



Yea High School Year 9 Handbook



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Welcome

Year 9 'Learning Age'

Our '*Learning Age*' curriculum is built upon the 'Yea Four' key educational principles and has key features which have been endorsed by the Yea High School Council.

Our key principles were developed after an extensive consultation process with all stakeholders in the Yea High School Community.

The 'Yea Four' are:

- Relationships
- Relevance
- Rigour
- Refining and redefining practice

Each principle is explained fully on our website www.yeahs.vic.edu.au

In addition the Department of Education has identified a skill set which it believes is crucial for students to be equipped with in the 21st century. Namely:

- Creativity and intellectual curiosity
- Critical thinking and systems thinking
- Information and media literacy skills
- Accountability and adaptability
- Communication skills
- Interpersonal and collaborative skills.

Some of the key features of our Year 9 '*Learning Age*' curriculum are:

- The use of advisories
- Clear two way communication with families linked to student learning
- Provision of 'Master Classes' linked to VELS requirements and identified student need
- High emphasis on student skill development
- Student led conferences or exhibitions

Yea High School recognises that when it comes to education 'one size doesn't fit all'. The '*Learning Age*' model outlined in this handbook seeks to deliver an educational program that is designed to suit individual student needs.

The '*Learning Age*' model offers students a real choice in the kind of high school education they want to experience. Our aim is to empower students to take charge of their learning in order to gain the skills and knowledge necessary to achieve success beyond high school.

The Learning Age Curriculum structure consists of three parts

- **Core studies – English, Maths, Technacy, Health/PE and Sport Ed**
- **Advisory – 'Deep learning' projects which explore key areas of Science and Humanities.**

- **Community Connections – consists of community projects, developing ‘work readiness skills’, shadow days and internships.**

All Year 9 students must meet the requirements of the Victorian Essential Learning Standards and present their learning to an audience through exhibitions.

Throughout the year students will have excursions/incursions to attend, during which they will learn Science and Humanities content that links directly to the Year 9 AusVELS standards. Students will also have the opportunity to sign up for Masterclasses where they can learn new skills that will be useful to them throughout the year.

Students are expected to:

Take advantage of the opportunities available to them and commit to the learning plans they have co-created. Students in their Learning Age course will be successful if they strive to be self motivated, self directed and self managing.

Families are expected to:

- Commit to the key educational principles underlying the ‘Learning Age’ course and work in partnership with staff and students to set appropriate learning goals for their child and support them through the challenges of achieving those goals.
- Assist with the development and achievement of a learning plan and attend student led conferences or exhibitions.

Teacher Advisors are committed to:

Making the Year 9 Learning Age course enjoyable and engaging for students. In addition, they seek to aid student development and provide challenges and varied learning opportunities.

In 2016 the school undertook a review of the curriculum offerings for Year 9 students at Yea High School. The purpose of this review was to establish if the current programs would continue to meet the needs of our future Year 9 students and engage them in quality education in order to achieve positive outcomes. After this review it was determined that in 2017 we will begin offering three different programs to our Year 9 students. The three programs that will be running in 2017 are The Big Picture Inspired Program, The Matrix Program and The Agribusiness Program. An outline of each of these programs can be found on the next few pages of this handbook.

Advisors,
Sally Nott & Jude MacArthur



The Big Picture Inspired Program

The Big Picture Inspired Program is based on the belief that true learning takes place when:

- a student is an active participant in the learning process;
- a student's learning is personalised; and
- a student's learning is blended with real life experience and challenges.

The Year 9 students that take part in The Big Picture Inspired Program will complete four projects in 2017: the 'Who Am I?' Project, two Big Picture Projects and a Learning through Internship Project.

An explanation of each of the projects is below:

'Who Am I?' Project

- During the first four weeks of the year
- Aims to look into their interests as well as people/events that have impacted on their lives
- Students will create products to exhibit their work
- They will present their work at their first Learning Plan Meeting in Week 5.

Big Picture Projects

- Generally last 10-12 weeks
- Based on career interests students have for their future
- Work with the advisor to plan Science and Humanities questions
- Must complete a Science Experiment and Persuasive Humanities Essay
- Must have a Real World Connection – interview/email/spend a day with a person who is an expert in the topic
- Need to make products to exhibit their learning – eg. poster/brochure/booklet/model/etc
- Exhibition at the end of each project about the processes they have gone through and what they have learnt

Learning Through Internship Project

- During Term 4
- Students will organise an internship working one day a week at a workplace – spending time learning the roles from a mentor
- When at school they will plan and complete a product for the workplace that they negotiate with their mentor
- End of Year Exhibition – reflection of their whole year

The Matrix Program

After the review, it was decided that there needed to be a more structured program to suit a number of the students that will be undertaking Year 9 in 2017.

The Year 9 students that take part in The Matrix Program will complete five projects in 2017: the 'Who Am I?' Project and four Matrix Projects.

An explanation of each of the projects is below:

'Who Am I?' Project

- During the first four weeks of the year
- Aims to look into their interests as well as people/events that have impacted on their lives
- Students will create products to exhibit their work
- They will present their work at their first Learning Plan Meeting in Week 5.

Matrix Projects

- The Matrix Projects last for a term – with the first one being shortened due to the 'Who Am I?' Project at the beginning of the year
- Each term the students will be given a Matrix for Science and one for Humanities
- Links directly to the Year 9 AusVELS curriculum
- Regular Science and Humanities Masterclasses
- Learning Plan Meetings at the end of each project about what they have learnt

Students in The Matrix Program will also organise an internship for Term 4. They will be working one day a week at a workplace that interests them, learning the role from a mentor.

At the end of the year, students in this program will do an exhibition reflecting on the work they have completed over the year.

The Agri-business Program

“The Agribusiness Program” involves a large practical component with an agricultural focus.

Details

For the students this means:

- Aim to spend approximately one day a week (to be determined by the timetable) on local community placement (Semester 1- as a whole class with supervising teacher - visit farms for a range of activities or work on community projects e.g. lamb marking, tree planting. Semester 2 – students attend individual placements).
- They study agscience, business principles and geography at school and complete Certificate II in Agriculture through GOTAFE (Goulburn Ovens TAFE).
- Career pathways are available for choices in agribusiness and land management following their education in, insight into, and experience in such industries.
- They benefit from the advice and mentoring of adults in local industries.
- They learn a range of skills and will gain some understanding of the science, maths, geography and economics in these areas.

For our community this means:

- In Semester 1 - rural industries and organisations have a class of supervised students observe and/or work in agriculture and land management areas e.g. marking, pruning, planting trees, fencing.
- In Semester 2 – Farmers, those in Land Management and associated industries take on a student to mentor.
- Young people, more experienced in rural practices, will be skilled for local part time or casual work.
- In subsequent years, students can complete School Based Apprenticeships and further TAFE certificates in industries, or choose to pursue university related studies.
- Insurance and practical involvement is arranged under TAFE guidelines.



Community Connections – Semester 1

Outline

As part of the Year 9 curriculum, students undertake a subject titled “Community Connections”. The aim of this subject is to engage students with their local community, develop a variety of their skills, and prepare them for experiences in the real world including the world of work. In Term One students will work on attaining a set of competencies which assist them with the completion of the rest of the year’s work. In Term Two they are expected to partner with a community organisation to deliver a “Community Service Project”.

What is a Community Service Project?

Students work in small groups (no more than 4) to deliver a Community Service Project (CSP). The focus of the CSP is to give back to our local community in order to improve the wellbeing of such community. Students will select a particular area that interests them, brainstorm some possible projects ideas, identify a community group they could partner with, negotiate the project with the community group, and finally, deliver the project during Term Two. Before completing such a project there are several things for the group to consider.

Consider the following:

- Type of project: You can consider a service project or a fund raising project.
- Timing: The project must be completed by the end of Term Two.
- Duration: Your project must equate to a minimum of 4 sessions worth of work (it can be more).
- Costs: There is some funding available to support your project (eg. Pay fees for site at a market)
- Community group: You must have a group in the community that is prepared to work with you. Before you implement your project an agreement with the organisation must be signed (a legal liability).
- Other resources: You need to have an idea of the main items required (eg. Venue, sound equipment, chairs and tables). You are responsible for organising these!
- Jobs to be done: Have you enough people in your group to do the work required? What are the jobs and who will be responsible for each?
- Outcome: How will your idea improve the wellbeing in the community?
- Learning plan: How does this link in with your learning plan?
- Evidence: You will need to collect evidence about your CSP to present in your exhibition. Think about what this evidence may be (eg. Video footage, feedback sheets, photos, collages, permission forms etc.)

Possible projects

This list is far from exhaustive but may give you some ideas. Remember: it is important you determine what you are interested in first then see if there are others to work with as part of a group. Don't find a group first then come up with a project because they are your friends.

- ❖ Working bees for any purpose. Sports facilities, primary schools, kindergarten, community house.

- ❖ Run a stall or booth at markets held in Yea, Kinglake and other venues. Monies raised will assist a community organisation (eg. Flowerdale CFA, Red Cross, Yea Tennis Club etc).
- ❖ Organise and conduct a program at a community organisation (eg. Sports program at a local school).
- ❖ Assist Rotary with their donations in kind program and spend a day assisting at their warehouses in Melbourne.
- ❖ Work with Riding for the Disabled (Seymour branch), assisting the children during activities.
- ❖ Take part in the Salvation Army's Red Shield Appeal challenge.
- ❖ Get involved with the Freeza Committee.
- ❖ Assist the elderly with using technology at Rosebank.

Community Connections – Semester 2

The focus of Community Connections in Semester Two is for students to undertake real world experiences. There is a requirement and expectation that students will complete a minimum of **8 days** experience in the real world, off school campus, during the semester. It is preferred that these days are on a Monday or Thursday but the program is flexible to allow for students to attend on alternative days when necessary. The format of these days will vary but may include one or all of the following:

Shadow Days

These should be the main focus for students. Shadow Days provide students with an opportunity to spend the day with someone that works in an area of interest. Students attend shadow days in the hope of identifying an appropriate place to complete an internship.

Internships

The main goal of students in Semester Two is to identify and obtain an appropriate internship. This will be done through the completion of Shadow Days. Students will attend at their place of internship one day a week and will also work on their internship projects during Advisory classes. The aim is for internship projects to link back to the student's individual learning plan. An internship can take the form of a Community Service Project.

Community Service Projects (CSPs)

This is mainly for students who have not completed the minimum requirements to undertake an internship with a profit organisation or for those students who are under 15 years of age. Students are to identify a community organisation they would like to partner with and complete a second community service project that is different to the one completed in Term Two. Students are encouraged to select a different area of community service and a different style of project in order to increase their skills and knowledge base.

Personal Excursions

Students may arrange to undertake a personal excursion to a variety of locations by themselves. They will need to complete the necessary paperwork (*Shadow Day and Personal Excursion Consent Form – Unaccompanied Excursion*) and gain permission from their parents and Advisors. Students will only be permitted to go on excursions that meet the requirements of and are linked to their individual learning plans. This may include research for possible career pathways.

Group Personal Excursions

Similar to above, students may find that there are a number of students who would benefit from attending at a particular location or going on a group excursion. Students are permitted to arrange a group excursion. They will need to complete the following paperwork (*Shadow Day and Personal Excursion Consent Form – Unaccompanied Excursion, Information for office to create permission forms and Group Personal Excursion Checklist*) and gain permission from their parents and Advisors. Only those students whose individual learning plans are linked to the excursion will be permitted to attend.

NOTE: A variety of experiences may be offered by the school throughout the semester. Some of these experiences will be free of charge and others may require payment. Students who attend must gain permission from their Advisor, Community Connections teacher and parent/guardian and return all the necessary forms and monies. Priority will be given to those students whose individual learning plans are closely linked to the excursion, followed by those with particular career interests and lastly those who bring their forms and money back first. These experiences will be counted as one of the 8 days of experience once a student has completed the necessary reflection after the day.