

# Subject Descriptions

VCE offerings

# 2024



Melton

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## VICTORIAN CERTIFICATE OF EDUCATION (VCE)

### HOW IS VCE STRUCTURED?

Heathdale offers a wide range of VCE subjects from which students may choose. Each semester forms one Unit. Students will typically study Units 1 and 2 of a subject in Year 11, and Units 3 and 4 in Year 12. A typical Heathdale student studies 22 Units during their VCE, which translates into six Year 11 subjects and five Year 12 subjects.

### WHAT STUDIES CAN I CHOOSE?

With so many options and combinations available, it can be confusing to select the best course for you.

Some good questions to ask are:

- What are my interests?
- What subjects do I enjoy studying?
- Have I asked my parents what they think my strengths are?
- What do I want to do after I graduate? Do I want to go on to University or some other form of further training?
- What courses am I thinking of enrolling in? Have I spoken to a Careers Counsellor about their prerequisites and how to apply for them?
- Which subjects are going to prepare me for these courses? Have I spoken to the teachers of these courses so that I understand their demands and the skills that I will need to show and develop?

Remember that you're not expected to decide on your subjects alone. Please talk to your parents and teachers about the best direction forward.

### WHAT DO I HAVE TO DO TO ACHIEVE MY VCE?

To achieve your VCE, you must successfully complete at least 16 units. As detailed above, and in common with the vast majority of schools that deliver the VCE, Heathdale requires students to complete more Units in order to achieve a greater breadth of learning.

The 16 Units that must be satisfactorily completed include:

- three units from the English group, two of which must be a Unit 3 and 4 sequence.
- at least three additional Unit 3 and 4 sequences.

While you have been given a brief overview of the differences between the English courses, you can find out more about them on the VCAA website or in this handbook.

You can complete the remaining units, including the three sequences at Unit 3 and 4 level, in any study that interests you. This could even be an additional English group study on top of the units you take to meet the minimum English requirement.

## HOW IS THE VCE MARKED?

Units 1 and 2 (Year 11) are marked internally by the school, according to the assessment tasks outlined in each subject's Study Design and our internal examinations. There are no external exams in Year 11 for Unit 1 & 2 subjects.

In Units 1 and 2 you will receive either S (Satisfactory), or N (Non-Satisfactory). While Heathdale provides a grade from A+ to E and feedback for each assessment task, only the S or N counts towards your VCE and is externally recorded.

In Units 3 and 4 you will receive feedback and grades calculated from A+ to E, for your assessment tasks, as well as an S or N. These are marked internally, and then reported to VCAA who moderate the marks to ensure that all schools in Victoria are marking to the same standard. Unit 3 and 4 subjects also have external assessments which are set and marked by the VCAA. Usually this will be an examination – whether written, oral, performance or in an electronic format. VCE examinations are held each year in October and November and are marked by assessors who are experts in their area of study.

## WHAT IS THE ATAR AND HOW IS IT CALCULATED?

ATAR stands for the Australian Tertiary Admission Rank and is one measure many universities use to help them select students for entrance into university courses. The ATAR is a rank (not a score) out of 100 and ranks every student according to their achievement in their Year 12 subjects. The ATAR is a number between 0 and 99.95.

Each Unit 3-4 subject will create a study score out of 50. The ATAR consists of adding together your score for your highest English subject, plus your next 3 highest subject scores and then 10% of any scores for fifth or sixth subjects. Students are then assigned a percentage rank based on that combined score total and it is distributed evenly over a 100-point scale. So, if you get an ATAR of 85, it means you performed better than 85 % of the students that year.

The table below indicates how a student's ATAR might be calculated. Please be aware that subject scaling changes from year to year, and not all of the subjects indicated below will necessarily be available in 2024.

Top 4 Subjects	Subject	Study Score	Scaled Score	Aggregate Contribution
	English	35	37.90	37.90
	Visual Communication	40	39.50	39.50
	Further Maths	37	35.50	35.50
	Psychology	35	31.34	31.34
	HHD	30	27.42	2.74 (10%)
	Legal Studies	25	23.25	2.32 (10%)
	Aggregate Score			149.30
	ATAR			85.00



## WHAT SUBJECTS DO I NEED TO HAVE FOR UNIVERSITY?

In Australia, most universities have very few pre-requisites for their undergraduate courses. Usually there is a minimum score for English that must be achieved, along with a minimum ATAR for that course, although this can vary greatly between universities and campuses. Other entrance factors such as SEAS (Special Equity Access Scheme) can make a difference to the minimum required score.

Prerequisites are studies you must have completed to be eligible for selection to a course. All prerequisites for Victorian Courses are found via the VTAC (Victorian Tertiary Admission Centre) website under Course Search. Prerequisites are released by all universities well in advance. Prerequisites may be listed under 'Essential requirements for selection and application' or 'Admission criteria'. You can look up the courses of interest and check the prerequisites to be sure that you've selected what you need.

All undergraduate courses will require English and possibly one or two other subjects from a range of options. For example, a Science/Engineering based course might require a study score of 25 in English plus a study score of 20 or 25 in Mathematical Methods. Courses rarely require very specific subjects to be taken. For example a Bachelor of Arts or Science majoring in Psychology will not require Psychology as a prerequisite or Bachelor of Business at RMIT does not require Business Management.

Your Pathways Coordinator will schedule a Subject selection meeting with you to ensure that you have the correct prerequisites for the course you would like to take post-secondary.

## SHOULD I CHOOSE THE SUBJECTS THAT ARE SCALED UP?

All subjects have their study scores adjusted to account for the fact that ranking well in some subjects is harder than others depending on the group of students taking that subject across Victoria each year. Students sometimes think that taking a subject that has a history of being scaled up is like earning 'bonus' points. However, that ignores the fact that the subject is only scaled up if it was harder in the first place.

Scaling adjusts for the fact that it is more difficult to obtain a high VCE study score in some subjects than others. This is not because some studies are inherently harder or easier, it is because some subjects attract a more competitive cohort of students. Therefore to get a high study score can be difficult because of this. Scaling ensures that students are neither advantaged nor disadvantaged based on the subjects they choose.

Many students believe that to achieve their best possible ATAR they need to choose studies have been scaled up in previous years. This is not true and can work against you.

Choosing a study that you are not very good at, or engaged in, simply because it may be scaled up would be a mistake. If you are concerned about your score, you need to be sure you are good at a study and that you are engaged in doing your best.

Trying to do a subject that you don't feel confident in, or don't like but think you should do just for the possibility of scaling, is likely to leave you performing more poorly than if you chose a subject that was a better fit for your skills and interests. If you were to get a study score of 39 in one subject and it was scaled down by 2 to 37, you are still better off than if you received a huge scaling up of 8 when you only received a raw score of 27 in that subject. Remember, apart from pre-requisite subjects, universities are only going to look at your overall ATAR, not the individual subjects. So, stick to choosing subjects that you know you'll enjoy and want to learn. That will be your best chance of getting your highest possible score.

## 2024 YEAR 11 SUBJECT BLOCKS

Block 1	Block 2	Block 3	Block 4	Block 5	Block 6
English	General Maths	Maths Methods Psychology History	Biology Business Management	Chemistry Health and Human Development	Philosophy Applied Computing Art Making and Exhibiting



## THE ARTS

### ART MAKING AND EXHIBITING – UNITS 1-4

#### BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE

- Developing critical thinking skills
- Appreciating and caring for God's creation
- Developing God-given creativity
- Recognising and understanding divinely created order

#### SUBJECT OVERVIEW

##### *Content*

The aim for Art Making and Exhibiting is to introduce students to the methods used to make artworks and how artworks are presented and exhibited. Students use inquiry learning to explore, develop and refine the use of materials, techniques and processes and to develop their knowledge and understanding of the ways artworks are made. They learn how art elements and art principles are used to create aesthetic qualities in artworks and how ideas are communicated through the use of visual language. Their knowledge and skills evolve through the experience of making and presenting their own artworks and through the viewing and analysis of artworks by other artists.

The study is made up of four units.

Unit 1: Explore, expand and investigate  
 Unit 2: Understand, develop and resolve  
 Unit 3: Collect, extend and connect  
 Unit 4: Consolidate, present and conserve

##### *Skills*

Students will develop skills in investigating and using materials, techniques and processes in specific art forms. They will document the development of art making in a Visual Arts journal, developing their use

of visual language and art terminology to document this process. Through this, they will work towards the completion of a number of finished artworks. They will also research and discuss exhibition characteristics and conservation practices, including the development of a proposal for an exhibition.

##### *Types of Assessment*

- Analytical essays
- Practical reports
- Research tasks
- Folios
- Oral presentations
- Problem-solving tasks
- Design projects
- Examination

##### *Lifelong Skills*

- Analytical thinking
- Writing and communication skills
- Initiative
- Work-place skills
- Logical reasoning
- Critical and creative thinking
- Design skills
- Reflective skills
- Group work

## COMMERCE

### BUSINESS MANAGEMENT – UNITS 1 AND 2

#### BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE

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- Developing critical thinking and decision-making skills
- Learning a moral framework for the effective stewardship of resources, both physical and human
- Developing the God-given creative and productive capabilities of students

#### SUBJECT OVERVIEW

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##### *Content*

VCE Business Management explores the management of both large and small businesses, including the decisions required to start a small business, as well as the decisions involved in managing large groups of people and large-scale operations. The ability to make decisions effectively, efficiently and ethically is a key focus of this subject.

Students apply critical thinking skills and decision-making criteria to a range of business situations to determine appropriate strategies and actions businesses can take in order to achieve objectives.

The study is made up of four units.

Unit 1: Planning a business

Unit 2: Establishing a business

##### *Skills*

Business Management is a discipline that teaches you some core employability skills that employers look for when appointing staff in the business world, including: planning and organising; resource management; collecting, analysing and organising information; problem solving, taking the context of data and circumstances into account; initiative, enterprise and decision-making skills.

##### *Types of Assessment*

- Tests and case studies
- Exam

##### *Lifelong Skills*

- Ethical Decision-making skills
- Analytical thinking
- Writing and communication skills
- Initiative
- Work-place skills
- Logical reasoning
- Critical and creative thinking





# ENGLISH

## ENGLISH – UNITS 1 AND 2

### BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE

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- Developing critical thinking skills
- Developing God-given creativity
- Understanding God's story
- Developing empathetic understanding

### SUBJECT OVERVIEW

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#### *Content*

In VCE English Units 1 and 2, students study two complete texts and a number of smaller mentor texts, and complete three assessment tasks in response to them: a personal response essay, a creative written piece and an analytical essay. Students also study how language is used to persuade in the media, as well as developing and presenting a point of view in an oral presentation.

#### *Skills*

Students will further develop their skills in textual and media analysis, workshopped writing and persuasion. In terms of higher order thinking skills, students' analysis, synthesis and evaluation skills are significantly developed in Units 1 and 2 English.

#### *Types of Assessment*

- Analytical essays
- Creative writing
- Oral presentations
- Reflective essays

#### *Lifelong Skills*

- Analytical thinking
- Writing and communication skills
- Logical reasoning
- Critical and creative thinking
- Reflective skills

## HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

### HEALTH AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT – UNITS 1 AND 2

#### BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE

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- Appreciating and caring for God's creation
- Developing critical thinking skills

#### SUBJECT OVERVIEW

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##### *Content*

Health and Human Development provides students with broad understandings of health and wellbeing that reach far beyond the individual. Students learn how important health and wellbeing are to themselves and to families. Students explore the complex interplay of biological, sociocultural and environmental factors that support and improve health and wellbeing and those that put it at risk. The subject provides opportunities for students to view health and wellbeing's development across the lifespan. Students examine how health and wellbeing may be influenced across the lifespan by the conditions into which people are born, grow, live, work and age.

##### *Skills*

Health and Human Development is designed to improve health literacy. As individuals and citizens, students develop their ability to navigate information, to recognise and enact supportive behaviours, and to evaluate healthcare initiatives and interventions. Students take this capacity with them as they leave school, and apply their learning in positive and resilient ways through future changes and challenges.

##### *Types of Assessment*

- Research tasks
- Tests
- Oral presentations

##### *Lifelong Skills*

- Group work
- Writing and communication skills

## HUMANITIES

### HISTORY – UNITS 1 AND 2

#### BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE

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- Developing critical thinking skills
- Understanding God's story

#### SUBJECT OVERVIEW

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##### *Content*

Units 1 and 2 Empires (approximately 1400 - 1800 CE) investigates the journey from the medieval to the modern world and the transformation of the globe through trade, exploration and colonisation. The course also covers the impact of the Renaissance, Reformation and the Scientific Revolution. Students will study two major empires from the early modern era, including the establishment of the British colonies of North America, providing an excellent foundation for Units 3 and 4 History: Revolutions.

##### *Skills*

Students will develop their skills in responding to historical evidence, including primary and secondary sources. They will evaluate the causes, significance and consequences of historical events, people, ideas and movements. They will identify and explain different historical perspectives and construct arguments about the challenges and changes of empires.

##### *Types of Assessment*

- Analytical essays
- Research tasks
- Source analysis tasks

##### *Lifelong Skills*

- Analytical thinking
- Writing and communication skills
- Critical and creative thinking
- Reflective skills

## PHILOSOPHY – UNITS 1 AND 2

## BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE

- Developing critical thinking skills
- Understanding God's story

## SUBJECT OVERVIEW

*Content*

VCE Philosophy contains a broad introduction to western philosophy and its methods of inquiry. In Unit 1 students are introduced to three key areas of Philosophy: metaphysics, epistemology, and philosophical inquiry. Metaphysics is the study of the basic structures and categories of what exists, or of reality. It is the attempt to work out a logical account of everything that we know or believe about existence, including all our scientific knowledge. Epistemology prompts students to consider more about what it means to “know” something. The word epistemology derives from two Ancient Greek words: episteme meaning ‘knowledge’ and logos meaning ‘what is said about something’. The study of epistemology is concerned with the difference between belief and the certainty associated with knowledge.

In Unit 2, students explore questions of value and morality. This unit enables students to explore these questions in relation to different categories of value judgment within the realms of morality, political and social philosophy and aesthetics. Students also explore ways in which viewpoints and arguments in value theory can inform and be informed by contemporary debates. They study at least one primary philosophical text, using the complete text or an extract, and develop a range of skills including formulating philosophical questions and informed responses.

*Skills*

VCE Philosophy develops students’ abilities to identify and articulate philosophical questions, understand and analyse significant philosophical ideas, and understand relationships between responses to philosophical questions and contemporary issues. It also helps students to cultivate open-mindedness, reflecting critically on their thinking and that of others, and exploring alternative approaches to philosophical questions.

*Types of Assessment*

- Analytical essays
- Short-answer responses
- Written reflections
- Oral or multimedia presentations
- Research tasks
- Dialogues (oral or written)

*Lifelong Skills*

- Analytical thinking
- Writing and communication skills
- Critical and creative thinking
- Reflective skills

# MATHEMATICS

## GENERAL MATHEMATICS – UNITS 1 AND 2

### BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE

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- Developing critical thinking skills
- Recognising and understanding divinely created order

### SUBJECT OVERVIEW

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#### *Content*

The study of General Mathematics in Units 1 and 2 involves topics like data analysis, algebra, number, structure, matrices and number patterns. Linear graphs and equations (straight line graphs) are taught extensively while shape and measurement (perimeter, area, volume) which was covered in year 9 is also explored. The last topic students look at is statistics, where students will analyse and compare data in different forms.

#### *Skills*

Students will develop problem solving skills in each of the chapters covered. They will continue to grow their understanding of everyday mathematics and apply theories covered to their own lives. Students will utilise their learning from previous years and build upon their foundation of mathematics, to respond to and analyse worded questions, as well as apply these concepts to real life situations. Edrolo will enable students to analyse their understanding of every exercise and to correct any misunderstandings. Calculator use is essential in all assessments, so students will become more proficient and effective at using their CAS calculators.

#### *Types of Assessment*

- Tests
- Problem-solving tasks
- Mathematical Investigation
- Examinations

#### *Lifelong Skills*

- Analytical thinking
- Logical reasoning
- Group work
- Reflective thinking
- Critical and creative thinking

## MATHEMATICAL METHODS – UNITS 1 AND 2

### BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE

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The study of this subject will help students develop an appreciation of Mathematics:

- As a language that describes patterns and order in God’s Creation
- A powerful tool for problem-solving and therefore best stewardship of our world
- A field where they will be able to develop their God-given potential in logical reasoning
- Recognising and understanding divinely created order

### SUBJECT OVERVIEW

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#### *Content*

Mathematical Methods Units 1 and 2 provide an introductory study of elementary functions of a single real variable, algebra, calculus, probability and statistics and their applications in a variety of practical and interesting contexts. As such, one of the benefits is to enhance students understanding of the methods that are required to achieve successful problem solving.

#### *Skills*

This subject offers a good balance between the use of CAS technology (calculators) and by-hand skills to develop students’ ability to work mathematically.

#### *Types of Assessment*

- Tests
- Problem-solving tasks
- Research tasks
- Modelling tasks

#### *Lifelong Skills*

- Analytical thinking
- Group work
- Logical reasoning
- Critical and creative thinking



## SCIENCE

### BIOLOGY – UNITS 1 AND 2

#### BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE

- Developing critical thinking skills
- Appreciating and caring for God's creation
- Recognising and understanding divinely created order
- Developing God-given creativity

#### SUBJECT OVERVIEW

##### *Content*

Unit 1 Biology focuses on the structure and function of cells, from the single celled to the multicellular organism, including the requirements for sustaining cellular processes. Students focus on cell growth, replacement and death and the role of stem cells in differentiation, specialisation and renewal of cells. They explore how systems function through cell specialisation in vascular plants and animals and consider the role homeostatic mechanisms play in maintaining an animal's internal environment. In Unit 2 Biology, students examine inheritance and the impact on diversity. Students will explore a contemporary bioethical issue relating to the application of genetic knowledge, reproductive science, inheritance or adaptations and interdependencies beneficial for survival.

##### *Skills*

Students employ critical and creative thinking as they conduct scientific investigations involving primary and secondary data. Students grow in the key science skills as they develop aims, formulate hypotheses, plan and conduct investigations, work within safe and ethical guidelines, generate, collate and evaluate data, analyse methodology, draw conclusions and communicate scientific ideas.

##### *Types of Assessment*

- Field reports
- Practical reports
- Research tasks
- Tests
- Problem-solving tasks
- Data and media analysis
- Design practical investigations
- PowerPoint presentations
- Scientific posters
- Examination

##### *Lifelong Skills*

- Analytical thinking
- Writing and communication skills
- Group work
- Work-place skills
- Logical reasoning
- Critical and creative thinking
- Design skills
- Reflective skills
- Leadership
- Initiative

## CHEMISTRY – UNITS 1 AND 2

## BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE

- Recognising and understanding divinely created order
- Developing critical thinking skills
- Appreciating and caring for God's creation

## SUBJECT OVERVIEW

*Content*

Unit 1: How can the diversity of materials be explained?

The development and use of materials for specific purposes is an important human endeavour. In this unit students investigate the chemical structures and properties of a range of materials, including covalent compounds, metals, ionic compounds and polymers. They are introduced to ways that chemical quantities are measured. They consider how manufacturing innovations lead to more sustainable products being produced for society through the use of renewable raw materials and a transition from a linear economy towards a circular economy.

Unit 2: How do chemical reactions shape the natural world?

Society is dependent on the work of chemists to analyse the materials and products in everyday use. In this unit students analyse and compare different substances dissolved in water and the gases that may be produced in chemical reactions. They explore applications of acid-base and redox reactions in society.

*Skills*

In VCE Chemistry Unit 1 and 2 students develop skills in scientific report writing through formulating hypotheses, aims and analyzing results. Students develop key skills in reporting findings through summarising both quantitative and qualitative data. Students then develop skills in creating evidence-based conclusions from the theoretical and experimental findings. Chemistry-related theories allow students to effectively communicate and explain scientific ideas by using appropriate terminologies, ideas, conventions, and units.

*Types of Assessment*

- Practical reports
- Research tasks
- Tests
- Problem-solving tasks
- Design projects
- Oral presentations

*Lifelong Skills*

- Analytical thinking
- Writing and communication skills
- Group work
- Initiative
- Work-place skills
- Logical reasoning
- Critical and creative thinking
- Design skills
- Reflective skills
- Leadership

## PSYCHOLOGY – UNITS 1 AND 2

### BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE

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- Developing critical thinking skills
- Recognising and understanding divinely created order

### SUBJECT OVERVIEW

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#### *Content*

Psychology explores the functions of the brain in response to experience throughout the life span and the brain's ability to adjust through plasticity. The connections between the brain and behaviour are analysed by focusing on relationships between environment, individual differences, and experience, as well as sensory perception with a focus on vision and taste. Furthermore, the study explores how people think, feel, and behave using the biopsychosocial approach of psychological development, and the influence of cognitive biases are examined. Students will evaluate research as well as conduct their own research and produce a formal psychological research report.

#### *Skills*

Students will develop analytical, evaluation and problem solving skills. They will evaluate research as well as develop abilities in writing a formal psychological research report. They will grow in their capacity to produce hypotheses and evaluate different research methodologies, as well as consider different types of samples and sample allocations. They will develop strategies to gather, analyse and evaluate data and compare it to previous research. There is an emphasis on the ethical considerations of research, the ability to analyse experiments and explain the types of variables that might have impacted research. Students will also develop skills in determining the conclusions and generalisations that can be made from the findings of research.

#### *Types of Assessment*

- Folios
- Tests
- Research tasks
- Practical reports
- Problem-solving tasks

#### *Lifelong Skills*

- Analytical thinking
- Writing and communication skills
- Reflective skills
- Research skills
- Logical reasoning
- Group work

## TECHNOLOGY

### APPLIED COMPUTING – UNIT 1 AND 2

#### BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE

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- Developing critical thinking skills
- Developing God-given creativity

#### SUBJECT OVERVIEW

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##### *Content*

In this unit students are introduced to the stages of the problem-solving methodology. Students focus on how data can be used within software tools such as databases and spreadsheets to create data visualisations, and the use of programming languages to develop working software solutions.

In Area of Study 1, as an introduction to data analytics, students respond to a teacher-provided analysis of requirements and designs to identify and collect data in order to present their findings as data visualisations. They present work that includes database, spreadsheet and data visualisations solutions. In Area of Study 2 students select and use a programming language to create a working software solution. Students prepare, document and monitor project plans and engage in all stages of the problem-solving methodology.

##### *Skills*

There are two areas of study for each unit. In Area of Study 1, students will need to analyse, manipulate, compare and interpret data using ICT skills. In Area of Study 2, students will learn to create digital solutions using software to analyse, develop, evaluate and monitor projects.

##### *Types of Assessment*

- Problem-solving tasks
- Practical reports
- Research tasks
- Project work

##### *Lifelong Skills*

- Logical reasoning
- Analytical thinking
- Group work