Embedding career education in the Victorian Curriculum F–10

Critical and Creative Thinking, 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:** Critical and Creative Thinking, Levels 9 and 10

**Relevant content description:** Investigate the nature and use of counterexamples structured as arguments ([VCCCTR048](https://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/VCCCTR048))

**Existing activity:** Analysing stereotypes or generalisations, judging whether assumptions are justified or reasonable.

**Summary of adaptation, change, addition:** Analysing assumptions about the work ethic of young people, and the impact of generalisations on career journeys.

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 presents a list of generalised conclusions that could be based on assumptions drawn from limited knowledge/evidence. Some broad examples might be:* All jet ski owners are rich.
* Buses are never on time.
* Motorcyclists are always unsafe on the road.

See the ‘Considerations…’ section on following page for suggestions about cross-curricular learning. | Teacher ensures that at least some of the generalised conclusions are primarily about young people and their attitudes to work. For instance:* Generation Z is lazy and entitled.
* Young people cannot take criticism.
* Kids these days are not as independent or as driven as previous generations.

Students may suggest generalisations they have heard. Extending this discussion to include assumptions about the type of work available, or the options available to individuals would be relevant. Examples of such generalisations might include, ‘There are no jobs for young people in our area’, or ‘Only smart kids can go on to work in [XYZ].’ |
| Referring to a previous example, the class or small groups work to create a hasty generalisation (an argument where the conclusion is inferred from a limited set of evidence).For example, ‘I regularly see motorcyclists cut in between cars on the road, which is dangerous. Clearly all motorcylists are unsafe on the road. Jo is a motorcyclist. Therefore, Jo is dangerous on the road.’ | Class creates a hasty generalisation drawing on one of the career stereotypes identified. For example: ‘Gen Z teens are lazy and always complaining about work conditions. I know, because my children’s friends do it all the time. Young Jo does not have a job. It must be because Jo is lazy.’ |
| Referring to the hasty generalisation generated by the class, students collaboratively research factors that limit the cogency (or strength) of the argument, and provide counterexamples. In relation to the above example:* The truth or strength of evidence supporting the generalisation (Do motorcyclists actually cause that many accidents? How do we know?)
* Other factors influencing the evidence (is there other relevant evidence about Jo being ignored?)
* Any assumptions made in the generalisation (that each time it is a different motorcyclist observed?)
 | Class research factors that limit the cogency of the hasty generalisation. For instance, in relation to the above example:* Truth or strength of evidence (is the sample size large enough? Do young people choose unemployment? How do we know?)
* Other factors (What pathways into work are available where Jo lives? What else might limit Jo’s employment prospects?)
* Any assumptions made (How are pathways for young people today different from in the past?)

See ‘Additional resources’ for suggestions that might support class discussions.  |

Considerations when adapting the learning activity

* This activity may encourage students to voice generalisations they have internalised as barriers to their own success, so teachers will have to be mindful of this and prepare for unexpected discussion topics.
* This activity can be adapted in relation to other curriculum areas. For example, a generalisation about young people in relation to Mathematics might be ‘Young people overly rely on technology to complete number operations’. Alternatively, this activity can be adapted to investigate assumptions and generalisations about subject-specific career pathways. For example, using generalisations such as ‘Doctors are male’ would adapt this activity for a Health and Physical Education context.

Additional resources to help when adapting the learning activity

* [*Book of Bad Arguments*](https://bookofbadarguments.com/) (see page on hasty generalisations).
* *Australian Bureau of Statistics*, [2016 Australian employment data](https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs%40.nsf/Lookup/by%20Subject/2071.0~2016~Main%20Features~Employment%20Data%20Summary~67)
* [Labour Market Information Portal](https://lmip.gov.au/)

Benefits for students

Know yourself – self-development:

* Reflecting on assumptions and generalisations about young people and their attitudes to work can help students to reflect on their own attitudes to work. It can also provide an opportunity to challenge unhelpful assumptions young people might be making about themselves, or to alert them to areas in which they may need to seek further development.

Know your world – career exploration:

* Students practise using technology to find up-to-date information about their own work prospects or possible pathways. This enables them to think critically about assumptions about work.

Manage your future – be proactive:

* Exploring factors that influence career paths (such as assumptions of elders, employment rates, regional/socioeconomic variations in available pathways to work) can help students develop more informed and targeted career decision-making.