

Mercy College Curriculum Plan



Mercy College is a school which operates with the consent of the Catholic Archbishop of Melbourne and is owned, operated and governed by Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools Ltd (MACS), where formation and education are based on the principles of Catholic doctrine, and where the teachers are outstanding in true doctrine and uprightness of life.

Curriculum and Learning Policy

Vision

At Mercy College, we endeavor to empower students to engage in authentic learning within a global context. We focus on the literacies required for collaborative learning in a knowledge based society. With an emphasis on developing a socially just and environmentally aware consciousness, we provide a basis for the individual to contribute with purpose to their world community as a confident, articulate and self-aware young woman. Inspired by Catherine McAuley and the tradition of Mercy, we aim to do this within a faith based, nurturing and educationally challenging environment that is child safe.

Mission

Mercy College is a Catholic secondary college for young women, committed to handing on the teachings of Christ and His Church, and to living out those teachings. At Mercy College, personal growth is fostered and diversity celebrated. We strive for excellence as a learning community which is student centered, curriculum focused, community oriented and culturally enriched. We are committed to maintaining a child safe environment. In the Mercy spirit, love, compassion and service underpin all we are and do.

Purpose

The purpose of the Mercy College Learning and Teaching Policy is:

To provide a broad, stimulating, differentiated and challenging curriculum of the highest quality to enhance the vast and varied talents of our students.

To provide a diverse curriculum and pedagogical approach to prepare students for academic, vocational, professional and civic leadership, whilst fostering individual growth, independence, a sense of achievement and belonging in an encouraging and supportive environment.

The Victorian Curriculum is the Foundation to Year 10 curriculum for Victorian government and Catholic schools for implementation from 2017. The Victorian Curriculum reflects Victorian priorities and standards for F–10 and incorporates the Australian Curriculum. It defines what it is that all students have the opportunity to learn as a result of their schooling, set out as a series of learning progressions. See <https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/curriculum/foundation-10/Pages/default.aspx>.

The Victorian Curriculum F–10 recognises that increasingly, in a world where knowledge itself is constantly growing and evolving, students need to develop, in addition to discrete discipline knowledge and understanding, a set of skills, behaviours and dispositions, or general capabilities, that apply across discipline content and equip them to be lifelong learners able to operate with confidence in a complex, information-rich, globalised world.

The Mercy College Curriculum Plan has been developed in light of the directions for Catholic education and principles of curriculum from the *Horizons of Hope* education framework: Catholic schools provide an excellent holistic education centred on the students and engaging them in authentic, purposeful learning; and incorporating the philosophy of the Victorian Curriculum F–10 and the Religious Education Curriculum Framework.

The curriculum is a statement of the purpose of schooling and defines what it is that all students have the opportunity to learn as a result of their schooling.

Principles

In the spirit of Catherine McAuley and the Mercy tradition, Mercy College provides a Catholic education for young people and endeavours to make Catholic education accessible to all those who desire it.

At Mercy College we hold the care, safety and wellbeing of children and young people as a central and fundamental responsibility of our College. Our commitment is drawn from and inherent in the teaching and mission of Jesus Christ, with love, justice and the sanctity of each human person at the heart of the gospel.

Reverence for the sacred dignity of each learner provides a foundation for pedagogy in a Catholic school. Through pedagogical choices educators seek to develop deep learning, powerful teaching and to create animated learners who are inspired by the Holy Spirit to act for justice and strive for the common good.

(Horizons of Hope: Pedagogy in a Catholic school, p. 2 & 6.)

Scope

Our school curriculum defines what it is that all students have the opportunity to learn as a result of their schooling at Mercy College.

At Mercy College, Curriculum is enriched by the values, beliefs, perspectives and experiences of each member of the learning community when they engage actively with Catholic understandings of the human person. This orientation towards the person means that the process of curriculum design is shared with students, creating within them a sense of ownership and self-efficacy as learners. Our learning community fosters the conditions for students to have a voice in the design process, allowing them to make decisions about what they need to know and when.

Implementation

An effective learner displays a variety of dispositions. The three that are considered paramount are courage, inquisitiveness and persistence. Visible Learning is the pedagogical approach that underpins learning and Mercy College. Ten Evidence Based Teaching Strategies are used to guide program development. Research has informed this list of evidence based teaching strategies due to their impact on student results.

Mercy College will implement the curriculum by:

Ten Evidence Based Teaching Strategies are used to guide program development.

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1. Be clear about what students need to learn and convey this via Learning Intentions.
2. Tell students what they need to know and show them what they need to be able to do via Success Criteria and worked examples.
3. Use questions to check that students understand; the diagnostic and formative data, together with summative data should inform future lesson planning and conversations with colleagues about student needs.
4. Have students summarise new information in different ways, understanding the interrelationships between aspects of the course can consolidate and deepen learning and also lead to students being able to transfer knowledge, skills and understanding.
5. Give students plenty of practice spaced out over time, it provides another opportunity for formative assessment and a chance to evaluate the impact of the pedagogical approach.
6. Provide students with feedback so they can refine their efforts.
7. Allow time for every child to succeed. Flexibility, differentiation and appropriate adjustments will see all students' progress. Diagnostic and formative assessment data must support differentiation decisions.
8. Allow students to work together in productive ways, collaboration and the development of responsibility for learning builds effective learners.
9. Teach strategies as well as content, with the aim for students to understand where to go next in their learning and what to do when they are stuck.
10. Nurture metacognition, assist students to evaluate the various strategies and understand.

The curriculum is designed and delivered from whole-school to level planning to individual teacher plans. These are created in a collaborative and supported environment. This ensures that a guaranteed and viable curriculum is driving student learning and lifting student outcomes.

Curriculum Content

Mercy College demonstrates its commitment to maintain and develop performance as a leading and highly successful provider of education as evidenced in the following curriculum implementation:

- Curriculum Documentation for all subjects offered according to the Victorian Curriculum and developed using VCAA guidelines.
- All courses offer learning activities that are appropriate for various ability levels.
- All subjects are internally audited every four years, and curriculum documentation must reflect the College's pedagogical approach.
- VCE/ VCAL subjects are delivered according to the Study Designs and VCAA guidelines. All subjects are subject to potential mandated audits each year.
- Differentiation strategies, Learning Intentions, Success Criteria, feedback and Assessment Rubrics are incorporated into all curriculum planning for every subject at Years 7-10.
- There is accountability by all teachers to follow curriculum using such methods as classroom observations, rigorous professional learning and professional conversations that see the discussions about data and moderation.
- Coaching is available to all teachers to assist with classroom practice.
- Personalised Learning Plans are created for students in order to assist with curriculum implementation and support effective teaching and learning outcomes for students. These articulate quality differentiation strategies and adjustments.

Mercy College reviews the Curriculum every four years with the aim to have a deeper understanding of contemporary learning and shape the future direction of learning at Mercy College through working collaboratively with staff, students, families and the wider community.

Each year, units and programs are evaluated through feedback from students and staff and the information is used to inform future planning. Students and parents/guardians attend Subject Information Evenings that outline procedures for selecting subjects.

The evenings showcase the subject offerings. Domain Leaders and Specialist Teachers are available to outline the subjects and to answer questions about the courses offered.

Handbooks describing the subjects on offer and the subject selection process are distributed. Students are invited with their parents/guardians to take part in course counselling sessions to support students to make a decision regarding the senior year's pathway.

Curriculum Review

The College conducts curriculum reviews every four years, led by the Deputy Principal: Learning and Teaching. It is a review of subjects offered by the College, and in line with accreditation requirements. A curriculum review may cover: an individual subject or suite of subjects.

Where legislation or curriculum accreditation changes or where a serious performance issue is identified through monitoring processes, an unscheduled curriculum review may be initiated.

The dimensions of a Curriculum Review include and are not limited to:

- Design
- Structure
- Teaching Materials
- Delivery Methods
- Learning Outcomes
- Learning Experiences
- Assessment
- Staff Qualifications and Experience
- Resources and Facilities
- Viability and Sustainability

The Review Panel is approved by the Director of Curriculum and Pedagogy and includes but is not limited to:

- Director of Curriculum and Pedagogy
- Director of Student Engagement and Wellbeing
- Domain Leaders
- Pathways Coordinator
- Literacy Leader
- Numeracy Leader
- Students
- Parents/Guardians

Upon completion of the review, the Director of Curriculum and Pedagogy shall present a Curriculum Review Report to the College Principal.

Upon approval of recommendations, the Director of Curriculum and Pedagogy shall develop an action plan to address approved recommendations. Implementation of the action plan shall be reported and monitored via the appropriate team.

The school implements the Victorian Curriculum in order to provide students with a comprehensive and cumulative curriculum from Foundation to Year 10.

The school's teaching and learning program is the school-based plan for delivering this common set of knowledge and skills in ways that best utilise local resources, expertise and contexts. Information technology is an integral part of our curriculum as a basic tool for learning. Supported by our governing body, Mercy College will develop strong processes for monitoring student progress and the application of appropriate explicit teaching and intervention strategies.

Mercy College will also take inspiration from the *Horizons of Hope* education framework. This framework supports Catholic school communities to engage in dialogue about the distinctive nature of learning and teaching, leading learning and enhancing Catholic identity in our schools. The framework is a living document that has been added to over the years with examples of practice from schools, as well as additional strategy statements in the areas of Leadership, Wellbeing, Diversity and Religious Education.

Religious Education has a central place in the curriculum at Mercy College, as it reflects our unique character of Catholic identity and focus as a Catholic school. The primary source for developing our Religious Education program is the Religious Education Curriculum Framework, developed by our governing body MACS.

Whole-school Curriculum Plan and Time Allocation

The following provides an outline of the learning areas and recommended weekly time allocation across F–6. Multiple learning areas are often part of a unit and not always taught as separate subject areas. This is ensured through time allocations which are in line with recommendations of the educational authorities.

All Year 7 students will study the following:

Compulsory Full Year Subjects	Compulsory Single Semester Subjects
Religious Education	History
English	Geography and Commerce
Mathematics	Italian
Science	Indonesian
Physical Education	Dance
STEM	Music
Student Wellbeing Program	Art
	Food Studies

Compulsory Subjects

All Year 8 students will study the following:

Compulsory Full Year Subjects	Compulsory Single Semester Subjects
Religious Education	History
English	Geography and Commerce
Mathematics	Italian
Science	Indonesian
Student Wellbeing Program	Physical Education
	Food Studies
	STEM
	Health
	Textiles
	Drama
	Music
	Visual Communication Design

Compulsory Subjects

All Year 9 students will study the following:

Compulsory Full Year Subjects	Compulsory Single Semester Subjects
Religious Education	History
English	Geography
Mathematics or Advanced Mathematics	
Science	
Languages: Italian or Indonesian	
Health and Physical Education	
Wellbeing Program	

Year 9 Electives

Block A – The Arts	Block B – Technology	Block C – Health and Physical Education and STEM
Drama Art Rock Band Media Visual Communication Design	Design and Create World Food Traveller	Outdoor Education Sustainable Technology

Compulsory Subjects

All Year 10 students will study the following:

Compulsory Full Year Subjects	Compulsory Single Semester Subjects
Religious Education English Mathematics or Advanced Mathematics Science Physical Education	Commerce History

Year 10 Electives

The Arts	Technology	Humanities, Health and Physical Education, Science and Languages	Unit 1 and 2 Sequence (counts as four electives)
Drama Art Media Music Performance Visual Communication and Design	Café Culture Design and Fashion	Digi Tech and Sustainability Health Justice It's a Small World Psychology Indonesian (counts as two electives) VET Italian (counts as two electives)	Accounting Biology Physical Education

VCAL Studies

VCAL Work related Skills

VCAL Personal Development Skills

VCAL Numeracy

VET Active Volunteering

VET Business Studies

The following is a list of Unit 1-4 sequences offered for VCE 2021. Subjects where it is not recommended for students to study Units 3 and 4 without completing Units 1 and 2 in Year 11 are shaded.

Key Learning Area	Subject	Units 1 and 2	Units 3 and 4
English	English/EAL	✓	✓
Health and Physical Education	Health and Human Development	✓	✓
	Physical Education	✓	✓
Humanities	Accounting	✓	✓
	Business Management	✓	✓
	History: 20 th Century	✓	
	History: Revolutions		✓
	Legal Studies	✓	✓
Languages	Italian	✓	✓
Mathematics	General Mathematics (Further)	✓	
	Further Mathematics		✓
	Mathematical Methods	✓	✓
	Specialist Mathematics	✓	✓
Religious Education	Religion and Society	✓ Unit 2 Year 11	✓
Science	Biology	✓	✓
	Chemistry	✓	✓
	Environmental Science	✓	
	Psychology	✓	✓
	Physics	✓	✓
Technology	Food Studies	✓	✓
	Product Design and Technology	✓	✓
The Arts	Drama	✓	✓
	Media	✓	
	Music Performance	✓	✓
	Studio Arts	✓	✓
	Visual Communication Design	✓	✓
VET Certificates	Based on student interest, availability and access	✓	✓
Extension Studies	ACU Step-up (must be doing Unit 3/4 HHD)		✓

Capabilities

The Victorian Curriculum includes both knowledge and skills. It is expected that the skills and knowledge defined in the capabilities will be developed, practised, deployed and demonstrated by students in and through their learning across the curriculum:

- Critical & Creative Thinking
- Ethical
- Intercultural
- Personal & Social.

The skills and knowledge defined in the capabilities will be developed in student learning across the curriculum areas where it is relevant and authentic to do so.

Curriculum Organisation and Implementation

The school's planning for curriculum draws on the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) curriculum planning site for age-appropriate content, sequential learning patterns, and interrelated aspects of the content and skills and of the desired learning capabilities. Refer to the Pedagogical Framework.

All content is developed using the following documents:

- Mercy College policies for each of the learning areas
- Mercy College Religious Education Scope and Sequence: Religious Education Curriculum Framework
- Victorian Curriculum F–10
- Statement of Philosophy.

A variety of other resources, including online resources, will be available to support planning.

Evaluation

This Policy will be monitored and reviewed by the staff, in accordance with the School Improvement Plan or as required.

School Policies/References

Mercy College Learning & Teaching Policy
Mercy College Curriculum Handbooks as produced each year
Mercy College Curriculum Review Policy