Embedding career education in the Victorian Curriculum F–10

Design and Technologies – Materials and technologies specialisations, Levels 9 and 10

An existing learning activity linked to a particular learning area or capability in the Victorian Curriculum F–10 can be easily adapted to incorporate career education, enriching students’ career-related learning and skill development.

1. Identify an existing learning activity

**Curriculum area, sub-strand and levels:** Design and Technologies – Materials and technologies specialisations, Levels 9 and 10

**Relevant content description:** Critically analyse factors, including social, ethical and sustainability considerations, that impact on designed solutions for global preferred futures and the complex design and production processes involved [(VCDSTS054)](https://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/VCDSTS054)

**Existing activity:** Investigating the factors that influence production processes for large and small businesses.

**Summary of adaptation, change, addition:** Investigating the challenges and opportunities identified in their research, in the context of career planning.

2. Adapt the learning activity to include a career education focus

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| Existing learning activity | Adaptations, changes or extensions that can be made |
| Students conduct a case study to compare and contrast the production processes for two similar items (such as handbags), where one item is made offshore by a large nation-wide chain such as Kmart, and one is made by a smaller enterprise (either locally or offshore but for a company that prioritises ethical production, such as [Beekeeper Parade](https://beekeeperparade.com/pages/about-us).) Students investigate who makes the products, where the materials are sourced, worker conditions, how much the items sell for, etc. | Students extend the investigation to look in more detail at who makes the products they are studying. What skills do these people have? In a local setting, what sort of training would be available to get those skills? Are the people making the items running the business? If so, what other tasks might they do? |
| Students then consider the factors that influence why the businesses follow different production processes. They brainstorm factors that influence how and why the businesses made the decision to operate as they do and present information in a graphic organiser such as a mind map. Factors could include expertise of workers, cost of materials/labour, price consumers are willing to pay, ethical or sustainability concerns. | Students consider how the factors identified might impact job opportunities. For example, if consumers prioritise affordability over all other factors, what impact would that have on the availability of local manufacturing jobs? If local jobs relating to the creation of bags are oriented towards design, sales, or project management, what skills and training would someone interested in that industry need to develop?  Conversely, if someone had strong feelings or concerns about offshore production (re: conditions of workers, environmental concerns, or impacts on local jobs), what avenues could they take to change policy around it? Are there career opportunities available to alter the way businesses operate? |
| Students compare the results of their case studies to identify similarities and differences between the large/small organisations, in terms of production processes and factors influencing the choices. They reflect on the implications of their findings on how they feel about buying from different types of businesses. | Students consider how their findings have affected how they think about their future employment opportunities. They consider any pathways they would like to explore further, or any skills/expertise they would like to develop. Any insights gained could be added to career planning tools such as an e-portfolio. Teachers can encourage students to do this in class or in their own time. |

Considerations when adapting the learning activity

* Teachers may need to prepare to ensure they are able to support students in developing sound research and documentation skills that will assist them to make informed judgements about the information they have found. These strategies will also be valuable career skills.
* Students may need support in locating accurate information about the various roles explored during the activity. The careers practitioner can assist with this, or students can visit [Job Outlook](http://www.joboutlook.gov.au/). Students can also be encouraged/supported to conduct research into study pathways related to business, international business, social entrepreneurship and social justice. This would help to prepare them for their career planning during senior secondary school years.

Additional resources to help when adapting the learning activity

* [BeeKeeper Parade](https://beekeeperparade.com/pages/about-us)
* Biome, ‘[The buzz about BeeKeeper Parade’](https://www.biome.com.au/blog/beekeeper-parade/)
* [Job Outlook](http://www.joboutlook.gov.au)

Benefits for students

Know yourself – self-development:

* Considering how their findings may impact on future behaviours and career opportunities and identifying avenues for further exploration helps students develop self-awareness about their interests and values.
* Sharing findings and working with their peers to compare results encourages students to work well with others and enhance their communication skills.

Know your world – career exploration:

* As they research production processes, students explore the labour market locally and abroad, learning more about the skills and expertise required in a range of industries.
* Conducting the case study and presenting their findings in a way that can easily be compared with others requires students to use information and technology effectively.

Manage your future – be proactive:

* As students consider the impact of their research on career options and steps they would like to take on their career pathways, they gain knowledge and skills needed to plan and build their careers.
* Analysing the factors behind various production processes helps students make informed decisions, as they identify how others have used information to guide decision-making.