12:24pm - 1:33pm	12:18pm - 1:27pm	11:41am - 12:50pm	12:18pm - 1:27pm	12:19pm - 1:28pm
Recess	1:33pm - 1:53pm (20 mins)	1:27pm - 1:53pm (26 mins)	-	1:27pm - 1:53pm (26 mins)	1:28pm - 1:53pm (25 mins)
Period 4	1:53pm - 3:02pm	1:53pm - 3:02pm	12:53pm - 2:02pm	1:53pm - 3:02pm	1:53pm - 3:02pm
End of Day	3:02pm	3:02pm	2:02pm	3:02pm	3:02pm

Student Services

Victoria University Secondary College has the services of the following:

- Student Wellbeing Leader
- Health Nurse
- Youth Worker
- Learning Support Program

The College has a Student Wellbeing Team that students may speak to during recess and lunch time.

ICT

Students are expected to bring their own device to the school. Details about the school's prescribed device(s) as well as how to obtain one will be provided separately. Students are expected to read and adhere to the Student Computer and Mobile Phone Use Agreement that is detailed in their planner.

Students need to pay for their printing, which can be done at the General Office either before school or at recess or lunchtime.

Parent / Guardian Involvement

At Victoria University Secondary College we strongly promote a partnership between parents / guardians and staff in order to provide the best education for each individual child. An important aspect of this partnership is to keep our parents / guardians informed about the progress of their child and the events that are occurring at school. We do this in a variety of ways:

Parent / Guardian Newsletter

The newsletter is issued regularly through the Compass School Manager. The newsletter informs parents / guardians of the events taking place in the school. Please read this newsletter, as it will keep you up to date with all the important events and activities that are going on in the school.

The newsletter and important dates can also be found on the school website: www.vusc.vic.edu.au.

Parent / Guardian Participation

There are many ways parents / guardians can be more involved in the College programs. These include many of the committees that operate within the School. Please let the staff at the General Office know if you are interested in being a member of the School Council or its various Sub Committees.

Assessment and Reporting

Parents/Guardians are invited to contact their child's Home Group Teacher to discuss progress at any time. Teachers may contact parents or guardians via the planner, e-mail, or by phone.

Student progress reports are issued twice per semester in addition to an end of semester report that includes a detailed statement of the student's semester results. These reports are provided via the student and parent Compass portals.

For students to be awarded an S for satisfactory completion of the semester, they must have:

- completed at least 90% of classwork
- completed at least 90% of homework
- achieved a passing grade on all common assessment tasks

Full-time attendance is one of the keys to success. An attendance rate of at least 90% is expected in order to support students to satisfy coursework requirements.

Specialist Programs

SEAL Program

The Academy of Accredited SEAL Schools (TAASS) accredits schools who run the SEAL program. The SEAL program is designed to enrich and extend students through a curriculum that emphasises content of greater complexity and depth, more abstract and challenging learning tasks, higher order critical and creative thinking, problem-solving skills, independent research skills and leadership opportunities. This supportive environment encourages learning and collaboration with like-minded peers to develop students academically, socially and emotionally.

The SEAL Program:

- Provides high-functioning students with the opportunity to fulfil their academic and social potential
- Offers a highly challenging, engaging and motivating learning environment for students to move rapidly through the curriculum
- Offers greater flexibility in their choice of subjects for the remaining years of their secondary education
- Provides the opportunity to work independently and cooperatively with other students of similar abilities and interests.

In order to be considered for selection into the SEAL program students must register via the VUSC website and sit an entrance examination. (Further information and registration details can be found here: <https://www.vusc.vic.edu.au/learning/seal-program/>)

Deep Learning Pathway at Years 9 & 10

At VUSC, Years 9 & 10 are focused on providing an adaptable curriculum to meet students' needs. During these years, some students are ready to specialise in their learning and develop their knowledge and skills in specific subjects in greater depth.

The Deep Learning Pathway allows students who are ready for increased complexity in specific subjects to access a greater level of challenge. Students can specialise in the areas of English, taking an extension English class, Literature (for SEAL students only) and Humanities (History and Economics & Legal Studies). Students can also specialise in the areas of Mathematics and Sciences, being part of an extension Mathematics class and having additional periods of Science where they undertake inquiry-based learning. Some students are able to specialise in all areas.

Students in Year 10 are able to take advanced placement in a Unit 1 & 2 VCE subject. These students may also take Introduction to Extended Investigation, which is an inquiry-based learning unit where students are able to pursue academic research in a field of their interest.

Based on academic performance, students will be invited to be apart of the Deep Learning Program.

AVID

Advancement Via Individual Determination is a program run at the College to support students' academic success.

Students enrolling at the College to commence in Year 7 have the opportunity to apply for entrance into the AVID elective. In the AVID class, students undertake a rigorous and engaging curriculum that extends and develops their skills in the five key areas of WICOR (Writing, Inquiry, Collaboration, Organisation and Reading). Developing these skills allows students to succeed in all their subjects and sets them up for success in both VCE and tertiary education.

AVID students are ambitious and aspirational. They spend time thinking about their futures and determining what they will need to do in order to reach their goals. From Year 8 onwards, students in the AVID elective participate in tutorials. In a tutorial, students work collaboratively in small groups to address points of confusion in their coursework, building on their problem-solving skills and developing new strategies for learning.

Students undertake regular binder, diary and Cornell note checks to ensure they are able to meet important deadlines in their school work.

The College runs an AVID elective class as well as using the strategies school-wide in every class.

AVID School-wide

At the College, the WICOR (Writing, Inquiry, Collaboration, Organisation and Reading) strategies are implemented school-wide. This includes the use of a binder, which students use to organise their Cornell notes and resources for every subject.

Cornell note-taking is a system every student uses in all subjects. Cornell notes are designed to support student learning by teaching them to identify new vocabulary, summarise their ideas, take detailed, well-organised notes, and develop questions about their notes in order to test themselves later. Students are expected to review their notes 10 minutes after writing them, 24 hours later, and then after 7 days in order to retain new information they have learnt in class.

All students at the College are encouraged to work collaboratively with their peers, in order to develop interactive and leadership skills. Students regularly participate in activities which develop these skills. For example, Philosophical Chairs enable students to discuss and debate ideas, and Socratic Seminars encourage students to develop critical thinking and ask higher order questions of a text to help them discuss and comprehend what they have read.

Music and Performing Arts

Victoria University Secondary College has a long-standing reputation for excellence in Music and the Performing Arts. Through a multitude of performance ensembles and theatre productions incorporating music, drama and vocals, we encourage our students to develop their individuality and talents, and increase their self-confidence.

Our unique and innovative music curriculum provides students with numerous live performance opportunities, both at the College and in the wider community. Students may perform in:

- Junior Year- Level Concert Bands
- Senior Concert Band
- Rock Bands
- Choirs
- Big Band Ensembles
- Woodwind ensembles
- Solo Performances

The Music and Performing Arts Faculty performs a range of concerts throughout the year which all families are encouraged to attend. These include the Annual Music Concert, Junior Soiree, VCE Performance Evenings and annual Theatre Production.

College Production

The production involves selected students from both the Junior and Senior Campuses. The standard of performance is very high and productions incorporate singing, dancing, musical performances, stage building and backstage work.

Rugby League Academy

This is a specialised select entry program which provides opportunities to students in Years 10–12 to further develop their rugby skills and development. Students work closely with trained Victoria University Secondary College staff and elite coaches to develop their skills and expertise.

An elective in Year 9 is available for Junior Rugby, and our coaches also work with Year 7-8 students in rugby skill development.

Student Scholarships and Awards

Victoria University Secondary College is committed to ensuring that students are recognised and rewarded for their achievements and contributions within the school community. Students are encouraged to maintain a portfolio of evidence that demonstrates achievements and successes in areas such as:

- Academic
- Leadership
- Community
- Sport
- Performing Arts
- Arts

At the end of each year a student may qualify to be a recipient for an award in any one of the following categories;

- Academic Excellence
- Artistic Excellence
- Outstanding Effort
- Contribution to the community
- Sporting Excellence
- Excellence in AVID



The students of Victoria University Secondary College are also fortunate to directly benefit from the many organisations and educational institutions that share partnerships with our College. The following are examples of scholarships offered as a result of such partnerships.

1. The Hall and Wilcox (Law Firm) Scholarship Award - this is awarded to a Year 12 student who has demonstrated dedication to their studies in the area of Legal Studies.
2. Defence Force Long Tan Awards – these awards are presented to Year 10 and 12 students for excellence in leadership and teamwork.
3. Kwong Lee Dow Young Scholars Program at the University of Melbourne (the Kwong Lee Dow Young Scholars Program is an academic enrichment program designed to support high-achieving Victorian school students in realising their full potential. The program provides access to events, activities and resources to give them a head start into university. It also creates a community of students to allow scholars to network and make new friends) – this is awarded to Year 10 students.
4. AMEB Award (AMEB is the Australian Music Examinations Board and it is an exam system for instrumental students to sit exams) – this is awarded to students that excel with high achieving results.
5. Caltex All-Rounder Awards – this award is presented in recognition of student's excellence in academic, leadership, sporting and community service activities.
6. Western Chances Scholarships – this scholarship supports motivated young people who have an obvious talent and who may not otherwise have an opportunity to pursue their education and their dreams.

Student Activities

The College offers our students the opportunity to be involved in a number of activities throughout their time in the school. These include the following:

Debating Team

Students at Victoria University Secondary College have the opportunity to develop their skills in speaking and listening, developing arguments, and researching topics by joining the College Debating Team. Throughout the year, students work with other members of the college to tackle challenging and interesting topics.

Throughout each term, members of the debating team participate in intraschool competitions, competing against other teams in the school.

As well as this, from Year 9 onward, students have the opportunity to participate in the Debating Association of Victoria's interschool debating competition. This event is held every few weeks on Wednesday evenings, where they compete against other schools.

Debating is an excellent way for students to develop their confidence, expand their knowledge by thinking critically about a range of topics, improve their ability to work collaboratively with different types of people, and improve their skills in English.



Student Leadership

There are a range of leadership opportunities for students at the College. These students work with the student body to represent their views to the College Leadership Team. They advocate on behalf of their peers over questions regarding their learning and experience at the College.

Being part of the student leadership team enables students to develop their skills in organisation, public speaking, and collaboration by working with their peers.

Students who gain a position on the team are role models amongst the student body, exemplifying the school values by Aspiring to achieve, Strengthening the community and Respecting themselves and others. More than this, these students encourage and promote these amongst the student body.

Inter-School Sports

The whole school participates in a number of sporting events and students are encouraged to be involved in any of the school's sport teams. Students interested in a particular sport should attend the information meeting and any practice sessions outside class hours as required by the coach of that team. Parents / Guardians are most welcome to attend any of the sporting events. Information concerning the times of training sessions is published via COMPASS.

House Sports

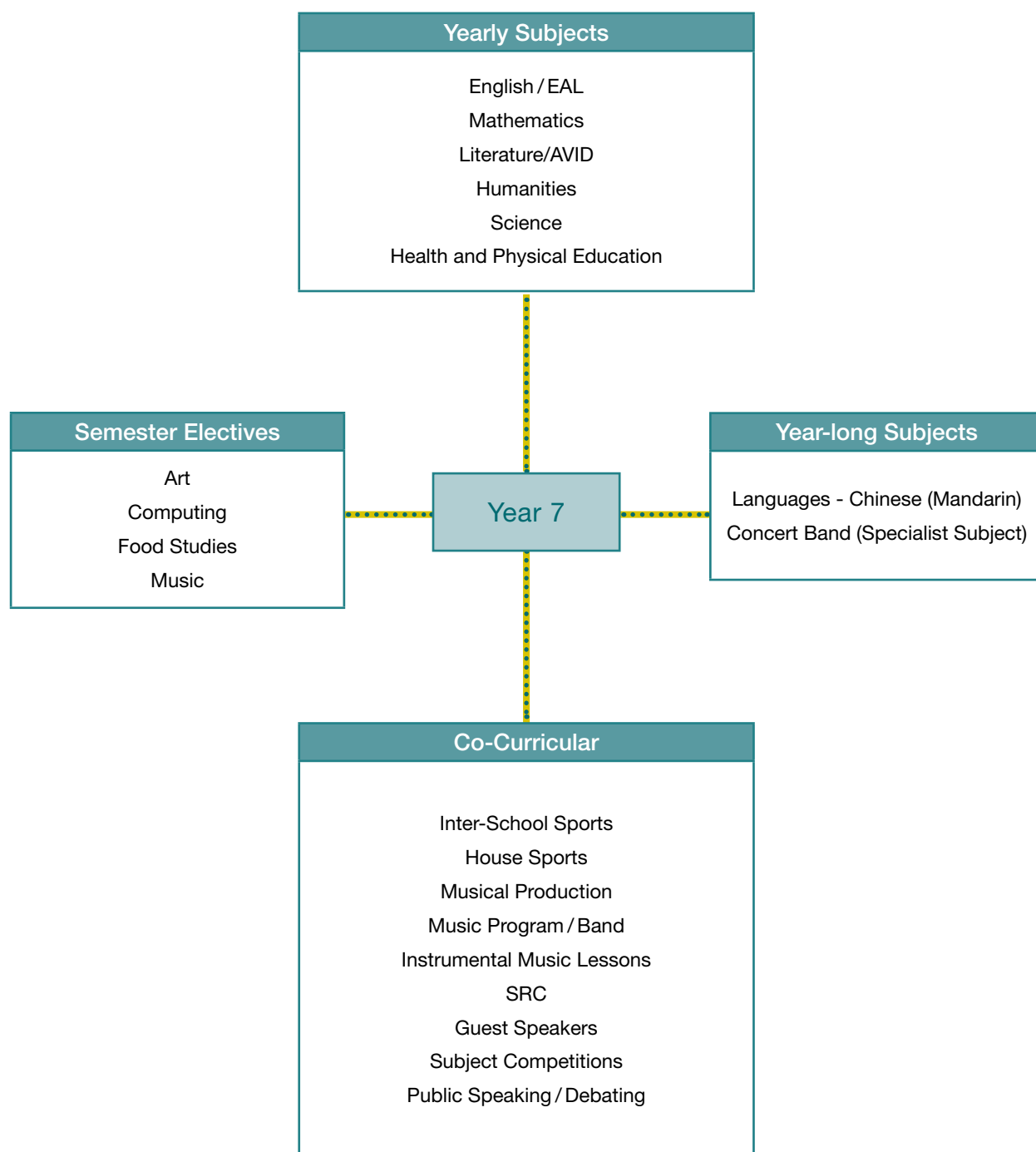
All students are allocated a House Team and participate in the annual Athletics Day.

Career Planning

Students in Years 7 - 9 have the opportunity to participate in a range of activities to help them with career exploration and discovery such as:

- completing a yearly Career Action Plan
- Career Week Activities
- Industry Immersion Days
- My Career Insights (Morrisby Profile) in Year 9.

The Year 7 Program



Overview of Year 7 Curriculum

The structure of the Year 7 learning program is intended to provide students with a balanced, rigorous and engaging curriculum. All students will study Mathematics, English, Science, Humanities, Languages (Chinese) and Health and Physical Education for the entire year. They will also study two electives, which are semester based. All subjects have been developed to reflect the Victorian Curriculum.

The table below gives an overview of the Year 7 curriculum and indicates the number of periods per week allocated to each subject or Key Learning Area. Each period is of 72 minutes duration.

Mainstream Program

Subjects	Periods per week
English / EAL	4
Humanities	2
Maths	4
Science	2
Health and Physical Education	2
Languages – Chinese	2
Elective 1 (Food, Music, Art, Computing or specialist subject Concert Band)	2
Elective 2 (Food, Music, Art, Computing or specialist subject Concert Band)	2
TOTAL	20

SEAL/AVID Program

Subjects	Periods per week
English	3
Literature/AVID	2
Humanities	2
Maths	3
Science	2
Health and Physical Education	2
Languages - Chinese	2
Elective 1 (Food, Music, Art, Computing or specialist subject Concert Band)	2
Elective 2 (Food, Music, Art, Computing or specialist subject Concert Band)	2
TOTAL	20



Year 7 Core Subjects

English

The study of English combines the necessary literacy skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening. Students will be introduced to overarching thematic studies, building the skills to interpret and construct a variety of text types for different audiences and purposes. They will develop a deeper level of comprehension skills in analysing fiction, non-fiction and visual text types, including speeches, articles and short stories and begin understanding formal approaches in responding to these texts. Students will also study the fundamentals of grammar, punctuation and spelling.

English as an Additional Language (EAL)

The EAL program is mostly aligned to mainstream Year 7 English with some variations. EAL is designed to meet the unique and varied needs of students for whom English is not the mother tongue. Speaking and Listening tasks are also included to allow students opportunities to practise speaking English. These are small, specialised classes, designed to meet individual student needs. The focus is on learning how English functions in the Australian context while practising the skills required for mainstream English in the later years. Students utilise the four language modes: speaking, listening, reading and writing to express and exchange knowledge, attitudes, feelings and opinions. They examine language patterns including spelling, grammar and punctuation at the word, sentence and extended text levels. Students learn to reflect upon their own speaking and writing, enabling them to continue to improve upon their use of English.

Humanities

The Year 7 Humanities course incorporates History, Civics & Citizenship, Geography, and Business & Economics units. In the History component, students explore ancient civilisations, such as Ancient China. Students will learn the importance of archaeology and how historians interpret the past. They interpret primary and secondary sources and present historical research. In Civics & Citizenship, students will investigate the world of politics and political parties and explore the Australian identity and values. In Geography, students learn skills in representing and interpreting geographic data. Students will study the importance of river water systems and characteristics of liveability. They apply these skills to a range of spatial data including maps, photographs and graphs. In the Business & Economics component, students learn entrepreneurship and the process of making a business. They will also learn the value of work and how work is done in Australia. Throughout Year 7 Humanities, there is a focus on developing students' academic vocabulary and their skills interpreting data.

Mathematics

In Year 7, a significant amount of time is devoted to consolidating foundational number skills. Students will explore links between fractions, decimals, and percentages. They will expand their knowledge of shapes to calculate perimeter, circumference, area, and volume of different objects. Students will investigate how linear relationships can be graphed and applied in problem solving. Students will explore the relationship between angles, and describe how objects can be transformed mathematically. They will be introduced to the language of algebra to model and describe real life situations. Students will develop their data representation skills and communicate information using tables, graphs and descriptive statistics. Students also study probability, and how to assign numerical values to chance. Students explore these concepts through problem-based lessons and differentiated learning centres, targeted at their level of readiness. They use a variety of models and manipulatives to develop conceptual understanding of mathematical ideas.

Science

In Year 7 Science, students are introduced to safe laboratory practices, including how to identify and correctly use a range of scientific equipment, while developing an understanding of the scientific method through planning and conducting simple experiments. They explore different areas of science by building foundational inquiry skills and learning how scientists investigate the world. Students examine solids, liquids, and gases and how particle arrangement affects their properties. They will also focus on different techniques used to separate substances based on their physical properties. In physics, they are introduced to different types of forces, including gravity, while simple machines explore how basic mechanisms help make work easier. In biology, students are introduced to ecosystems where they will investigate living and non-living interactions.

Chinese (Mandarin)

This beginner-level course is designed for students with little or no prior learning of the Chinese language and script. The course aims to engage students in the learning of Chinese through a supportive and interactive program that builds essential language knowledge and skills. Students are introduced to Pinyin and approximately 80 basic Hanzi characters, providing a strong foundation for further language study. Throughout the course, they learn to use Chinese in practical contexts, including daily greetings, classroom instructions, and exchanging personal information about themselves and their families. The course also encourages students to develop an appreciation of Chinese-speaking cultures through a range of culturally related learning experiences and activities. Learning Chinese helps students strengthen their communication skills, broaden their intercultural understanding, and prepare for future opportunities in a global society.

Health and Physical Education

In our Health unit, Year 7 students explore their individuality and begin to develop an understanding of themselves and others. They explore what it means to have healthy relationships, understand safety in different environments, investigate their identity, and establish and challenge their values and influences on their sense of right and wrong. As students' individual understanding develops further, students explore the changes to the body and relationships during adolescence, physical changes for boys and girls, factors that influence development and make them unique, and learn ways to seek help and advice in regard to their health and development. In Physical Education students will explore fitness components and how to lead an active lifestyle. They will participate in a range of sports developing their skills in hockey, soccer, netball, basketball, badminton, rugby, volleyball and soft ball. Students will also develop skills in cooperation, leadership and teamwork.

Literature (SEAL only)

Literature is designed to improve students' abilities to read, view and respond to increasingly complex texts. Students are selected for this course based on their reading and viewing comprehension skills, which we aim to extend. They closely read and view a range of literary texts, consider how authors use language and other literary techniques, and respond in numerous ways to enhance their own creative and academic writing.

Numeracy

At VUSC, the first ten minutes of Years 7, 8 and 9 Mathematics classes are dedicated to the development of students' number skills through the completion of Number talks or cyclical revision activities.

AVID (Advancement via Individual Determination)

In Year 7 AVID, students develop skills in writing, inquiry, collaboration, organisation and reading. These skills are intended to support students' academic achievement across their subjects. In AVID, students apply these skills in units of work designed around the VUSC vision 'Create the Future' and value 'Aspire to Achieve'. Students have regular Cornell Note, Binder and Planner checks.



Concert Band

The Concert Band program has been a well-respected program at the College for several years now, giving students opportunities to perform and collaborate with their peers.

Students select a concert band instrument of their choice. Instrument families consist of brass, woodwind, percussion and bass guitar. Concert band classes run twice per week as part of the elective program. Students work on concert band arrangements of modern pieces and perform for College assemblies and functions. The cost of the concert band covers the instrument hire, sheet music hire, as well as a thirty-five minute instrumental lesson with a professional instrumental teacher on the selected instrument.

An additional fee to cover the cost of materials, excursions, etc, may apply for students choosing the Concert Band program.

Year 7 Elective Program

In Year 7, students will study four elective subjects (two per semester) and study these subjects in depth. Students will complete all elective subjects over the course of Years 7 and 8. Students involved in the Band Program will only study one elective per semester.

Costs for some Elective Subjects

Parents / Guardians and students should be aware that some of the electives require payment of a materials cost.

Art

Students explore and experience the creation and making of artworks. Students learn how design elements are used to draw people, animals, places or objects and how to combine these art elements to express and communicate ideas about their world. Students experience a variety of mediums such as pencil, charcoal, paint, pastel and clay, and practice techniques thereby improving and broadening skill levels in the use of these materials.

Students research artists and learn to recognise how artists from the past and how contemporary artists use the same art elements, which they themselves are studying to create artworks. Students will access the internet for their research, write and combine visual data to present assignments based on the chosen artists to be studied.

Music Performance

During their studies students will experience music in a variety of different ways including, performing, active listening, analysing and creating. They will learn rhythm reading, writing, and performing through drumming and likewise the understanding of chords through the playing of Ukuleles. They will perform a selection of contemporary works on both instruments. They will discover the origins of rock and popular music and use this information to better evaluate genres of music both past and present.

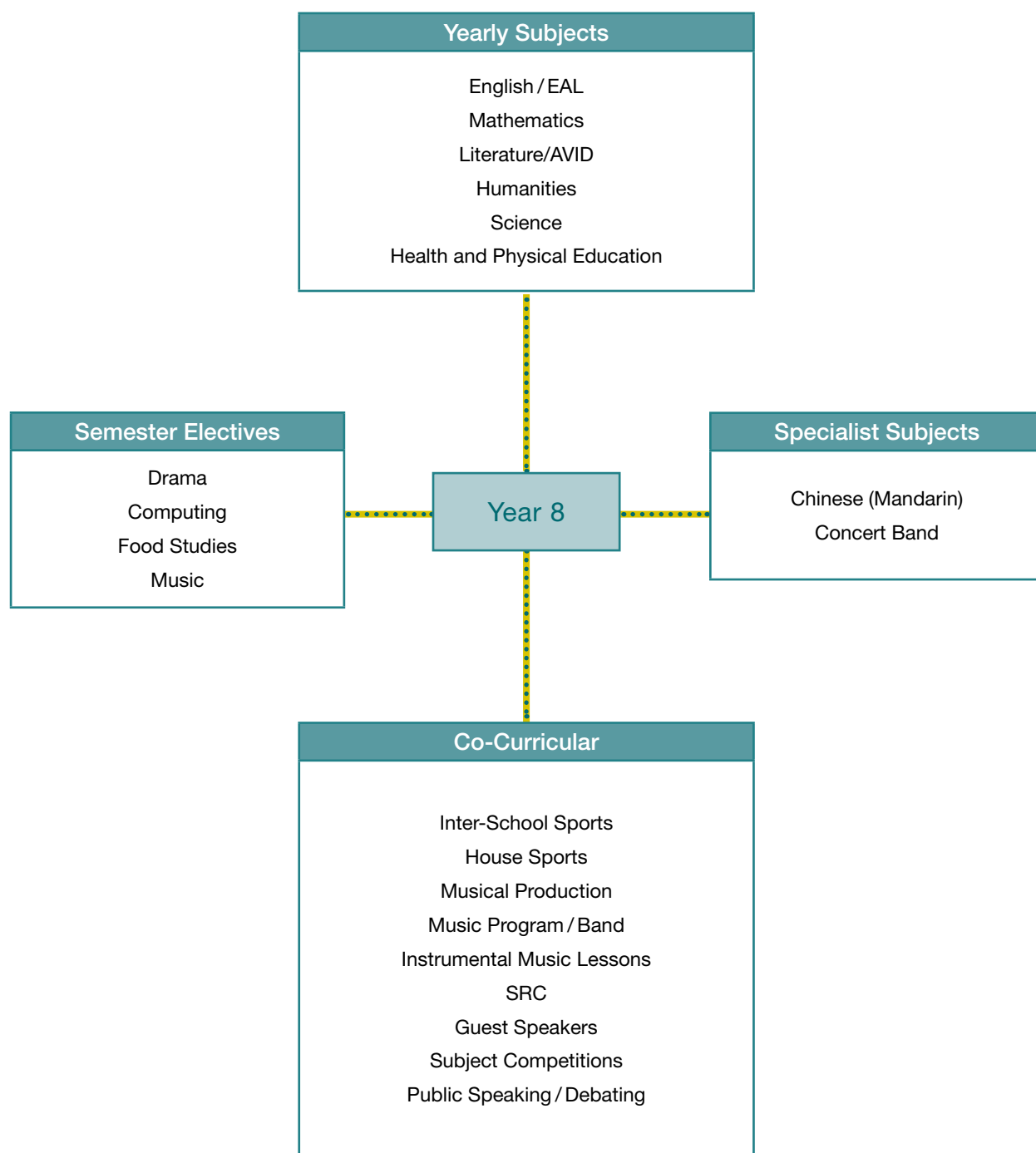
Computing

In Year 7, students are introduced to foundational digital technologies through practical, engaging activities. They explore how data can be organised, represented, and analysed using Microsoft Excel, developing confidence with spreadsheets and basic data manipulation. Students also begin their journey into programming through Python Turtle, where they learn core coding concepts such as sequencing, iteration, and simple algorithms while creating visual designs. These experiences build essential computational thinking skills and prepare students for more advanced digital technologies learning in later years.

Food Studies

In Food Studies students engage in theory and practical cooking lessons to gain an understanding of food preparation in a safe and hygienic manner. Students learn the correct and safe use of utensils and appliances, understanding a recipe, common abbreviations and the relationship between the nutritional value of food and good health. Students are taught the design process involved in Technology as they learn to design, select, produce and evaluate products for design projects.

The Year 8 Program



Overview of Year 8 Curriculum

The Year 8 learning program builds on the balanced, rigorous and engaging curriculum from previous years. The structure of the Year 8 learning program is designed to provide students with a range of learning experiences and strengthen their fundamental skills. All students study Mathematics, English, or English as an Additional Language (EAL), Science, Humanities, and Health & Physical Education. Core subjects at Year 8 reflect the Victorian Curriculum and build upon the essential skills, knowledge and understandings that students have developed in Year 7.

The table below gives an overview of the Year 8 curriculum and indicates the number of periods per week allocated to each subject or Key Learning Area. Each period is 72 minutes in duration.

Mainstream Program

Subjects	Periods per week
English / EAL	6
Humanities	2
Maths	4
Science	2
Health and Physical Education	2
Elective 1 (Food Studies, Music, Drama, Computing or Specialist Subject 1 (Chinese or Concert Band))	2
Elective 2 (Food Studies, Music, Drama, Computing or Specialist Subject 2 (Chinese or Concert Band))	2
TOTAL	20

SEAL/AVID Program

Subjects	Periods per week
English	4
Literature/AVID	2
Humanities	2
Maths	4
Science	2
Health and Physical Education	2
Elective 1 (Food Studies, Music, Drama, Computing or Specialist Subject 1 (Chinese or Concert Band))	2
Elective 2 (Food Studies, Music, Drama, Computing or Specialist Subject 2 (Chinese or Concert Band))	2
TOTAL	20



Year 8 Core Subjects

English

Year 8 English continues the focus of reading, writing, speaking and listening in the College. Students are exposed to a wider range of more difficult texts, and complete detailed study into them. Students are increasingly asked to form and justify opinions about contemporary issues. They will continue to analyse fiction, non-fiction and visual text types, including speeches, articles and short stories. Students will also study the fundamentals of grammar, punctuation and spelling. Students will learn how to establish and maintain a Reading and Writing Journal while using the library to engage in a wider reading program.

English As An Additional Language (EAL)

The EAL program is mostly aligned to mainstream Year 8 English with some variations. Speaking and Listening Tasks are also included to allow students opportunity to practise speaking in English. These are small, specialised classes, that focus on learning how English functions in the Australian context while practising the skills required for mainstream English in the later years. Students utilise the four language modes: speaking, listening, reading and writing to express and exchange knowledge, attitudes, feelings and opinions. They examine language patterns including spelling, grammar and punctuation.

Humanities

The Year 8 Humanities course expands students' skills and understanding of topics in History, Civics & Citizenship, Geography and Business & Economics. In History, students study aspects of Medieval Society and Polynesian history while conducting source analyses and research. In Civics and Citizenship, student will investigate the separation of powers of Australian governance and the protection of rights and freedoms in Australia. In Geography, students learn skills in representing and interpreting geographic data, relating to geomorphic processes such as earthquakes and volcanos. They apply these skills to a range of spatial data including maps, photographs and graphs. In Business and Economics, students will study supply and demand, and market forces. They will also learn about the different financial risks and concerns they may face.

Mathematics

In Year 8 Mathematics, students will build on their understanding of the topics covered in Year 7. Students will explore positive and negative rational numbers (fractions and integers), investigate how linear relationships can model and describe real-life situations, and further expand their understanding of measurement by investigating circles and prisms. They will study applications of percentages in the context of financial mathematics, and further explore algebraic expressions and geometry. Students will gain a deeper understanding of the importance of statistics and probability in making decisions and predictions. Students explore these concepts through problem-based lessons and differentiated learning centres, targeted at their level of readiness. They use a variety of models and manipulatives to develop a conceptual understanding of mathematical ideas.

Science

In Year 8 Science, students engage in the study of biology, chemistry, and physics through topics such as Cells and Body Systems, where they investigate cell structures and functions and explore how different body systems work together. In chemistry, Elements, Compounds and Mixtures introduces the particle model to explain the properties and behaviour of substances, while Chemical Change focuses on how substances react and transform. In physics, Energy explores different forms of energy and how energy transfers and transformations cause change in simple systems. Throughout the year, students participate in a range of scientific investigations, developing skills in questioning, predicting, and planning experiments by identifying variables and considering accuracy and ethics. They also learn to summarise and represent data, analyse patterns and relationships, and use evidence to justify their conclusions.

Health and Physical Education

In Year 8, Health and Physical Education students continue to develop their fitness, skills and understanding of health. In Physical Education students will work on improving their fitness aligning with a theoretical component of understanding fitness components and the physical benefits to exercise. They will participate in a wide variety of sports including netball, soccer, basketball, hockey, volleyball, badminton, and softball. Students will have the opportunity to design their own games and develop teamwork, leadership and peer teaching skills. Students will undertake a cultural games unit where they can explore sports and traditional games from different countries giving them a greater understanding to explore their knowledge of sports around the world. In the theory components, students consolidate their understanding of health and wellbeing through units on respectful relationships, mental health, and nutrition.

Literature

Literature is designed to improve students' abilities to read and respond to increasingly complex texts. Students are selected for this course based on their reading comprehension skills, which we aim to extend. They closely read a range of literary texts, consider how authors use language and other literary techniques, and respond in numerous ways to enhance their creative and academic writing.

Literacy

Additionally, students engage in an Enhanced Literacy Reading session once a week, focusing on the development of critical reading and comprehension strategies that support learning across all subject areas. By the completion of this course, students should be well prepared for their senior studies.

Numeracy

At VUSC, the first ten minutes of Years 7, 8 and 9 Mathematics classes are dedicated to the development of students' number skills through the completion of Number talks or cyclical revision activities.

AVID (Advancement via Individual Determination)

In Year 8 AVID, students continue to develop their writing, inquiry, collaboration, organisation and reading skills. Students apply these skills in order to develop a better understanding of how to cite evidence within their writing, conduct an independent inquiry into a topic of their choice and write about how to become an upstander within society.

At Year 8, AVID students participate in tutorials. This is an activity whereby students work collaboratively to help support one another to answer questions they need clarifying from any of their subject areas.

Year 8 Specialist Programs

In Year 8 some students will have the opportunity to participate in our specialist Chinese and Concert Band programs. These programs are select-entry and students will be nominated by their Chinese or music teacher.

Chinese (Mandarin) - Select Entry Program

This course aims to build on the foundations established in Year 7 and provides students with an enriched pathway to further develop their listening, speaking, reading and writing skills in Chinese (Mandarin). With a continued focus on the practical use of language in everyday contexts, students extend their application of Pinyin and expand their knowledge of Hanzi to approximately 120 characters. Through learning experiences connected to daily life, traditional Chinese culture and modern society, as well as hands-on activities, games and festival-based experiences, students strengthen both their language proficiency and intercultural understanding. Learning Chinese supports students to communicate with confidence, develop intercultural awareness, and engage more effectively with an increasingly global world. Entry into this course is based on selection and recommendation by the student's Year 7 Chinese teacher.

Concert Band

The Concert Band program has been a well-respected program at the College for several years now, giving students opportunities to perform and collaborate with their peers.

Students select a concert band instrument of their choice. Instrument families consist of brass, woodwind, percussion and bass guitar. Concert band classes run twice per week as part of the elective program. Students work on concert band arrangements of modern pieces and perform for College assemblies and functions. The cost of the concert band covers the instrument hire, sheet music hire, as well as a thirty-five minute instrumental lesson with a professional instrumental teacher on the selected instrument.

The cost of the concert band covers the instrument hire, sheet music hire, as well as a thirty-five minute instrumental lesson with a professional instrumental teacher on the selected instrument. An additional fee to cover the cost of materials, excursions, etc, may apply for students choosing the Concert Band program.

Year 8 Elective Program

In Year 8, students will study four elective subjects (two per semester) and study these subjects in depth. (Students will complete all elective subjects over the course of Years 7 and 8). However, students involved in the Concert Band and/or Language programs will do less.

Costs for some Elective Subjects

Parents / Guardians and students should be aware that some of the electives require payment of a materials cost.

Drama

In Year 8 Drama, students create a range of devised and scripted performances in a range of styles. They respond to their own and other's performances. Students develop their expressive capacity in voice and movement as they explore and communicate ideas. This study provides students an opportunity to experience the Drama classroom, before making selections for Year 9. Year 8 Drama focuses on building students self-confidence and self-esteem, in a fun and safe environment.

Music Performance

Continuing on with their music studies students will experience music in a variety of different ways including, performing, active listening, analysing and creating. They will further develop rhythm reading, writing, and performing though drumming and likewise the understanding of chords through the playing of Ukuleles which now includes playing of melodies and with other instruments. They will perform a selection of contemporary works on both instruments. They will discover the origins of rock and popular music and use this information to better evaluate genres of music both past and present.

Computing

In Year 8, students extend their digital skills by exploring more advanced features of Microsoft Excel, including functions such as SUMIF and COUNTIF, and applying data analysis techniques to solve practical problems. They also develop foundational web development skills through the creation of webpages using HTML and CSS, learning how structure and styling work together to produce functional and visually appealing online content. These experiences strengthen students' problem solving abilities and deepen their understanding of how digital tools are used in real world contexts.

Food Studies

In Food Studies students build on the theory and practical skills they have gained in Year 7. They will consolidate their understanding of the design process as well as preparing, sharing and evaluating food in line with the concept of good health and nutrition. Students will explore all components of the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating (AGTHE) and understand how this concept contributes to good health and nutrition. Students will also gain the appropriate skills to prepare and cook food in line with the AGTHE.

The Year 9 Program

Outline of Year 9 Curriculum

With student voice and agency at its core, The Year 9 Curriculum was developed by a dedicated team of teachers in consultation with a student focus group in 2019. In conducting this review our team focused on our school's vision for our students to be educated and enabled to Create the Future: their own future, their communities' future and the global future. Our ultimate aim was to build a curriculum that would provide students with opportunities to engage in deep learning – learning that 'situates the learner as someone who acts upon the world, thereby transforming her or himself and the world itself' (Fullan et al. 2018).

Our Year 9 Enrichment Program presents exciting opportunities, throughout the year, for students to step out of their comfort zone and explore new skills through immersive experiences off campus. Students work together to set goals, problem solve and support each other while participating in several excursions. The program is designed to upskill students personal and social capabilities to support them in fostering healthy relationships with their peers, which is known to result in mental, emotional, social and physical benefits. Through the support of a specialised Physical Education and Health teacher and their Humanities teacher, students develop practical skills in teamwork, decision making, communication and project management. In addition to this, students will begin to consider their career pathway options by investigating university and TAFE courses and the subjects needed to successfully move into these areas of study. Fundamentally, this unique Year 9 program is designed to ensure that our students at VUSC grow into lifelong learners and develop their capacity for critical and creative thinking and ethical, personal and social capabilities. Students will have an elective block filled with new and exciting electives from the Arts, Science and Physical Education learning areas.

For our academically ready students we have designed a Deep Learning program which offers increased specialisation in their preferred area (see details on the Deep Learning page) .

Reading Program

How do we improve students' reading at VUSC?

Year 7-9 students at VUSC take part in reading for 10 minutes at the beginning of every lesson in all subjects except Mathematics. All teachers ensure students are engaged in the reading of fiction or non-fiction texts during this time. Teachers will support students to discover the types of books, fiction and non-fiction, which interest them, and recommend appropriate reading material to students to expand their literacy and cater to their interests. All subjects, except Mathematics, will also require students develop critical reading skills using common strategies which are carried through to senior school.

Students are also expected to read for at least half an hour each night, and they are able to choose the books they read as long as they have chosen a 'Just Right Book'; a book which is of interest and appropriately challenging to the student's reading level. Teachers will also provide critical reading tasks in all subjects, which will give students the opportunity to expand their comprehension skills, vocabulary and improve their speaking, listening and writing skills.

WHY do students need to read so much?

Students who read:

- 1 min/day read 8,000 words/year
- 5 mins/day read 282,000 words/year
- 20 mins/day read 1.8 million words/year

Students who read more than 20 minutes a day have a greater chance of accessing learning across all subject areas, and successfully developing as academic learners.

Reading is also fun! Students can have amazing experiences by entering the world of books.

What are Reading Conferences?

Teachers will also conduct reading conferences with all of their students, either in a library lesson or in the 10 minutes at the start of the lesson. Each student will engage in a reading conference at least once per term, and teachers will keep records of skill development in that time.

This is also the time that students will set reading goals with their teachers, based on the outcomes of the conference. For example: **I need to practice making inferences while I read** or **I will practice annotating the text in my own words**. These goals will sometimes be drawn from the targeted lessons teachers have taught, and students will use a reading journal to write and reflect on the books they are reading.

How Parents Can Help

Parents can help by ensuring their children have an independent reading book in their bags at all times. Parent involvement during home reading is an essential element in developing life-long readers. Encourage your child to read on a nightly basis, record their reading in the reading journal and work with your children to complete regular written responses.

It is fantastic to be able to listen to your child read, either for part of their nightly reading time or on a few occasions each week, however, when that isn't possible, a conversation about their reading is also effective.

Where can students find great books to read?

If a student needs assistance with choosing a 'Just Right Book' they can be encouraged to speak to their English and Enhanced Literacy teachers, as well as the school librarians. Our librarians do a fantastic job recommending books to students as they have a vast knowledge of past and new books that are sure to spark student interest. Students can also join the local library and it is free! Brimbank library is on the corner of Station Rd and Neale Rd near the Brimbank shopping centre.

Students, teachers and parents may also like to browse through the books that have appeared on the Children's Book Council Awards:

<http://cbca.org.au>

Other websites which can help with book selections:

<http://www.goodreads.com>

<https://www.vic.gov.au/premiers-reading-challenge>

Keys To School Success

Students of Victoria University Secondary College can assist their progress and achievement at school by focusing on development of the following 'Keys to School Success'.

Growth Mindset

People with a growth mindset believe they can develop their skills, knowledge and understanding through effort, persistence, dedication and hard work. They take risks, are open to feedback and view mistakes as an opportunity to improve. At VUSC we believe all students can succeed with effort and persistence. We teach them to have a growth mindset – to challenge themselves, to learn from their mistakes, to persevere and to have a positive attitude.

Organisation (Binder, textbooks, laptop, materials & equipment)

Organisation is revealed when young people keep track of their tasks / assignments, schedule their time effectively, set goals for how well they want to do in specific areas of their schoolwork and in other endeavours. Organisation also means having in hand all materials, textbooks and equipment needed to do schoolwork and having a system for storing previously learned material.

To assist with organisation our students use a binder to store their notes and handouts for all subjects. You are expected to take your binder home each night and review and revise the notes you have taken during the day. Reviewing the notes the day you have taken them means you are more likely to remember the information you have learnt. Checking your binder each night means you will also remember to complete your homework. (Refer to appendix A for more detail).

Organisation also means setting a goal to do your best in your schoolwork, planning your time so you're not rushed, having all your supplies ready, and keeping track of when your tasks / assignments are due. Examples of organised behaviours are making sure you understand the teacher's instructions before you begin work, having all your school supplies ready, recording your tasks / assignments and their due dates, and planning when you're going to do your homework and revise your Cornell notes so you have enough time. Students at VUSC are expected to have a study/homework timetable (Refer to Appendix B for a sample timetable).

Cornell Notes

The Cornell Note System is a well-recognised way of taking notes. The system was created to assist students to remember what they have learnt. It allows you to review and reflect on the notes you have taken. Students are expected to review their notes 10 minutes after writing them, 24 hours later, and after 7 days in order to retain new information they have learnt in class.

You should re-read your notes at home and using a different coloured pen add information you may have forgotten to add during class time. You can also cross out any notes you have taken that don't seem essential and you can use a code to indicate information you are unsure about. Your teacher will give you instructions about the symbols and code you can use.

Your memory for the content contained in the notes is further extended when you formulate questions and write a summary based on these questions. Cornell Notes are extremely useful for study purposes. If you fold the notes so that only the question column is visible you can quiz yourself about what information is contained in the notes section.

Reviewing your notes the day you have taken them means you are more likely to remember the information you have learnt. (Refer to Appendix C).

Student Planner

You should always take your Student Planner home along with your binder. Your homework should be written into your planner and any worksheets that go with the homework should be neatly located in your binder. Check your planner every night. This means you will never forget to do your homework. You should also be checking and organising your binder as well as completing and reviewing your note taking for the day.

Homework

Homework reinforces the learning that happens within the classroom. The brain requires repetition and revision in order for it to store information in long-term memory. It helps you develop positive study skills and habits that will serve you well throughout life. It helps you to get ready for the next day's class. It allows you to extend your learning by applying skills to new situations. Homework helps your parents / guardians to learn more about what you are learning in school.

In Years 7 & 8 you need to devote at least five hours a week at home for school related tasks and Year 9 & 10 students need to complete at least six to seven hours and Year 11 & 12 students 17-21 hours. Also make sure to read every night for about 30 minutes.

Checklist - Studying to Succeed

- Ensure you have the following materials and equipment; textbooks, laptop, 4 ring binder, fully stocked pencil case, calculator, dividers, plastic pockets, student planner and Cornell note paper.
- Use a planner to assist with organisation and meeting deadlines.
- Have a homework/study timetable and stick to it.
- Have goals (Motivation comes easier if you do).
- Set one day aside on the weekend to study.
- Set one day aside on the weekend to play sport / spend time with family and friends. It's all about balance but if you have to study for a test, exam or complete a major project, you are to study not socialise.
- Review what you have learned (Cornell notes):
 - 10 minutes after writing them
 - 24 hours later
 - Then after 7 days in order to retain new information they have learnt in class.
- Attend study groups to discuss what you learn in class. (This also helps to get information from your short term memory to your long term memory).
- At home study at the same time and at the same space every time. (Your body and brain love rhythm and predictability).
- How long to study for?
 - 50 minutes at a time. Then take a 15 minute break to relax. Improves recalling of information. Use a timer.
- Can I listen to Music while studying?
 - The answer is YES, but NOT with lyrics if having to remember words.
 - Classical music can enhance memory when doing Mathematics.
- Read for at least 30 minutes every night.
- Eat well, make time to exercise and always get a good night sleep: 8.5 – 9.5 hours of sleep per night.

Appendix A

What should a VUSC Binder look like?

Students at Victoria University Secondary College are expected to arrive for school each day organised and ready to learn in each of their classes with their school binder.

A binder includes:

- A good quality, sturdy 4 ring binder. (We recommend a 50mm binder). The binder should be clearly labelled with the students name and should be in good condition. By the end of the year many binders become a bit battered. If students don't take good care of them they may need to be replaced.
- The School Planner
- A dedicated binder section (with a divider & label) for each subject you are studying, which should include:
 - Any handouts for the course. Each handout should have its own plastic pocket (or at most two handouts to a pocket back to back) so that students can leaf through all their handouts.
 - Cornell notes for the course. Students should be taking Cornell Notes for every class, every day.
 - Some courses require additional materials in their binder sections. For example, junior English students will have a Readers Journal (an exercise book where they record their reading), students studying Chinese need a Write Chinese exercise book, Maths students need a Maths Resource book for most year levels.
- A pencil case including:
 - At least two working black or blue pens
 - At least one working red pen
 - At least one working highlighter
 - A calculator
 - A ruler
 - A pencil case which clips into the binder is ideal.
 - Drawing pencil, sharpener and eraser
 - Glue and scissors
- Blank Cornell Note Paper (This should be already ruled up before class – students can buy pre-printed notepaper at the front office on either campus. Notepaper must be replaced before it runs out)
- Plain loose leaf binder paper (We recommend the kind with reinforced holes. Again this paper must be replaced before it runs out)
- Spare plastic pockets (For new handouts. There should always be at least 10 of these and they must be replaced before they run out.)
- We will regularly check that students bring organised binders to class and a binder grade will be posted on Compass and included in the statement of results for each subject, each semester.

Appendix B

Example Study and Homework Timetable

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun
3:30-4:30	Free time	Free time	Free time	Free time	Free time	Reading	Homework
4:30-5:00	Study Cornell notes	Study Cornell notes	Study Cornell notes	Study Cornell notes	Study Cornell notes	Free time	Free time
5:00-6:00	Homework	Homework	Homework	Homework	Homework	Free time	Free time
6:00-7:00	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner
7:30-8:00	Reading	Reading	Reading	Reading	Reading	Free time	Reading
8:00-9:30	Relax Shower Bed time	Relax Shower Bed time	Relax Shower Bed time	Relax Shower Bed time	Relax Shower Bed time	Free time	Relax Shower Bed time
9:30- 10:00	Lights out	Lights out	Lights out	Lights out	Lights out	Relax Shower Bed time	Lights out

Appendix C



Student:

Subject:

Date:

10 | 24 | 7

These are important too!
This is how you keep yourself organised.

Topic Fill this in now and it will be handy when you are looking for particular topics you are revising			
Learning Intention Pre /4 Just copy down the intention that the teacher has put on the board		Post /4 Use these spaces to rate your understanding of the learning intention before and after the lesson and your level of effort. Effort /4	
Vocabulary Define those new words!		Summary Do this last! Answer each of your questions using one sentence. Check to make sure your summary addresses the Learning Intention - add some more information if you need to.	
Questions Later the same day, write questions here that your notes answer as a way to summarise your notes. They are also a great way to revise - just fold over the paper and try to answer the questions.		Notes Take notes on whatever you are reading, seeing, hearing or doing. Don't wait for the teacher to write something - take notes as soon as you start learning! Your notes should be short and easy to read ? Put a question mark near anything you don't understand yet	
Draw a line right across the page like this one to chunk your notes into smaller sections. Chunking makes you think about your notes!		So what's next? Review your notes with a partner, what can you add? Review your notes in - 10 Minutes - 24 hours - 7 days Circle or highlight key terms Star ideas you think are important ★ Reflections Sometimes you can write a brief reflection on the lesson at the end of your notes. This helps you to think over what you just learnt before the more comprehensive review at home.	



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