



Guidelines for access to Vocational Education and Training (VET) courses by students in Years 9 and 10

Effective from	2011
Date published	29 October 2010

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Published by Board of Studies NSW
GPO Box 5300
Sydney 2004
Australia

Tel: (02) 9367 8111
Fax: (02) 9367 8484
Internet: www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au

2010662

Contents

1	Introduction.....	4
2	Guiding principles.....	5
3	Curriculum pathways.....	6
3.1	School Certificate Board Endorsed VET courses	6
3.2	Early commencement of Stage 6 VET courses	6
4	School-based apprenticeships and traineeships	7
5	Notification and monitoring processes	8
6	Further information.....	8

1 Introduction

This document outlines the guiding principles approved by the Board of Studies for access to Vocational Education and Training (VET) courses by students in Years 9 and 10 (Stage 5 of schooling). It also highlights important planning considerations to allow schools to make appropriate choices for their students in their local context.

For schools that belong to school systems, the relevant school system authority may also provide separate additional advice on processes for approval to offer and deliver VET courses to students in Years 9 and 10.

VET courses provide opportunities for students to:

- acquire a range of technical, practical, personal and organisational skills valued both within and beyond the workplace
- acquire underpinning knowledge and skills related to work, employment and further training
- gain experiences that can be applied in a range of contexts, including work, study and leisure
- receive formal VET sector qualifications awarded for the achievement of competencies recognised by industry
- make informed career choices and improve transition from school to work.

VET courses contribute to the broad education of students. They have the capacity to engage and challenge students to maximise their individual talents and capabilities for further education and training and lifelong learning.

Access to VET courses by students in Years 9 and 10 can be a valuable strategy for schools seeking to improve student engagement, retention and participation in education and training. It is an option for schools.

Students in Years 9 and 10 may access VET courses through two curriculum pathways:

- School Certificate Board Endorsed VET courses
- early commencement of Stage 6 VET courses.

All schools intending to offer VET courses to Year 9 and 10 students in 2011 must complete a *Notification of intention to offer VET courses to Year 9 and 10 students in 2011* form and submit it to the Office of the Board of Studies and their school system authority by **Friday, 3 December 2010**.

2 Guiding principles

Undertaking a VET course should be an option for students in Years 9 and 10 as a part of a broad general education leading to recognised schooling and VET sector qualifications. Students must also complete the mandatory requirements of the School Certificate, including the development of essential literacy and numeracy skills.

VET courses undertaken by students in Years 9 and 10 will lead to Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) VET qualifications. They will be delivered and assessed in accordance with the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) under the auspices of a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) which may be a school (as a part of a school system RTO), TAFE NSW college or other VET provider. They should create pathways that allow students the opportunity to achieve higher levels of training and AQF VET qualifications by the time they complete their schooling and should maximise further training and employment opportunities post-school.

Students in Years 9 and 10 should only undertake a VET course if it suits their individual needs. It is not necessarily appropriate for all schools, or for all students. It should be seen as one strategy within a suite of strategies used by schools to address engagement, retention and participation in education and training.

The support of the relevant school system authority and RTO is essential prior to schools offering VET courses to students in Years 9 and 10.

In considering offering access to VET courses to students in Years 9 and 10, schools should take into account:

- the needs and interests of individual students identified through school-to-work transition planning
- local and regional workforce and community needs
- local infrastructure and partnerships
- the availability of appropriate training pathways in different industry areas
- the longer term planning and logistics required to provide training pathways through Years 9 and 10 and into Years 11 and 12
- the advice issued by their school system authority.

3 Curriculum pathways

Students in Years 9 and 10 may access VET courses through two curriculum pathways:

- School Certificate Board Endorsed VET courses
- early commencement of Stage 6 VET courses.

3.1 School Certificate Board Endorsed VET courses

School Certificate Board Endorsed VET courses include outcomes and content drawn from national industry training packages endorsed by the Board of Studies for study as part of the School Certificate.

The AQF VET qualification outcomes of School Certificate VET courses are at a lower level than those contained in Stage 6 HSC VET courses. School Certificate courses would generally not include units of competency contained in Stage 6 HSC VET courses.

The Board has endorsed a range of School Certificate Board Endorsed VET courses for delivery that lead to Certificate I VET qualifications. These courses are 100-hour elective School Certificate courses that will be reported on the School Certificate Record of Achievement.

Course descriptions for these School Certificate Board Endorsed VET courses are available on the Board's website at www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/voc_ed/stage-5.html.

If schools wish to offer other AQF VET qualifications that may be appropriate for endorsement at the School Certificate level, they should contact the Board of Studies on (02) 9367 8310 or their school system authority.

3.2 Early commencement of Stage 6 VET courses

A broad range of Stage 6 VET courses are available that contribute towards the Higher School Certificate (HSC). These include courses from the Industry Curriculum Frameworks, Content Endorsed VET courses and locally designed Board Endorsed VET courses.

Early commencement of a Stage 6 VET course means that a student in Year 9 or 10 undertakes a Stage 6 VET course while continuing to complete the requirements for their School Certificate and any school system curriculum requirements. These students will commence the accumulation of HSC units of credit while concurrently completing their School Certificate. If a student completes a Stage 6 VET course, it will be reported on a Higher School Certificate Record of Achievement issued each year.

Students in Years 9 and 10 undertaking a Stage 6 VET course will be required to meet all Stage 6 VET course requirements listed in the syllabus or endorsed course description. These include studying a minimum 120 hours of the VET course, addressing the HSC Content or HSC Requirements and Advice (for examinable units of competency in industry curriculum framework courses) as well as meeting mandatory work placement requirements.

Students in Years 9 and 10 undertaking a Stage 6 VET course must complete the *HSC: All My Own Work* program (or its equivalent) before the school submits students' 2011 Preliminary or HSC course entries. Principals will be required to certify students' completion of the *HSC: All My Own Work* program (or its equivalent) via *Schools Online (Administration)*.

Students in Year 10 who commence a school-based apprenticeship or traineeship will undertake early commencement of Stage 6 VET courses (refer to Section 4).

Considerations when planning the early commencement of Stage 6 VET courses include:

- students must be able to complete the mandatory requirements for their School Certificate during Years 9 and 10 while also studying a Stage 6 VET course
- potential training pathways should be available in Stage 6 to allow students to undertake additional HSC VET courses in the industry area that provide opportunities to progress to higher level AQF VET qualifications or achieve valuable additional skill sets by the end of their senior schooling
- the age and maturity of students and their readiness to commence a particular Stage 6 VET course
- the pattern of Stage 6 VET course delivery and assessment should align with the appropriate [Preliminary and/or HSC event timetable](#).

4 School-based apprenticeships and traineeships

School-based apprenticeships and traineeships are available to students as part of their HSC pattern of study. Students may commence a school-based apprenticeship or traineeship in Year 10. Early commencement of a Stage 6 VET course is the appropriate curriculum pathway.

The requirements outlined in the NSW Department of Education and Training's *School Based Apprenticeships and Traineeships in NSW Guidelines* apply to all school-based apprenticeships and traineeships for students undertaking their HSC at:

- a NSW government school
- a NSW non-government school
- a TAFE NSW college.

The *School Based Apprenticeships and Traineeships in NSW Guidelines* are available from the NSW Department of Education and Training website at <http://sbatinnsw.info/>

The training plan for a school-based apprenticeship or traineeship needs to indicate the HSC VET courses to be undertaken in Years 10, 11 and 12 that will provide appropriate HSC unit credit for the school-based component of the training plan.

When the school-based apprenticeship or traineeship begins after Term 1 of Year 10, careful consideration needs to be given to the pattern of VET course delivery and assessment to align with the appropriate Preliminary and HSC Event Timetables.

Electronic *School-based Apprenticeship and Traineeship VET Course Mapping Tools* are available to assist schools to map school-based apprenticeship and traineeship training plans to HSC VET courses through Years 10, 11 and 12. These are available on the Board's website at www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/voc_ed/apprenticeships-traineeships.html

5 Notification and monitoring processes

Schools intending to offer VET courses to Year 9 and 10 students in 2011 must complete a *Notification of intention to offer VET courses to Year 9 and 10 students in 2011* form and submit it to the Office of the Board of Studies and their school system authority by **Friday, 3 December 2010**.

The notification form includes a *Training Pathways Planning Tool* which must be completed for every new cohort in each industry area in which the school is planning to offer VET courses to Year 9 and 10 students in 2011. Sample *Training Pathways Planning Tools* are available on the Board's website at www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/voc_ed/stage-5.html

Submission of notification forms – due Friday, 3 December 2010

The school principal should email notification forms to:

- Office of the Board of Studies: vet@bos.nsw.edu.au

AND

- your school system authority:
 - Department of Education and Training: Regional Vocational Education Consultant
 - Catholic Education Commission: Diocesan Vocational Education Adviser
 - Independent Schools: hchand@aisnsw.edu.au

6 Further information

Information on access to VET courses by students in Years 9 and 10 is located on the Board's website at www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/voc_ed/stage-5.html

Located on this webpage are:

- this guidelines document
- the *Notification of intention to offer VET courses to Year 9 and 10 students in 2011* form
- course descriptions for School Certificate VET Board Endorsed courses
- a range of further planning advice and sample planning tools
- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and experiences of other schools
- *Schools Online (Administration)* course entry advice.

Schools should also discuss their plans with a Vocational Education consultant or adviser in their school system authority.

Telephone queries can be directed to the VET team at the Office of the Board of Studies on (02) 9367 8310.