



# STAWELL SECONDARY COLLEGE

## Subject Selection Policy

### Rationale:

- The subjects that students study have the potential to impact on the pathways open to them following the completion of their secondary education. Accurate, timely and effective subject selection time frames and counselling is critical to students making well informed decisions. The engagement of families in this process is very important. Stawell Secondary College must plan to optimise outcomes for students and for the resource management of the College.

### Aims:

- To ensure an efficient and effective course selection process is developed and implemented across the College.
- To ensure that all students and their families are informed and involved in the process.
- To ensure timely, accurate course selection information is provided to the College Consultative Committee (CC).
- To ensure the CC makes considered decisions and so optimises the College resources.
- To ensure staff are trained and knowledgeable and so provide accurate and timely advice to students.

### Definitions:

Word	Definition
Consultative Committee (CC)	The Consultative Committee is a formal group that ensures school staff have the choice and opportunity to be involved in the consultation process in the school. The consultative arrangements must allow for the representation of employees for the purposes of consultation and the input of the union sub branch.
VET	Vocational Education and Training
VCE	Victorian Certificate of Education
VCAL	Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning

### Policy Statement:

- Learning Areas review their subject offerings in light of current trends in demand. Victorian Curriculum, Victorian Certificate of Education, Victorian Certificate for Applied Learning and the College resources.
- Submissions to change curriculum are called for by the Registrar in Term 2. Submissions can only be received from the Learning Area Leader.
- Approval is sought through the Head of Curriculum and Leadership Team in Term 2.
- The College curriculum for the following year cannot be changed after the end of Term 2.



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- Learning areas will identify prerequisite learning and skills and will clearly outline these in the College Year Level Handbooks. Review of all Year Level Handbooks will be coordinated by the Registrar early Term 3.
- Learning Area Leaders are responsible for the correct information being recorded in these handbooks.
- Course selection and Year Level Handbooks will be documented and circulated to students and families at the commencement of course selection processes in Term 3 via:
  - VCE/VCAL Information Evening to all current Year 9-11 students and families.
  - Home Group Activity – all College students review their Year Level Handbook for the following year.
  - Subject Expo – all current Year 9-11 students and families participate in a College wide briefing all elective subject to be offered in the following year.
  - Individual subject selection interviews will be conducted for all future Year 10-12 students
- All staff involved in the provision of advice and information to students regarding course selection or pathway planning will be uniquely skilled to do so.
- The Registrar and Timetabler will work in conjunction to enter indicative subject selections to build blockings and in turn enter actual subject selections from interviews conducted.
- The CC will use subject selection information to determine the programs to run the following year.
- The College expects that students are committed to the choice they make.

## **Implementation:**

- Term 3 will be the main time that subject advice and selection processes occur.
- The Registrar will determine a timeline for information sessions, activities, advice and course selection during Term 3 in consultation with the Principal, Learning Area Leaders, and the Leadership Team.
- This timeline will be provided to the Leadership Team in Term 4 the preceding year.
- Professional Development will be provided to staff involved in pathway planning and subject selection to ensure staff are skilled.
- A balance should be sought between students selecting subjects they are good at and can do well in, and keeping some breadth in their studies, especially for Year 9 and 10.
- The Registrar/Head of Curriculum will seek and process any changes to curriculum from Learning Area Leaders in Term 2. The Learning Area Leader will provide timely advice, materials and input regarding curriculum offerings to the Registrar.
- The Registrar will lead the development of course documents including prospectuses, handbooks, parent information leaflets and newsletters. Course information sessions will be developed to ensure all students receive adequate time to consider their choices. Subjects entered at the completion of individual subject selection interviews will be assumed to be the student's final choice.
- Students must select their program at the time of their subject selection interview. Should the course not run or they not be accepted, they will choose their further subject from the available



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units of study on offer to minimise any change to their course. This will be coordinated by the Registrar and a Subject Change Form be sent home to parent/guardian for approval.

- Year 10 students can only undertake a VET subject if approved by the Principal. Approval will only be granted if the VET subject supports the student's pathway and has vacancies.
- Students who have not completed their subject selection by the due date/and/or failed to attend their nominated subject selection interview, without parental communication to the Registrar, will only have the established subject vacancies to select from.
- Students will not be granted permission to study a subject via Distance Education.

## **Subject Change Requests:**

- A request for a change of subject by a student, needs to be a combined decision by the student, the student's parents, and the College.
- This is not a routine matter and should be treated more as the exception than the rule.
- Students need to show good reasons for changing subjects; in particular there should be a reasonable likelihood that they will be more motivated and achieve better results by making the change.
- The decision to change will be dependent on numbers in the proposed subject class, and the views of the parents and the College.
- Students will only be allowed to change subjects within the first two weeks of Semesters 1 & 2 so they are able to meet the assessment and attendance requirements for that subject.
- After this date, subject changes can only be approved by the student's respective House Leader and will be dependent on behaviour and wellbeing reasons.
- The House Leader will speak to the relevant teacher for their advice prior to the students changing to the new subject mid semester.
- The Registrar will enact this change after advisement from the House Leader.
- Students will not be permitted to change VET Certificates after the VET withdrawal date nominated each year. This final withdrawal date will be communicated to all VET students via morning Home Group announcements – coordinated by the Registrar.
- Applications to change subject selections must be made through the Registrar. Change will only be granted:
  - On receipt of Subject Change Request Form signed by parent/guardian and student.
  - If the new subject requested by the student has room for the student in question to join on the basis of pathway planning.
  - VCE Subject changes will also need to be approved by the VCE Coordinator.
- The size of practical classes is governed by Victorian Government Schools Agreement:
  - Practical class sizes:
    - (a) Schools are required to provide and maintain, so far as is practicable, a working environment that is safe and without risks to health.
    - (b) Schools should plan for the minimum practical class sizes possible given available resources. Practical class sizes should be determined having regard to the nature of



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the activities, the nature of the equipment used, the maturity and competence of the students and the capabilities of the teacher to provide expert supervision.

(c) A practical class includes a subject or course where the use of equipment and/or material of a potentially dangerous nature is involved and/or a class in which students are undertaking manual or other tasks requiring greater individual supervision of the classroom activity.

Due to this the following maximum class sizes will apply:

- 25 students per class – unless subject teacher approval sought prior.
- 22 students per Year 10 Systems
- 22 students per Year 10 Wood
- 24 students per Year 10 Food Technology
- 24 students per Year 9 Food Technology
- 16 students per VET Automotive

At the conclusion of subject selection, if a class size is more than 25 but not enough students to warrant a second class, student acceptance into class will be based on student performance and attendance. Semester subject changes, and acceptance into unit, will be based on the order the completed forms arrive to the Registrar.

## **Compassionate Late Withdrawal of VET Certificate or Distance Education Enrolment Applications:**

- A student may, under exceptional circumstances, be given approval for Compassionate Late Withdrawal from a VET Certificate or enrolment into a Distance Education subject. The student or parent/guardian must apply, in writing, to the Principal, for permission for alteration to pathway plan.
- Documentation of the exceptional circumstances must be included.
- If the exceptional circumstances claimed are for medical reasons, evidence from a qualified person, for example a general practitioner or psychologist, is required as part of the application.
- All decisions in regard to these matters will be communicated to the students and parent/guardian in all instances.
- These appeals are to be given to the Registrar whom will seek the Principal's decision on a case-by-case basis. The Principal's decision will be final.

## **Evaluation:**

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's review cycle in accordance with the Child Safe Policy, in October, every two years. The review will be led by the Registrar and referred to the Policy Subcommittee and School Council for ratification.

*Reviewed last: October 2017*

*Next Review: October 2019*