Embedding career education in the Victorian Curriculum F–10

Personal and Social Capability, 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:** Personal and Social Capability, Levels 9 and 10

**Relevant content description:** Analyse how divergent values and beliefs contribute to different perspectives on social issues ([VCPSCSO047](https://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/VCPSCSO047))

**Existing activity:** Reading media on a particular issue and speculating on possible reasons for why different perspectives are presented.

**Summary of adaptation, change, addition:** Identifying and exploring a specific workplace issue currently debated in the media, such as underpayment in the hospitality and service industries.

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 identifies several short articles, comments or opinion pieces about a topical issue, where different opinions on the issue are presented. Class read these examples together.Alternatively, teachers may prefer to write up short mock examples of their own. | Teacher adapts the activity so that the articles, comments or opinion pieces provided relate to a specific workplace context in which there is public disagreement. For example, students could explore disagreements relating to the underpayment of casual staff members in the hospitality and service industry.  |
| Teacher facilitates a class discussion defining the concepts ‘belief’ and ‘value’. In doing so, teacher raises questions such as: * Do people always recognise their own and others’ beliefs and values? Consider contexts in which people make assumptions or have low awareness, and why.
* How do beliefs and values affect each other? Point to contexts in which people may make assumptions based on values, or value something because of a widespread belief.
* How do an individual’s beliefs and values relate to the groups of which they are a part?
 | In addition, the discussion identifies the stakeholder groups in the selected workplace context, and any core beliefs and values held by these groups. Groups may include employers, workers, consumers or customers, unions, management, the broader Australian society, or so on.  |
| Teacher leads a class brainstorm about what beliefs or values might be present within one of the written examples. Teacher records the brainstorm on a whiteboard.  | As an extension, students consider how the beliefs and values of the stakeholder groups impact on their perspective on the issue.  |
| In small groups, students analyse the remaining examples for possible beliefs and values. Student write down which beliefs or values are central to the main points of disagreement, as well as points of agreement. | Teacher leads students to identify how they fit into the stakeholder groups identified, if at all. They also consider how their personal values and beliefs align with stakeholder groups they’re not a part of, and how that could affect their future. For example, would they want to join a union when they enter the workplace? Students draw from their own experiences relating to beliefs and values in the workplace groups where possible.  |

Considerations when adapting the learning activity

* Depending upon the cohort and the issue selected, students may need further support. Some workplace issues will be more familiar to them with others. For instance, hospitality will be a more familiar context to most than construction for most students. Even so, teachers should not assume that students understand workplace terminology or ideas (e.g. ‘overtime’ or ‘leave’).
* Teachers would benefit from ensuring they have up-to-date information related to the example of their choice, particularly if it’s an issue that could directly impact students’ working lives, such as wage theft.

Additional resources to help when adapting the learning activity

* [Fair Work Australia](https://www.fairwork.gov.au/website-information/related-sites/unions-and-employer-associations)
* [Young Workers Centre](http://www.youngworkers.org.au/) (information and support for young people seeking or in work)

Benefits for students

Know yourself – self-development:

* Identifying that there are different stakeholders and values in a workplace dispute fosters a capacity for students to work with others, as well as reflect on how an individual can reconcile differing values for pragmatic reasons.

Know your world – career exploration:

* Reflecting on the different values and beliefs involved in a specific workplace setting can help students to understand work roles, including how different perspectives can coexist within a functional workplace.
* Exploring issues such as underpayment of young workers helps students to identify their rights, and to know where to find information in times when they need support.

Manage your future – be proactive:

* This activity allows students to gain insight into how workplaces may be changing in response to issues or societal trends. This knowledge equips students with the ability to plan and build their careers.
* Focussing on different stakeholders in a workplace issue assists in appreciating the different kinds of work that people do, allowing them to make better decisions about their own careers.
* Understanding potential risk factors in seeking employment as a young person, such as the potential for underpayment, can help students identify workplaces more likely to treat them fairly, or assist them in developing strategies for addressing workplace issues.