

What's the Difference

School

V

Vocational Education and Training (VET)

V

University

A Resource of



*Enhancing post secondary education,
training and employment opportunities
for people with disabilities*

Modified by the NDCO Newcastle-Hunter
September 2008

www.newcastle.edu.au/ndco

How is Post-Secondary Education and Training Different From High School?

Enrolment

Enrolment Into High School	Enrolment Into VET*	Enrolment Into University
Once you enrol at your high school you remain enrolled until you leave or graduate	You need to fill in a form to apply for entry into a course. The fact that a course is available is no guarantee that it will be offered. You will need to re-enrol every semester if you are doing a course for twelve months or longer	You are required to enrol at least every year if not every semester
An enrolment form is completed and submitted by your parent/guardian prior to your entry into high school	Once the College accepts you into a course you must fill out an enrolment form. You must fill out the correct enrolment form depending on whether you are a <i>new or continuing</i> student	Once the university makes you an offer of a place in a program you are responsible for accepting that offer
Enrolment and subject selection are unrelated	To enrol you <i>must</i> complete the form and <i>pay</i> for your course. There may be penalties for late enrolment	Enrolment is not complete until you select your courses for the semester into which you are enrolling
Your teachers and guidance officer can assist you in selecting your subjects and will complete any required paper work for you	You are responsible for keeping your personal details in the College records up to date. Modules within each course are mostly pre-set by the College	You are responsible for selecting, adding and dropping your courses before each semester and completing the required process. A program advisor is available for advice only
It is the responsibility of the school from which the student is coming to advise of any learning support needs to the high school. Decisions regarding any provision of support are based on an ascertainment process carried out by the teachers, Education Department, the parents/guardians and the student	Students with Disabilities or Chronic Medical Conditions are encouraged to advise the College upon enrolment into their course. Decisions regarding provision of support are based on professional documentation and personal confidential negotiations between the student, the DSO and the teachers	Students with Disabilities or Chronic Medical Conditions are encouraged to advise the university as early as possible of their intention to apply to study. Decisions regarding provision of support will be based on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ professional documentation & ▪ case-by-case confidential negotiations between the student and staff of the University

Personal Freedom

Personal Freedom In High School	Personal Freedom In VET	Personal Freedom In University
High school up to grade 10 is <i>mandatory</i> and up till grade 12 is <i>free</i> (unless you choose other options)	College courses are <i>voluntary</i> and most of them have fees	Study at a university is <i>voluntary</i> and often <i>expensive</i>
While you may have some personal study time built in, the majority of your weekly timetable is structured by others	Some courses have set timetables while others are fully self-paced and flexible. You are expected to manage your own time as much as possible	The lecturer often sets the times for lectures. A choice of times for tutorials is usually offered. You are expected to manage your own personal study time
You need permission to participate in extracurricular activities	You must decide whether to participate in extracurricular activities. (<i>Hint: Choose wisely in the first semester and then add later</i>)	You must decide whether to participate in extracurricular activities. (<i>Hint: Choose wisely in the first semester and then add later</i>)
You need money for special purchases or events	You may need money to meet basic necessities if you live away from home	You may need money to meet basic necessities if you live away from home
You can count on parents and teachers to remind you of your responsibilities and to guide you in setting priorities	Some teachers will help you take responsibility for your studies. While counsellors are available you are responsible for your own moral and ethical decisions	You will be faced with a large number of moral and ethical decisions you have not had to face on your own previously. <u>You</u> must balance your responsibilities and set priorities
Guiding principle: You will usually be told what your responsibilities are and corrected if your behaviour is out of line	Guiding principle: As an adult learner you are expected to take responsibility for what you do and don't do, as well as for the consequences of your decisions	Guiding principle: As an adult learner you are expected to take responsibility for what you do and don't do, as well as for the consequences of your decisions

- Vocational Education and Training – includes courses at Institutes of TAFE, Agricultural Colleges, Apprenticeships and Traineeships as well as courses by private training providers.

Classes

High School Classes	VET Classes	University Classes
Each day you proceed from one class directly to another according to the timetable provided. Some days you may have free periods that allow you to study	Some courses run classes continually throughout the day while others have a more flexible approach	You often have hours between lectures and tutorials at variable times throughout the day and week
You spend 20-25hrs in class between the hours of 8.30am–3pm Mon – Fri	Classes and practical sessions can be held from as early as 7.30am or run as late as 9.30pm, any weekday depending on the level, delivery mode and nature of the course	If you are an internal student studying full-time you can expect to spend 12 to 16 hours each week in lectures or tutorials between 8am–9pm Mon – Fri
The school year is 36 weeks long; some classes extend over both semesters and some do not	Courses can be as short as one day in length or as long as two years	The academic year is divided into separate 12-13 week semesters, usually with a week at the end of semester for exams. Universities vary in how many semesters they may offer in a year
Your classes are scheduled for you	In some courses the timetable is pre-set while other courses are entirely self-paced by you.	You select your schedule from the timetable provided
Teachers carefully monitor class attendance and your end of semester report will reflect this	Teachers may not formally take roll, but they are still likely to know whether or not you attended. Failure to attend a practical session can lead to a grading of not competent	Lecturers and tutors may not formally take roll, but they are still likely to know whether or not you attended. Regular non-attendance at lectures and tutorials can lead to a failure
Classes generally have no more than 25 students	Classes usually number no more than 20 students	Lectures may number from 100 students or more
You are provided with textbooks at little or no expense	You need to buy your own textbooks, tools, safety equipment/clothing, materials and stationery. In some practical courses this can cost more than \$200	You need to budget substantial funds for textbooks, which at university will usually cost more than \$200 each semester, but low cost course readers are sometimes available, and you can borrow the books from the library if you plan ahead
Graduation requirements are straightforward; you are guided in the provisions needed to graduate	Graduation ceremonies are usually simple if at all	Graduation requirements are complex. You are expected to know those that apply to you

Teaching Staff

High School Teachers	VET Teachers	University Lecturers
Teachers check your completed homework	Teachers often don't check required reading, but will often base their assessment on the competent completion of set tasks	Lecturers and tutors don't check required reading and responses to the literature, but they will assume the set tasks have been completed successfully
Teachers remind you of your incomplete work	Teachers may not remind you of incomplete work but often you will not pass the module until it is completed	Lecturers may not remind you of incomplete work
Teachers approach you if they believe you need assistance	Teachers may not be aware you are having difficulty until it comes time to assess your competence. It is advisable to approach them if you do not understand	Lecturers are usually open and helpful, but most expect you to initiate contact if you need assistance
Teachers are often available for conversation before, during, or after class	Teachers are usually available to answer questions and demonstrate good practice during classes only	Lecturers expect and want you to attend their scheduled office hours
Teachers have been trained in teaching methods to assist in imparting knowledge to students	Teachers are experienced in their field and also have qualification in how to conduct training to at least Cert IV - Workplace Training and Assessment	Lecturers have been trained as experts in their particular areas of research
Teachers provide you with information you missed when you were absent	Teachers may tell you what was covered in a particular class but will expect you to catch up. They may or may not repeat any practical demonstrations you may have missed	Lecturers expect you to obtain for yourself any notes from classes you missed
Teachers present material to help you understand the material in the textbook	Teachers will usually follow the textbook although they will add extra information. They may give illustrations, demonstrations or provide background information about the topic you are learning	Lecturers may not follow the textbook. Instead, to amplify the text, they may give illustrations, provide background information, or discuss research about the topic you are studying. Or, they may expect <i>you</i> to relate the classes to the textbook readings

	You will be expected to relate the practical component to the textbook and vice-s-versa	
Teachers often write information on the board to be copied in your notes or provide handouts of relevant information	Teachers will intersperse discussion with practical activities or demonstrations. They will usually point out any vital information or skill that you are expected to remember or demonstrate	Lecturers may lecture non-stop, expecting you to identify the important points in your notes. When lecturers write on the board, it may be to amplify the lecture, not to summarize it. Good notes are a must
Teachers impart knowledge and facts, sometimes drawing direct connections and leading you through the thinking process	Teachers impart knowledge and facts but also demonstrate the level competence you will be expected to have in your assessment	Lecturers expect you to think about and synthesize seemingly unrelated topics
Teachers often take time to remind you of assignments and due dates	Teachers will usually remind you of assignments and due dates but will expect you to be up to date with work and your progress towards competence	Lecturers expect you to read, save, and consult the course profile/outline; the profile/outline spells out exactly what is expected of you, when it is due, and how you will be graded

Studying

Studying In High School	Studying In VET	Studying In University
You may study outside of class as little as 0 to 5 hours a week	Depending on the course you are doing you will need to spend approximately 5 hours a week practicing your skill development and the knowledge component of your course	You need to study at least 2 to 3 hours outside of class for each hour in class e.g. 16 hrs of class time may require 30 hours of private study/week
You often need to read or hear presentations only once to learn all you need to know about them	You need to review class notes and text material regularly and practice skills regularly	You need to review class notes and text material regularly
You are expected to read short assignments e.g. a book chapter that are then discussed, and often re-taught, in class	<p>You may be required to read, understand and demonstrate complex procedures, formulae or recipes.</p> <p>In some courses there are substantial amounts of required readings</p>	You will be assigned substantial amounts of reading and writing, which may not be directly addressed in class
Guiding principle: You will usually be told in class what you need to learn from assigned readings	Guiding principle: It's up to you to read and understand the assigned material and practice the skills demonstrated to you; classes proceed from the assumption that you've already done so	Guiding principle: It's up to you to read and understand the assigned material; lectures and assignments proceed from the assumption that you've already done so

Exams

Exams In High School	Exams In VET	Exams In University
Exams are often frequent and covers small amounts of material	You will have frequent opportunities to demonstrate your competence or knowledge in each module of work. The teacher will organize the materials required for you to complete these demonstrations	Exams may be infrequent and may be cumulative, covering large amounts of material You, not the lecturer, need to organise the material to prepare for the exam. A particular course may have as few as one exam in a semester
Makeup exams are often available	You are often allowed multiple opportunities to demonstrate your competence if you fail at the first attempt	Makeup exams are seldom an option; if they are, you need to request them
Teachers frequently rearrange exam dates to avoid conflict with school events	Exam schedules depend on availability of venues and materials, the teacher's timetable and course deadlines	Lecturers in different courses usually schedule exams at the start of semester without regard to the demands of other courses or outside activities In fact, most exams are scheduled to occur in a formal exam period that falls at the end of semester
Teachers frequently conduct review sessions, pointing out the most important concepts	Teachers may conduct review sessions, pointing out important concepts, skills or knowledge required to demonstrate competence	Lecturers rarely offer review sessions, and when they do, they expect you to be an active participant, one who comes prepared with questions
Mastery is usually seen as the ability to reproduce what you were taught in the form in which it was presented to you, or to solve the kinds of problems you were shown how to solve	Mastery is usually seen as the ability to competently complete a task, demonstrate knowledge or solve a problem utilising all the skills and knowledge imparted during the course	Mastery is often seen as the ability to creatively apply what you've learned to new situations or to solve new kinds of problems

Grades

Grades In High School	Grades In VET	Grades In University
Grades are given for most assigned work	Grades are not assigned at all. Students must demonstrate their competence in each module	Grades may not be provided for all assigned work
Consistently good homework grades may help raise your overall grade when exam grades are low	Competency in class activities does not count for the final assessment unless the teacher states so	Grades on exams, assignments and tutorial presentations provide the entire course grade
Initial exam grades, especially when they are low, may not have an adverse effect on your final grade	Competency in each module is often a prerequisite for subsequent modules	Your <i>first</i> exams are usually "wake-up calls" to let you know what is expected - but they also may account for a substantial part of your course grade. You may be shocked when you get your grades
You may graduate as long as you have passed all required courses	You may graduate only if you have successfully demonstrated 85% of all competencies. It is compulsory to be able to demonstrate certain competencies	You may graduate only if your average in classes meets the faculty/school standard