

Master Stage - Year 11 & 12

Frequently Asked Questions

Do schools have a choice as to the mode of curriculum delivery in the senior phase?

All Queensland schools have the capacity to select the delivery and implementation approach in the senior phase of learning. The Queensland Curriculum & Assessment Authority (QCAA) indicates that schools should make this decision based on the specific context of the school and the needs of the students.

What is Compressed Curriculum?

Compressed Curriculum refers to a learning approach where the entire curriculum for a subject is condensed and taught in a shorter time period, usually a single year. This is achieved by doubling the time students spend studying the subject and reducing the number of subjects during the year of delivery. This approach allows students to focus their attention and energy on a smaller number of subjects thereby enabling a more in-depth exploration of the material. By reducing the number of subjects being studied at once, students may find it easier to manage their workload, stay organised, and retain information.

Why did FVSSC choose compressed curriculum as the mode of delivery?

A Compressed Curriculum approach aims to support students in reducing their cognitive load by focusing on 3 subjects per year versus 6 subjects in a traditional school approach. FVSSC has fore-fronted student well being in selecting this delivery method. This approach aims to assist students to manage their stress levels as a result of studying fewer courses with fewer internal assessment items and external exams in a calendar year.

Why aren't all schools offering compressed curriculum?

In 2019, the new Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE) was introduced for students entering Year 11 while Year 12 students completed their studies under the Overall Position (OP) system. Schools could not offer a compressed curriculum in that first year as external exams did not start until the end of 2020 when the first cohort completed Year 12. This means that most schools started and have continued to deliver the curriculum in the traditional way.

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FVSSC has the advantage of being able to choose the delivery method for senior without having to undertake a major change process from the traditional method of delivery to compressed curriculum.

There are number of schools across Queensland who deliver a fully compressed curriculum. Some schools, due to their local context, offer a mix of both traditional and compressed delivery. It should be noted that there has been a steady increase in the number of schools offering the compressed mode of delivery since the new QCE started in 2019.

What subjects will be available?

The compressed mode of delivery does not impact the range of subjects offered. Factors that do impact the range of subjects a school is able to offer include student interest, staff subject matter expertise, cohort size and access to specialist teaching spaces. The subjects on offer for 2024 include:

- Biology (General)
- Business (General)
- Chemistry (General)
- Design (General)
- English (General)
- General Mathematics (General)
- Legal Studies (General)
- Literature (General)
- Mathematical Methods (General)
- Essential English (Applied)
- Essential Mathematics (Applied)
- Media Arts in Practice (Applied)
- Music in Practice (Applied)
- Certificate III in Fitness and Certificate II in Sport and Recreation

Subjects on offer for 2025 will be announced in 2024.

Do students have to select all of their subjects for senior in Year 10?

No. Students will select their Year 11 subjects in Year 10 after they have completed their SET Plan. In Year 11, students will review their master stage pathway and then select their subjects for year 12.

Will FVSSC deliver a Diploma program?

A diploma level qualification is seriously being considered as an option and more information will be provided next term.

What do these acronyms mean - VET, RTO, TAFE and SATs?

- **VET** - Vocational education and training provides pathways for students seeking further education and training and employment-specific skills.
- **RTO** - Organisations that provide VET pathways are known as Registered Training Organisations (RTOs). Schools can become RTOs or may engage the services of an external provider. FVSSC will engage external RTOs in the first instance and may become an RTO at a later stage.
- **TAFE** - Technical and Further Education institutes are a part of the VET pathway. TAFE institutes provide adult and community education through industry skill centres, commercial and enterprise training providers and colleges and some universities and schools.
- **SATs** - School-based apprenticeships and traineeships allow students to undertake paid work with an employer and train towards completing a recognised qualification under a contract of training while completing senior schooling.

Will our SET Planning conversations cover individual pathways?

As a part of the Agile Minds course, all Year 10 students complete their Senior Education and Training (SET) planning. This planning will assist students to navigate and identify their preferred educational pathway and the subjects required to support that direction.

ATAR myths

- **MYTH - All students need to get an ATAR to go to university.** There are many different pathways to go to university. Obtaining an ATAR is only one of these. Students can also gain university entry from completing a VET (Vocational Education and Training) course. Another pathway is for students to complete a Tertiary Preparation Program (TPP) which is offered free of charge by most universities. This course is completed after students finish Year 12, or exit school and usually takes 6 months. Students can also enter university as a "mature aged student". A mature aged student is a non-school leaver who is over 18 years of age and may have taken a gap year or a period of time after finishing school before applying for university
- **MYTH - ATAR is the same as an IQ score.** An IQ score is a measure of intelligence. The ATAR is NOT an IQ score. The only purpose of an ATAR is to assist universities with selecting students for university courses. The ATAR ranks students in relation to other students who have studied similar combinations of subjects.
- **MYTH - Certain subjects give the best ATAR results.** Students are encouraged to select subjects base on ability and interest. There is no one combination of ATAR eligible subjects that will guarantee a high result.
- **MYTH - The harder the subject, the higher the ATAR.** The best pathway is to choose subjects that students are good at or enjoy. This will give them the chance of getting higher grades which will lead to a higher ATAR. Choosing "hard" subjects that they may struggle with will work against students as it will most likely lower their achievement in other subject areas as well due to high levels of stress.