

ESSENTIAL VCE Unit 3 & 4 STUDY SKILLS



You have an important year ahead of you. Your parents and teachers will encourage you to study as hard as you can in the hope that you will achieve excellent results. Unfortunately many students do not know **how** to study. Effective study will only occur if you have developed the appropriate skills. Without those important study skills, the time and effort you invest in your study will be less effective, resulting in grades that may not reflect your level of ability.

Pathways Education will provide you with useful information that will help develop your study skills.

STUDY SKILLS – AN INTRODUCTION

If you wish to develop your study skills you need to understand that study requires you to:

- be organised – this includes your time, work, materials and thoughts. Unit 3 & 4 studies are demanding. The better organised you are, the more effective you will be in your studies.
- remain positive about the year ahead. You will be challenged in a number of ways this year. Remain confident and work consistently.
- develop a range of study skills and techniques to help you achieve your goals. The skills and techniques you will need to develop will probably be different to other Unit 3 & 4 students. You need to identify the areas that require some modification. The tables below will help you.
- adopt an active role in the learning process. Passive recipients of information will be slower to understand and less likely to utilise information effectively.

When you have mastered the art of effective study you will:

- improve your Outcome results,
- enhance your post-secondary options, whether they be tertiary study or future occupation,
- feel a level of personal satisfaction because of your efforts,
- avoid a lot of the stress leading up to Outcome submission dates or tests and the final examinations because you will be better organised, and
- find that your teachers, friends and family respect for you will be enhanced.

ORGANISED, CONSISTENT WORK HABITS WILL HELP MAKE THESE THINGS HAPPEN

WHAT ARE MY CURRENT WORK HABITS?



The first step in developing your study skills is to identify where you can improve as a student. You will find below four tables. By completing each table it will help you develop a more complete understanding of your strengths and

weaknesses as a student. All you need to do is tick the box that most accurately describes your behaviour and then calculate your score. Be honest with yourself. Students who excel in Unit 3 & 4 studies often have a clear idea of their particular strengths and weaknesses as student.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES AS A STUDENT HELPS YOU TO DEVELOP APPROPRIATE STUDY SKILLS

Table 1

STUDENT/TEACHER RELATIONSHIP

Nature of Relationship	Always Evident	Usually Evident	Sometimes Evident	Rarely Evident
1. I seek help from my teacher when I experience difficulty with my work.				
2. I am punctual to any meetings with my teacher.				
3. I feel comfortable discussing my work with my teacher.				
4. I concentrate on what the teacher is saying.				
5. I take notes during my discussions with my teacher.				
6. I will ask questions to further develop my understanding.				
7. I answer any questions asked by my teacher.				
8. I take note of the advice given by my teacher.				

Check your answers again then calculate your score. *Always Evident* – 4 points; *Usually Evident* – 3 points; *Sometimes Evident* – 2 points; *Rarely Evident* – 1 point.

25 to 32 points

Well done! You have a great work relationship with your teacher. You are likely to maximise your Outcome results because you not only recognise your teachers as an important resource but you find your ability to understand the subject matter is enhanced.

17 to 24 points

Your getting there! You have a good working relationship with your teacher but there is room for improvement. You understand that your teachers are an important resource and recognise some academic value in your relationship but, you are able to benefit even more. Take note of the areas that scored poorly and use them as a guide.

9 to 16 points

Careful! You are not using your teacher appropriately. You are probably not working to your potential because you are not utilising your teacher effectively. Try to improve in the areas that have scored poorly.

0 to 8 points

You must act now! Your working relationship is almost nonexistent. The benefits that are derived from a positive working relationship such as enhanced grades and an improved understanding of your strengths and weaknesses as a student are being missed. You must work to improve in this area otherwise you may perform below your potential.

Table 2

CLASSROOM WORK PATTERNS

Classroom Patterns	Always Evident	Usually Evident	Sometimes Evident	Rarely Evident
1. I am punctual to class.				
2. I have all the appropriate books and materials with me at the beginning of the lesson.				
3. I maintain a high level of concentration throughout the lesson.				
4. The work tasks set during the lesson are completed on time.				
5. I actively participate in classroom discussions of the subject matter.				
6. I will ask questions if I have difficulty with the work.				
7. I will answer fully any questions asked by the teacher.				
8. I avoid unnecessary distractions during class.				

Check your answers again then calculate your score. *Always Evident* – 4 points; *Usually Evident* – 3 points; *Sometimes Evident* – 2 points; *Rarely Evident* – 1 point.

25 to 32 points

Excellent! There is no reason why you should not perform to your potential. Your concentration and application is first class. Maintain this approach for the rest of the year.

17 to 24 points

Well done! You have adopted an approach to your classwork, which will reap rewards for you, but there is still some room for improvement. Identify the areas that require further attention and think about how you can modify your behaviour.

9 to 16 points

You can do better! You need to think about how you can use your class time more effectively. If you can strive to improve, there is no reason why you should not enhance your ability to achieve better grades. Try to work towards your potential.

0 to 8 points

Oh dear! You are working well below your potential. It's not too late, make a conscious effort to improve your level of performance. Become more proactive. Use the eight classroom patterns above as a guide. Strive to improve – a number of benefits await you.

Table 3

HOMEWORK HABITS

Homework	Always Evident	Usually Evident	Sometimes Evident	Rarely Evident
1. I record accurately any homework tasks or study				
2. I ensure that any resources needed to complete my homework tasks are with me when I go home.				
3. With major pieces of work, I use a timeline that helps me to complete the work on time.				
4. With minor pieces of work, I commence work on them at least several days before they are due for submission.				
5. I have a homework or study timetable.				
6. I complete my homework in the same place.				
7. The television, internet, computer games or my mobile phone does not distract me when completing my homework.				
8. My homework submissions are my own work and not the work of other students.				

Check your answers again then calculate your score. *Always Evident* – 4 points; *Usually Evident* – 3 points; *Sometimes Evident* – 2 points; *Rarely Evident* – 1 point.

25 to 32 points

Fantastic! You appear to be an effective student at home. You are well organised, task oriented, and conscious of the importance of homework.

17 to 24 points

Your getting there! You recognise the importance of homework but probably need to review how you structure your homework habits. Review how you can improve. There is no reason why you cannot lift your understanding of the subject matter even further.

9 to 16 points

Lets see if we can improve! Homework presents some difficulties. Some simple changes in your work habits will enhance your ability to do well this year. Perhaps it is as simple as finding a quite place to complete homework or breaking large homework tasks down into more manageable pieces. Use the eight habits above as a guide.

0 to 8 points

It's not too late! This is an important year for you. It is extremely important that you appreciate that by completing your homework tasks as well as you can will help you achieve your goals. It's only a short year. Perhaps you should use the eight points above as a starting point.

Table 4

CURRENT STUDY SKILLS AND TECHNIQUES

Study Skills and Techniques	Always Evident	Usually Evident	Sometimes Evident	Rarely Evident
1. I study at home at least five days a week.				
2. I have a study timetable that I follow on a regular basis.				
3. I use a variety of resources when preparing my study notes.				
4. I make useful summary notes from my textbooks, class notes and other resources.				
5. I find it easy to identify the important points from my textbooks, class notes and other resources.				
6. I use several different study techniques to help me develop a better understanding of the work.				
7. I am active in my study. I try to do things to help me maintain my concentration.				
8. I study in a place that is quiet, has a clear desk, good lighting and ventilation.				

Check your answers again then calculate your score. *Always Evident* – 4 points; *Usually Evident* – 3 points; *Sometimes Evident* – 2 points; *Rarely Evident* – 1 point.

25 to 32 points

Great! You appear to have developed an excellent range of study skills and techniques. You are keen to do well this year and with a consistent and concentrated approach to your studies, you will enhance your ability to achieve your goals.

17 to 24 points

You are getting there! You recognise the importance of a structured study program. It is important that you use the time you have set aside for your study as effectively as possible. Try to incorporate some of the areas above that are only sometimes or rarely evident. A small modification in your study program now will help you maximise your grades later in the year.

9 to 16 points

It's never to late! Many students structure a study program that incorporates only one or two of the points above. Start now! Review where you could improve and visit our next section on '*Essential unit 3 & 4 Study Skills*'. It will examine how to organise yourself for effective study including where and when to study and study timetables.

0 to 8 points

Oh-oh! Many students go through their secondary school years without any formal training in how to study. Work towards establishing a study program that is structured, consistent and effective. The eight points above will help guide you but look out for the next instalment on effective study techniques. It will help you enormously.