

# Teacher-librarians dissect the new VCE study designs

Allan Thomas

Since they first appeared in schools in the middle 1950s, teacher-librarians have seen it as a significant part of their role to bring resources and users together to enhance their teaching and learning. They have done this by keeping abreast of the changing media in which information is presented, and by keeping in close touch with what teachers are teaching, what resources would be needed to support that teaching, and what information skills students would need to effectively access those resources for their assignment work.

Over the past ten or more years there have been a number of significant developments and changes in curriculum documents used in Victorian schools, culminating in the Curriculum Standards Frameworks leading into the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE). In these latter documents there has been a heavy emphasis on individual, independent, investigative learning. For success in this type of learning a wide range of resources is required, knowledge of information skills is a must and assistance in interpreting resources should be available. Teacher-librarians have recognised these necessities, and, although neither they nor the resources they provide were specifically mentioned in the curriculum documents, they unpacked those documents in such a way as to provide these services to their school communities.

The latest change to the VCE, a new set of study designs being implemented this year, seemed at first glance to de-emphasise these skills. It is not surprising then that the Victorian Schools Section of the Australian Library and Information Association at an early stage in the year hosted a workshop to dissect some of these study designs with a view to finding out what resources might be required, and how they might best be provided to teachers and students.

The workshop, held in the Library Resource Centre of Santa Maria College, Northcote on Saturday 25 March 2000, was opened with a Victorian Board of Studies overview presented by John Firth.

John presented a clear account of the changes which the study designs have incorporated, emphasised the difficulties teachers were facing in its implementation and described ways in which the implementation was occurring. This presentation and questions from the floor strongly suggested a move away from the individual, independent, investigative learning outcomes which

had been such a feature of the previous VCE curricula. John maintained that this was not the intention, that these outcomes were still possible but that there was less emphasis on 'individual' where it meant much of the work being done outside the school setting.

This set the scene well for the next session in which Sandra Ryan of Santa Maria College and Robyn Griffiths of Yarra Valley Grammar School presented a model for resourcing the learning outcomes of the new VCE based on an outcome for a unit from the English Study Design. It became clear that not only did the outcomes require resources, but there were many resources available to support them.

After an excellent morning tea the workshop participants broke into four groups to apply the model developed by Sandra and Robyn to outcomes for particular units from the Study Designs for Psychology, History/Revolution, Biology and Health and Human Development. Solid work by the groups and their leaders produced comprehensive lists of possible resources to support the chosen outcomes. At the end of the day these findings were shared by the whole group.

The workshop demonstrated very clearly that the skills of teacher-librarians in the provision of resources to support curriculum are alive and well and as relevant to current curriculum models as they have been to those of the past. Members of the workshop went away from it full of ideas for ways in which outcomes from other units in other Study Designs could be well supported with resources. So the schools who supported their teacher-librarians in coming to the workshop have a ready resource to support their VCE teaching. ■

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• **27/11 NSW School Libraries section.** *End of year function.* Venue: to be advised. Contact: Ian McLean, ph 02 9886 7501 (w), ian.mclean@det.nsw.edu.au

• **29/11 NSW Children & Youth Services section.** *Committee meeting,* everybody welcome. Burwood Public Library, 6pm. For further information, please contact: Sarah Steed, publicity officer, ph 02 9806 5159, fx 02 9806 5919, ssteed@parracity.nsw.gov.au

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• **15/11 NT Branch.** *AGM.* NTU, 4:30pm. For further information contact: Linda Winzar, ph 08 8999 8931, fx 08 8999 8998, linda.winzar@nt.gov.au

### QLD

• **8/8 Qld Special Libraries section.** *Tour of the Masonic Centre and Library.* Learn the secrets of the Masons!! 311 Ann Street, Brisbane, 4:30pm, meet in foyer. Further networking at Elliott's Café Bar next door to the Centre. *RSVP by 4/8 to:* Greg Ovens, ph 07 3234 1058, gregory\_ovens@health.qld.gov.au

• **8/8-14/11 Qld Library Technicians section.** *General meeting.* Venue: to be advised, 5:30pm for 6pm. 8/8, 10/10, 14/11 — AGM. For further information contact: Yvonne Brock, ph 07 3896 2229, yvonne.brock@acgs.qld.edu.au

• **9/8 Qld Branch & Qld UCRLS section.** *Subject gateways and metadata seminar and workshop.* Guest speaker: Debbie Campbell, NLA, followed by a panel discussion and a hands-on workshop. QUT Gardens Point, 8:45am. For more information contact: Wendy Hoyle, w.hoyle@mailbox.gu.edu.au or Claire Hill, c.hill@library.uq.edu.au

• **11/9-27/11 Qld Branch.** *Committee meeting.* Brisbane Administrative Centre, Conference Room, Level 6, Corner George and Ann Street, Brisbane City, 4-6pm. 11/9, 27/11 — plus AGM. For further information contact: Kathryn Harding, ph 0409 642 152, fx 07 3864 2014, k.harding@qut.edu.au

• **29/9 Qld Public Libraries section.** *Committee meeting and seminar* — all wel-

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