

## Part 3: AIM Online

### Specific Information for 2005

#### The AIM Online Formal Testing Period

- Around 85 schools will participate in the AIM Online program for 2005. This will involve around 12 000 students accessing the AIM Online tests.
- The formal testing will be conducted from 1 August to 19 August 2005 to collect results data for Year 7 students in a formal testing situation.

### AIM Online Key Dates for 2005

<b>July</b>		
11 July to 26 July	Preparation of AIM Online school server	
26 July to 30 July	Download tests to school server	
<b>August</b>		
1 to 19 August	Formal testing period	
1 to 5 August	English Writing Task Test	
1 to 19 August	English and Mathematics Adaptive Tests	
12 August	Last day to upload Writing Task responses to the VCAA	
26 August	Last day to upload Adaptive Tests responses to the VCAA	
<b>October</b>		
	Reports provided to schools	

#### The AIM Online formal tests

There are three tests for Year 7 in 2005 and each student is expected to sit all tests:

- English Writing Task
- English Formal Adaptive Test
- Mathematics Formal Adaptive Test.

### Important note on the Writing Task

Students are required to complete one writing task topic only. To ensure that the integrity of the writing task test is maintained, a different topic will be available to run on each day of the week during the writing task testing period. Schools are required to only deliver the specified test on the specified day to their students.

Test	Date	Items	Time Allocation
English Writing Task 1	Monday 1 August	Topic A	5 minutes – tutorial 10 minutes – discussion 45 minutes – test
English Writing Task 2	Tuesday 2 August	Topic B	5 minutes – tutorial 10 minutes – discussion 45 minutes – test
English Writing Task 3	Wednesday 3 August	Topic C	5 minutes – tutorial 10 minutes – discussion 45 minutes – test
English Writing Task 4	Thursday 4 August	Topic D	5 minutes – tutorial 10 minutes – discussion 45 minutes – test
English Writing Task 5	Friday 5 August	Topic E	5 minutes – tutorial 10 minutes – discussion 45 minutes – test
English Formal Test (Adaptive)	Monday 1 August to Friday 19 August	60 Questions	10 minutes – tutorial 30–50 minutes – test
Mathematics Formal Test (Adaptive)	Monday 1 August to Friday 19 August	60 Questions	10 minutes – tutorial 30–50 minutes – test

## Administration Procedures for AIM Online

### AIM Online Requirements

For the AIM Online testing period, schools are expected to:

- prepare their computers and communications infrastructure
- download relevant tests from the VCAA to the VCAA Assessment Online school server
- load Year 7 student details into the VCAA Assessment Online system
- conduct tests with all Year 7 students during the formal testing period
- upload students' test responses to the VCAA
- participate in any evaluation exercises.

### AIM Online Administration

The key tasks associated with the AIM Online are:

- school administration
- test administration.

### School administration

School administration involves looking after the school's system-related issues, such as:

- maintaining school data for the AIM Online
- loading student details into the online system
- maintaining the registrations of staff involved in test administration

- maintaining the VCAA Assessment Online school server
- preparing computers for the AIM Online
- ensuring staff involved in test administration have sufficient knowledge and skills to complete the required test administration tasks.

The tasks involved in the AIM Online school administration assume only a basic level of computer literacy including some experience in accessing the Internet or VicOne.

## Test Administration

Test administration involves the supervision of students during tests. This requires an understanding of the policies and procedures associated with administering AIM Online tests.

The tasks involved in the AIM Online test administration assume a very low level of computer literacy.

### Administering AIM Online Tests

Schools may vary the ways in which they group students to administer AIM Online tests, according to the technical infrastructure and resource allocation of the schools.

Schools may choose to administer a test to all students at one time or in groups according to computer availability. Typically, whole class sessions could be conducted during English and Mathematics classes. Testing by a school could be administered over a number of days.

Schools with only one or two computers connected to the local area network can administer the test to one or two students at a time. A roster/timetable may be used with students.

It is suggested that a double period be allocated for an AIM Online testing session.

As with any test materials, the AIM Online must be regarded as a system that requires security from unauthorised access. Security should be provided for the VCAA Assessment Online school server and every precaution taken to secure test items and student results.

### Preparation

The School Administrator will need to download the VCAA Assessment Online formal tests prior to students commencing the tests.

The School Administrator will need to load student details into the AIM Online system prior to students sitting the tests. For Victorian Government schools, this data is directly imported from CASES into the AIM Online system. Instructions for this are provided in the *AIM Online User Manual* (Addendum for Chapter 4). For non-government schools, this student data is generally extracted from the school's administrative package into a file for import into AIM Online and the instructions for this are provided in the *AIM Online User Manual* (Section 4.5).

Students will need:

- access to a computer linked to a local area network to which the AIM Online school server is connected
- their student code (for Government schools, this can be the student's CASES number).
- to enter their day and month of birth
- pen/pencil and paper.

During tests, each test administrator will need:

- a class list with student names, student codes, and student dates of birth
- a test session key (to write on the board for students). Details of how to create a test session key can be found in the *AIM Online User Manual* (Section 6.1).

## Standard Test Conditions

The AIM Online test conditions should be similar to those run in school for other AIM tests. It is important that the AIM Online tests be conducted under standard conditions. This will enable the collection of valid implementation and testing information.

Standard conditions for the conduct of the test, adherence to time limits and level of teacher assistance will allow all students across the State equal opportunity in completing the task.

It is the school's responsibility to ensure that, during test delivery, no form of communication takes place between students (e.g. verbal, written, email).

If it is believed that communication has occurred between students, the test should be stopped for the offending students, and they should be advised that their tests will be conducted at a later date.

Schools should note that calculators, other than those that appear on screen for certain questions, are not to be used.

Students are allowed to have pen and paper to help them answer the questions in a test.

## Student Tutorial

When students log in to the AIM Online system, a tutorial commences so that students can work through an example of each item and response type.

The teacher may supervise the tutorial with the class as a whole, with a group of students or may allow individual students to complete the tutorial on their own. During the tutorial, the teacher may assist students by:

- reading instructions
- clarifying instructions
- reminding students how to complete responses.

## Writing Task

When students access the day-specific Writing Task, the teacher may read the Writing topic to the students and discuss with them the attached prompt questions. Discussion should last no more than 10 minutes and students should not take notes or enter text during this discussion.

Student writing time includes 10 minutes for discussion and 45 minutes for student writing.

## Time Limits

Each AIM Online item has a set time limit that is enforced by the system automatically.

Students will have adequate time to complete each item.

## Early Finishers of the Test

Like all test situations, the AIM Online tests will see some students finish the test earlier than others. Quiet, independent work should be available for these students.

## Interrupting a Test

Situations may arise where a student may need to leave the room during a test. In such cases, the teacher administering the test will need to interrupt that student's test.

There are options to pause or cancel a test depending on the circumstances. Details of how to administer these options by clicking the 'Ctrl + K' keys simultaneously can be found in the *AIM Online User Manual* (Section 7.2).

A short break from the classroom would require a test to be paused, enabling the student to resume the test when the student returns.

If the student has to leave during a test and will not return during the same day, for example if the student is ill, the test can be cancelled. Schools should note, however, that permission must be sought from the VCAA before a student can be allowed to resit a test. See 'Resitting a test' on page 62 of this guide for further information.

## Crashed Tests

There may be circumstances where computers may freeze or crash in the middle of the AIM Online Tests.

If this occurs during an adaptive test, the student will be able to log back into the test immediately and return to the last question that the student was at. There would be no need in these circumstances to seek permission to recommence a test.

If this occurs during the writing task test, the student will be able to log back into the test immediately and retrieve whatever work had been saved to the point of the crash. There

would be no need in these circumstances to seek permission to recommence a test.

Schools should note, however, that permission must be sought from the VCAA before a student can be allowed to resit a test in another test session. See 'Resitting a test' on page 62 of this guide for further information.

**NOTE:** There is no need for students to be logged back into tests under a 'dummy' student ID or as another student.

### Resitting a Test

Students are only allowed to sit a test once.

Schools are not permitted to allow a student to resit a test without the express permission of the VCAA. Details of the resit would need to be provided to the VCAA.

Schools wishing to apply for permission for a student to resit a test must contact the AIM Online Help Desk for advice. This permission will only be granted if a satisfactory reason for the student resitting the test is given.

### Conditions for Students with Special Needs

The principal has discretion in providing special conditions for students experiencing learning difficulties or students experiencing personal or social circumstances which may affect performance. These could include:

- extra people or equipment to assist students to complete the test
- a different environment from that used by other students.

#### Special environments

Special environments may also be appropriate for some students. These could take the form of a separate room if they have access to the appropriate systems.

Special conditions must be authorised by the principal. The principal should keep a record of any special conditions arranged for students. Schools will be aware of any special conditions for individual students or classes and will be able to interpret their results in light of these circumstances.

#### Visually impaired and physically disabled students

During AIM Online tests, visually impaired and physically disabled students may receive the same assistance as they would in a classroom lesson using computers.

Schools will be aware of any special conditions for visually impaired or physically disabled students and will be able to interpret their results in light of these circumstances.

#### Exemptions

In certain circumstances students may be granted an exemption from the AIM Online test. The principal may grant an exemption to students with disabilities and impairments and to students who have been learning English in Australia for less than two years.

A register for 'Exemptions from AIM Years 3, 5 and 7 Testing 2005' needs to be completed and retained at the school. This form is available from <[www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/prep10/aim/teachers.htm](http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/prep10/aim/teachers.htm)>. The names of exempted students will be recorded on the school Tally Sheet (see Appendix 2) which is sent to the VCAA at the completion of the tests.

Occasionally, a student will not be able to undertake a test due to illness on a particular day, but due to the nature of the computer test, students may be able to sit the tests on another day within the testing period.

If a student is unable to sit all three AIM Online tests and is absent from one or two of the tests, the student should be enrolled into the test session that he/she has missed and be marked as 'Absent' or 'Exempt'. This provides the VCAA with a reason for the missing test results when processing the reports for students and schools. See 'Uploading student responses to the VCAA' for further instructions on this.

If a student is absent due to extended illness or other personal reasons and the student does not sit any of the AIM Online tests, their name will be recorded on the School Tally Sheet (see page 56) which is sent to the VCAA at the completion of the tests.

### Uploading Student Responses to the VCAA

Schools should ensure that student responses are uploaded at the end of every day of testing.

All testing and response uploads must be completed by Friday 26 August 2005.

Prior to the final upload of student responses for the 2005 testing period, schools should check the status list of students for the test session/s for each test to ensure that all student test sessions have been completed and are listed as 'Complete', 'Cancelled', 'Exempt' or 'Absent'. (The *AIM Online User Manual* (Section 6.2.4) has instructions on how to perform this check.) No students should have their test session flagged 'Enrolled' or 'In progress' before the final upload.

If a student is unable to do all three AIM Online tests and is absent from one or two of the tests, the student should be enrolled into the test session that he/she has missed and be marked as 'Absent' or 'Exempt'. The *AIM Online User Manual* has instructions on how to perform this procedure at Sections 6.2.1 and 6.2.3.

If there are any students who are marked as 'Enrolled' in the status list, they should be either deleted from the test session or marked as 'Exempt' or 'Absent' as appropriate.

### School Tally Sheet

The School Tally Sheet will be sent to all AIM Online schools. At the completion of the testing period, the Tally Sheet must be accurately filled in and posted to the VCAA using the prepaid addressed envelope.

The breakdown of numbers of students who completed the tests, and the names of students who were absent from tests or were exempted need to be indicated on this form.

### AIM Online-specific Help

The VCAA has established a toll-free telephone line for schools to gather information, clarify procedures, seek advice or receive assistance with AIM Online-specific technical difficulties.

The telephone number of the AIM Online Help Desk for metropolitan and non-metropolitan schools is:

**Freecall 1800 623 681.**

The Help Desk can be contacted via email at:

**[aim.support@edumail.vic.gov.au](mailto:aim.support@edumail.vic.gov.au)**

The Help Desk operates from 8:30 am to 5:00 pm Monday to Friday during the formal testing period.

Your questions will be answered within one day of receipt.

### Before Calling the Help Desk

System users should attempt to isolate and diagnose any problems before calling the Help Desk.

They should also refer to the AIM Online User Manual to ensure that the problem is an AIM Online-specific problem and to check that all the facts and details are gathered to ensure efficient and timely assistance from Help Desk staff.

### Non-AIM Online-specific Help

Schools experiencing difficulties with their Internet connections should contact their Internet Service Provider as expected under normal circumstances.

Schools experiencing difficulties with hardware or non-AIM Online-specific software should pursue their normal help channels.



# Appendix 1

## Composition of AIM Online Adaptive Tests

Each AIM Online test in both English and Mathematics will consist of 60 items. Each student is presented with a different selection of items drawn from a large item pool.

All items within the item pool have been allocated a CSF level from 3 to 6, and an estimated difficulty within that CSF level, namely 'high' (H), 'medium' (M) or 'low' (L). These are combined for each item to form its CSF sub-level, e.g. 3L.

Throughout an AIM Online test, students are presented with twelve subtests. Each subtest contains five items from a particular CSF sub-level. The first subtest within a test is at the 4L CSF sub-level.

If a student successfully answers three or more items within a subtest, the next subtest the student receives will be at the next higher CSF sub-level, e.g. if a student successfully answers three items in a subtest at the 4M CSF sub-level, the next subtest the student receives will be at the 4H CSF sub-level.

If a student successfully answers less than three items within a subtest, the next subtest the student receives will be at the next lower CSF sub-level, e.g. if a student successfully answers two items in a subtest at the 4M CSF sub-level, the next subtest the student receives will be at the 4L CSF sub-level. However, if a student successfully answers less than three items in a subtest at the 3L CSF sublevel, the next subtest the student is presented with will be at the 3M CSF sub-level.

Figure 1 shows the possible pathways through an AIM Online test.

**Figure 1: Possible AIM Online adaptive test pathways**

