

Victoria University Secondary College



Create The Future

Year 9 Handbook 2027



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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

Welcome

Welcome to Year 9! Victoria University Secondary College is proud to offer an exciting Year 9 program that recognises the unique nature of this year of schooling. In a year of rapid change and personal growth we hope to inspire our students to feel challenged, engaged and inspired to achieve.

The adolescent years are clearly a time of significant change: intellectual, physical, social, emotional and spiritual. There is the further realisation that despite these changes, these years are also formative and foundational. The maturation process inevitably concludes with formed habits, values and ideals. The special experiences and programs at VUSC are hence crafted to make these changes positive and to ensure that the best possible foundation is laid, as students become young adults, and as the inquiry and broad-based learning of the junior years gives birth to the knowledge, skill and understanding demanded in specific elements for the senior years.

VUSC is dedicated to making the passage of our students through adolescence as successful as possible. The Year 9 program has been designed to provide opportunities for some students to participate in a wide range of electives while others, who are ready to do so, may enter into a Deep Learning program which offers opportunities to extend themselves in their areas of passion.

The Year 9 program focuses on real-world learning as well as developing students' critical and creative thinking, ethical capability, intercultural capability and personal and social capability.

VUSC promotes effective organisation and systems skills that parallel with concepts of order, process and operational efficiency and effectiveness. Beyond the promotion of organisational skills is the desire to cultivate critical thinking students who are deeply intuitive and connected with their own learning; students aware of their learning styles and strengths; students capable of acting with independence and autonomy; and, students in control of their own learning habits and futures. If students have accomplished these tasks by the end of their Year 9 at VUSC then they will have gained an immeasurable amount from their experience. The foundations for a successful VCE or VCE Vocational Major year, not to mention a fruitful journey of life-long learning, are in so many ways established at VUSC.

Elaine Hazim
College Principal



Course Information

The structure of the Year 9 learning program is designed to provide students with a range of learning experiences and allow students to begin to pursue areas of interest. All students study Mathematics, English or English as an Additional Language (EAL), Science, Humanities and Health & Physical Education. Core subjects at Year 9 reflect the Victorian Curriculum and build upon the essential skills, knowledge and understandings that students have developed in Years 7 and 8.

Students will have an opportunity to select up to four elective subjects, two per semester, and study these subjects in depth. Students will be required to study one elective from either Arts or Technology. The remaining subject choices can be made from any of the electives offered. Subjects that are offered will only run if a sufficient number of students select the class.

Enrichment Program

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. There is a fee associated with this program, to cover the costs of the off-campus activities

Deep Learning Program

At VUSC, Years 9 and 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 extension Mathematics and Science classes where they undertake inquiry-based learning. Some students are able to specialise in all areas.

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

Refer to page 8 for course structures.

AVID (Advancement via Individual Determination)

AVID is an exciting program that supports students in enhancing their educational outcomes and preparing students for a university education. The AVID elective has a strong emphasis on collaborative problem solving, inquiry and study skills. Students participate in tutorials, whereby they identify a point of confusion from their course work, and use critical thinking and questioning skills to solve the issue. Students who are interested in enrolling in the Year 9 AVID program, even if they have not completed the Year 8 program, need to obtain an application form from their Campus Principal. Students will be required to attend a formal interview to determine their suitability for the program.

Core Subjects

English

In Year 9 English, students extend their knowledge of text and language, with a particular focus on analytical, persuasive, and creative responses. In addition to responding to a range of contemporary literature, students also participate in the exploration of context focusing on a specific theme, where they will read and write in a variety of genres. Speaking and listening is also a focus of the Year 9 course, and students will present their point of view through persuasive and informative oral activities. They continue to prepare for senior studies in their writing of language analysis and analytical essay responses which require them to develop and express ideas in increasingly complex ways. Throughout the course, students work to refine their spelling and grammar, as well as their abilities to plan, draft, and edit their work. 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.

English Deep Learning is offered to students in the Deep Learning Program.

English as an Additional Language

The EAL program is mostly aligned to mainstream Year 9 English, with some variations. The EAL program is designed to meet the unique and varied needs of students for whom English is not their mother tongue. These are small, specialised classes designed to meet individual student needs. The focus is on learning how English functions in the Australian context, while also practising the skills required for mainstream English in the later years. Students utilise the four language modes of 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.

Literature

Literature is designed to improve students' ability to read or view and respond to increasingly complex texts. Students are selected for this course based on their reading and viewing comprehension ability, which this course aims to extend. The texts are chosen for their literary merit and are designed to offer a challenge to the students. They read or view the texts closely and consider the way that language, literary and/or film techniques have been used by the author or director. They respond to the texts using different genres, with a focus on academic writing.

Literature is a required subject for students in the English/Humanities SEAL program.

Physical Education & Health

Health and Physical Education (HPE) develops students' understanding of health, wellbeing, and physical activity to support informed decision-making and lifelong healthy lifestyles.

In the Health component, students explore topics such as Party Safe, Respectful Relationships and Consent, Mental Health, and Sexual Health. These units build knowledge about safe choices, healthy relationships, and personal wellbeing, while also developing skills in health promotion and awareness of contemporary health issues. In the Physical Education component, students participate in a range of activities using a game sense approach to develop skills, tactics, and strategies across sports including basketball, volleyball, tennis, netball, tchoukball, and badminton. Students also engage in inclusive sport and study key theoretical concepts such as the musculoskeletal system, physical activity in society, and the foundations of effective training. Through integrated practical and theoretical learning, students build the skills, knowledge, and confidence to lead active and healthy lives.

Humanities

In the History component of the Humanities curriculum, students investigate the causes and consequences of the Industrial Revolution. They utilize historical sources to analyse societal transformations during and following this era. The curriculum includes an examination of Colonisation and various aspects of life in Australia from 1750 to 1918. Additionally, students assess the causes and consequences of World War I and World War II, along with the experiences of Australians during these conflicts. The Geography component equips students with knowledge about the world's biomes and the human activities that affect them. They explore the factors that influence global food security and the effects of tourism on communities and environments. In the Economics component, students assess how the journey of a product from its source to retail impacts people and places. Lastly, the Civics & Citizenship component allows students to delve into Australia's political and legal frameworks, including the significance of the Australian Constitution, the federal government, and the judicial system.

History and Economics & Legal Studies - Deep Learning is offered to students in the Deep Learning Program.

Mathematics

During the course of the year, Year 9 Mathematics focuses on the topics of Index Laws, Measurement, Probability, Statistics, Linear and Non-linear Relationships, Trigonometry, Algebra and Financial Mathematics. 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.

Mathematics Deep Learning is offered to students in the Deep Learning Program.

Science

In Year 9, students further develop their scientific inquiry skills, progressing from questioning and planning investigations to analysing and clearly communicating their findings. They explore concepts across biological, chemical, physical, and Earth and environmental sciences, where they examine atomic structure, subatomic particles, and electron configuration in relation to the periodic table, and how substances interact and represent reactions using word and symbol equations. In biology, students study homeostasis, focusing on how organisms maintain stable internal conditions, and disease, exploring pathogens, transmission, and immune responses, while in physics, waves introduce the properties and behaviour of light and sound. Throughout the year, students are encouraged to develop higher-level thinking skills and approach problems in creative and critical ways.

Science Deep Learning is offered to students in the Deep Learning Program.



Course Structure

Mainstream Program

Subjects	Periods
English / EAL	5
Humanities	3
Maths	4
Science	2
Physical Education & Health	2
Elective / Specialist Program 1	2
Elective / Specialist Program 2	2
TOTAL	20

Maths/Science Deep Learning Program

Subjects	Periods
English / EAL	5
Humanities	3
Mathematics - Deep Learning	4
Science - Deep Learning	2
Physical Education & Health	2
Elective / Specialist Program 1	2
Elective / Specialist Program 2	2
TOTAL	20

English/Humanities Deep Learning Program

Subjects	Periods
English - Deep Learning	5
English - SEAL	3
Literature - SEAL	2
History, Economics & Legal Studies Deep Learning	3
Maths	4
Science	2
Physical Education & Health	2
Elective / Specialist Program 1	2
Elective / Specialist Program 2	2
TOTAL	25

All Areas Deep Learning Program

Subjects	Periods
English - Deep Learning	3
Literature - Deep Learning	2
History, Economics & Legal Studies Deep Learning	3
Mathematics - Deep Learning	4
Science - Deep Learning	2
Physical Education & Health	2
Elective / Specialist Program 1	2
Elective / Specialist Program 2	2
TOTAL	20



Specialist Programs

Specialist programs are offered to students who are excelling in particular areas of the college. These courses run for a full year and students are selected to enter into these programs.

Music

Concert Band – Full Year

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 this elective.

Languages

Chinese (Mandarin) – Full Year

This full-year course is designed for students who have completed a minimum of 100 hours of Mandarin Chinese instruction across Years 7 and 8 in a school where Mandarin is not the main language of instruction. Students are expected to have a secure foundation in Pinyin and to recognise approximately 200 commonly used Hanzi characters. Building on this prior learning, the course further develops students' listening, speaking, reading and writing skills through meaningful communication and engaging contexts drawn from everyday life, contemporary society and Chinese culture. As the year progresses, students strengthen their ability to understand short texts, participate in simple conversations, and produce increasingly extended and structured written responses. Through language learning embedded in social and cultural contexts, students deepen their intercultural understanding and develop valuable skills for future study and global engagement.

Sport

Year 9 Rugby Pathways – Full Year

VUSC Junior Rugby League Academy program provides students with specialised and individual support in skill development and strength and conditioning in order to perform at the level required to access further pathways in the sport. The junior program covers both theory and practical components throughout the course.

Areas of study include the following:

- Practical Components
- Theoretical Components
- Core Skills – attack and Defence
- Diet and Nutrition
- Strength and Conditioning
- Training Principles

Students must meet the entry requirements of the Rugby Academy and be prepared to represent VUSC at all Rugby League competitions. An additional fee to cover the cost of materials, excursions, etc, may apply for students choosing this elective.

Electives

Year 9 students will complete up to TWO electives each semester.

Students who are not participating in a specialist program must select at least one elective from either the ARTS or TECHNOLOGY Learning Domains. The remaining selection can be from any of the Learning Domains.

Costs for some Elective Subjects

Parents and students should be aware an additional fee to cover the cost of materials, excursions, etc, may apply.

Arts/English

Page To Stage

In “Page to Stage,” students with a passion for theatre will produce a scripted play. Essentially, this is the type of drama seen on stages and screens throughout the world, where actors and production crews present the works of playwrights. Students will gain confidence through collaboration, stretching their creativity, and building performance skills. They will also develop their literacy and critical thinking skills by reading and understanding the text, context, and subtext of a play with literary merit. At the end of the semester, the class will perform their play to a small audience.

Literature

Literature is offered as a semester-based elective in either Semester 1 or 2 for students who enjoy reading, film and exploring ideas in greater depth. Students engage with a range of challenging and thought-provoking texts chosen for their literary merit, analysing how authors and directors use language, structure and stylistic techniques to shape meaning. Through discussion, close analysis and a variety of written responses, students develop their critical thinking and academic writing skills while deepening their appreciation of literature and film.

Media

Students in Media will learn to use media technologies to create their own work. They will investigate social constructs through the media and learn to manipulate it to tell their own stories, images and viewpoints. They will also study other Media works and write analysis of those works. They will produce their own film and present it at VUSC film festival..

Arts

Visual Art

In Year 9 Visual Art, students are able to use their creativity to experiment and explore with a variety of materials, processes, and styles. Students will explore different technical approaches such as drawing, painting, sculpture and digital media to create for themselves an artistic style and visually express their ideas.

Throughout a year, students will learn to plan, create, and deliver artworks and comprehend how artists throughout history and across cultures convey meaning in art.

The elective challenges students to:

- Think and problem-solve creatively
- Analyse their own and others' work
- Develop technical and conceptual skills
- Work independently and as a team

Students will become confident to produce and react to art, and finish the year with a collection of personal and completed artworks.

Visual Art is appropriate for students who enjoy being hands-on, thinking creatively, and expressing themselves in different ways.

Drama

Students explore non-naturalistic theatre through the study of pre-modern and modern theatrical styles and conventions. Students work together to interpret and rehearse a script incorporating non-naturalistic theatrical elements. This study culminates in a class performance presentation. Students do not need prior experience in Drama to elect this subject. Year 9 Drama focuses on encouraging students to develop their language and communication skills as well as encouraging students to understand the world around them.

Music Performance - Rock Band

Students studying Music study a variety of areas of music. Students are expected to learn a musical instrument within the context of performing in a small ensemble. Students undertake a level of theoretical knowledge of music including written and aural theory. The subject also includes the exploration of a range of musical styles through listening exercises and an understanding of the use of musical vocabulary in response to listening.



Health and Physical Education

Exercise Performance

Exercise Performance is an engaging elective designed for students interested in sport, fitness, health, and human movement. Students will explore how the cardiovascular and respiratory systems work together to support physical activity and athletic performance. The elective focuses on training methods used to improve performance, including training principles, recovery, and goal setting. Students will also develop leadership and communication skills through sport coaching, where they plan, lead, and evaluate activities and peer coaching sessions. Exercise Performance is ideal for students who are passionate about sport and physical activity, and want to develop their understanding of training, performance, and coaching in engaging ways.

Health and Human Development

Year 9 Health and Human Development is a precursor unit to VCE Health. Students will study content relative to the current VCE study design including; Dimensions of health, Global health initiatives and interventions, Australia's health care, physical activity to promote health, and explore the development of health across the lifespan. This course is designed to give students the necessary tools to promote achievement in VCE by exposing them to concepts explored in later years.

Sport Science

Sport Science develops students' understanding of how the body responds and adapts to physical activity, supporting improved performance and informed participation in sport. Students investigate the body's energy systems, examining how energy is produced and used during different types of physical activity, from short, high-intensity efforts to endurance-based exercise. They also explore the cardiovascular system, analysing how the heart, lungs, and blood vessels work together to deliver oxygen, enhance performance, and support recovery. Students examine skill acquisition, developing an understanding of how motor skills are learned, practised, and refined through different training methods, feedback, and practice structures. In addition, they apply biomechanical principles to understand how movement, force, and body position influence efficiency, performance, and injury prevention. Through a combination of theoretical and practical learning, students build the knowledge and skills to analyse movement, improve performance, and apply sport science concepts in real-world sporting contexts.

Humanities

Philosophy

Philosophy allows students to explore and assess a range of traditional thought and thinkers. Students consider moral dilemmas and the meaning of right and wrong. Students also enter the realm of metaphysics, exploring questions of reality, and the nature of the mind and soul. Students apply logic and critical thinking skills while engaging in rational discussion and traditional philosophical dialogues.

Myths and Legends

'Myths and Legends' invites students to explore mythology and storytelling from cultures around the world, including Ancient Greece, Egypt, Norse societies, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, Japan, and medieval Europe. Students investigate how myths reflect the beliefs, values and environments of different societies, while developing their skills in discussion, source analysis and creative writing. Through analysing myths and creating their own retelling, students build critical thinking, research and storytelling skills.

Geography

Geography seeks to integrate the disciplines of humanities, mathematics, and natural sciences to develop a holistic view of our world. Students will develop their inquiry-based learning to explore geographical elements, use their creativity and problem-solving skills to critically analyse complex data, and develop solutions to contemporary geographical issues. Students will gain knowledge on the diverse biomes and ecosystems of Earth, developments in food security, and how migration patterns affect cultural exchange in a global world.

Sciences

Forensic Science

Forensic science is the application of science concerned with the analysis of evidence from crime scenes to support criminal proceedings. Students will explore how science is used in criminal investigations. It involves a combination of chemical, physical and biological tests on evidence such as hair, fibres, fingerprints and blood substitutes. Students are required to analyse evidence, observe reactions and draw conclusions from experiments performed and research undertaken.

Marine Biology

Marine biology is the study of marine organisms, their behaviours and interactions with the environment. Students will investigate the oceans, its inhabitants and the challenges they are faced with. Issues of coexisting with commercial shipping, recreational boating, plastics, chemicals, and other human activities will be explored. Students will study how these activities affect marine life and suggest alternatives to minimise or prevent them.

Introduction to Environmental Science

Introduction to Environmental Science Students will be introduced to Environmental Science, an elective that focuses on human's impact on the environment. Students will investigate the extent to which humans modify their environments and the consequences of these changes in local and global contexts with a focus on pollution (natural and manufactured) and how we can manage this population using primary and secondary data and sources. At the latter half of the unit, students will investigate how to manage food and water security in Australia and through the lenses of Indigenous Australians. Introduction to Environmental Science is a precursor to VCE.

Technology

Computing

In Year 9, students deepen their digital capabilities through more advanced programming and hands on technological problem solving. They extend their knowledge of Python by exploring more complex coding structures and begin creating graphical user interfaces (GUIs) using Python Tkinter. Students also engage in robotics by building and programming LEGO EV3 robots, using drag and drop programming to design, test, and refine automated solutions. These learning experiences strengthen computational thinking, encourage creativity, and prepare students for the increasingly sophisticated digital challenges of future years.

Food Studies

Students will explore key concepts and participate in practical classes to prepare and cook food in line with food security, food sovereignty and food citizenship in depth. They will develop the appropriate skills to prepare dishes as well as rules to be safe. Students explore the design process further as they learn to design, select, produce and evaluate a fusion dish of cultural and Indigenous Australians.

Notes

Dotted lines for note-taking.



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