Embedding career education in the Victorian Curriculum F–10

Music, 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 and levels:** Music, Levels 9 and 10

**Relevant content description:** Plan, develop, and notate compositions with an understanding of style and convention ([VCAMUM043](https://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/VCAMUM043))

**Existing activity:** Creating music for different purposes and occasions, for example, a soundtrack that enhances a film’s narrative arc.

**Summary of adaptation, change, addition**: Collaborating to work to a brief to create music for an external organisation or another school department.

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 |
| Teacher sets up a learning task that asks students to compose for a specific purpose. Teacher plays examples of music compositions that have been written for a specific purpose and occasion. This may include soundtracks to ads, music for online games or music written for supermarkets. Teacher guides discussion on music conventions that are used by the composer for the piece’s purpose.  Teacher sets composition and notation tasks for students to develop their own work for an imagined purpose and occasion. | Teacher provides an authentic purpose for a composition. This could be via collaboration with other school departments, such as creating a soundtrack for Media Arts student work or writing a composition for a performance at school event. Alternatively, teacher could provide a brief with ‘real-world’ expectations and needs, such as working with an external organisation like the local council. An example might be a professional brief to compose a song/jingle that helps educate the community on a new kerb-side collection initiative.  Students collaborate in teams to compose a piece that meets the brief. The task replicates real-world work as they work to a deadline, ensuring the product is fit for purpose. |
| Students work individually as they consider the purpose of the task as set by teacher. They plan, compose and record the work. | Students work in small teams, allocating specific roles for each student as well as setting and monitoring deadlines. Examples of these roles may include performer, sound technician/recording engineer, communications (responsible for briefing client on task progress). Teacher facilitates discussion on what each of these roles entails. Students develop authentic work practices as they formally meet with their ‘client’ throughout the project. Students can reflect on the development of their work-based skills by keeping a journal, which becomes a reference for a résumé or e-portfolio. |
| The composition is produced as a classroom learning activity. | The task replicates real-world work as students work to a brief with deadlines, hold client meetings and meet agreed obligations. They need to be highly organised, willing to share and discuss ideas with the team and practice skills relevant to the changing work environment. |
| Students perform their compositions and discuss the planning and composition process.  Teacher assesses the value of the work as a set of skills and knowledge. | Students hold regular team meetings where they discuss successes and challenges of the project. They can use insight gained through this activity in preparation for auditions, interviews, a résumé or their e-portfolio by making links between the activity and transferable skills they have developed.  Each team’s work is assessed for its ability to fulfil the brief and students receive feedback from their clients. In the case of an external brief, the composition that most successfully works to the brief criteria could be selected and used by the local organisation. |

Considerations when adapting the learning activity

* Teachers will need to communicate with other school departments or external organisations to plan the scope of the task. If there is collaboration with an external organisation, teacher will need to follow relevant school policies.
* Teachers will need unpack the various work roles adopted by students in this project. A discussion on career pathways and uses of the various skills beyond the arts industry would be a valuable enrichment.

Additional resources to help when adapting the learning activity

* [Buck Institute for Education](https://my.pblworks.org/resources) (free project-based learning online templates useful for planning and self-reflection)

Benefits for students

Know yourself – self-development:

* By communicating with the ‘client’ (either school-based or external) to understand and work to the brief, students develop skills in communicating, working with others and being adaptable.
* Working in teams can provide challenges. Students will learn to practice flexible thinking, be supportive of other team members and respect different opinions.

Know your world – career exploration:

* Students develop insight into the range of opportunities for people in the music industry and understand work undertake when working to a brief.
* By deciding on the most appropriate apps/online tools/software to use for their composition, students learn to use technology and information effectively as they would in the workplace.
* By managing real deadlines where other students/external ‘clients’ are relying on them to complete their composition at the agreed time, students experience work.

Manage your future – be proactive:

* The process of making informed decisions (as done in responding to a brief and client feedback) and reflecting on successes and challenges will help students with decision-making in their own lives.
* Students translate some of their new skills as employability skills and add these to a résumé or   
  e-portfolio.