



MEDIA RELEASE

North Central LLEN

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Pathways to the future of Work – VCAL, VCE, and VET what do they all mean?

The North Central LLEN (NCLLEN) is working on a range of initiatives to help inform students, parents, businesses, and industry about the changing world of work and how young people can prepare for the future.

In this article we explore the similarities and differences between VCAL, VCE and VET as St Arnaud College students begin making subject selections for 2021 and thinking about their future beyond secondary school.

Choosing a career and pathway is exciting and challenging for young people and there are so many options to be considered.

The Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) is an exam-based certificate which provides students with an ATAR (Australian Tertiary Admission Rank) upon successful completion.

According to NCLLEN Careers and Pathways Coordinator Sue Clay the ATAR is calculated by the Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre (VTAC) and Universities use it as the main selection criteria for entry into most of their courses.

“The ATAR isn't a score out of 100 – it's a ranking showing student achievement in relation to other students - for example, a 65 ATAR means the student performed better than 65% of all other students completing the VCE in that year, while a 50 ATAR means they performed better than 50%,” said Ms Clay.

The Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) is a hands-on option for students in Years 11 and 12 which can lead to Apprenticeships/Traineeships, TAFE and other training, or employment.

Ms Clay says VCAL focuses on the individual, placing importance on the development of personal and employability skills with students learning directly from industry experts and experiences in the workplace.

“Like the VCE, VCAL is a recognised senior secondary qualification. Unlike the VCE, which is widely used by students as a pathway to university, the VCAL focuses on 'hands-on learning'.

“Students who study VCAL are more likely to be interested in going on to train at TAFE; undertaking an Apprenticeship or Traineeship; or gaining employment after completing Year 12,” she said.

Vocational Education and Training (VET) subjects give students the chance to combine industry focused training with their VCE or VCAL studies.

Local students can participate in VET studies at the state of the art North Central Trade Training Centre (NCTTC) based at Charlton which services St. Arnaud Secondary College, Boort District School, Charlton P-12 College, Donald High School, East Loddon P-12 College, Pyramid Hill P-10 College, Wedderburn P-12 College, and Wycheproof P-12 College.

NCTTC Principal Kelvin Baird says depending on the VET subject chosen, they can either make a direct contribution to your ATAR in score assessed subjects, or in other VET subjects contribute 10% of your lowest study score of the primary four. VET subjects can also give you credit for TAFE or University courses.

“Students who undertake VET subjects in year 11 or 12 can finish school with either a VCE or VCAL certificate and a nationally accredited VET certificate”.

“They can also choose to undertake a School Based Apprenticeship or Traineeship (SBAT) as part of their VCE or VCAL which can contribute to the VCE or VCAL in the same way that VET subjects do, with some school-based apprenticeships or traineeships contributing to ATAR scores,” he said.

For more information about VCE, VCAL and VET visit www.vcaa.edu.au.