Embedding career education in the Victorian Curriculum F–10

Economics and Business, Levels 7 and 8

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:** Economics and Business, Levels 7 and 8

**Relevant content description:** Examine the ways consumers and producers respond to and influence each other in the market, particularly through price mechanism ([VCEBR011](https://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/VCEBR011))

**Existing activity:** Students consider and discuss how process is established within a free market through the price mechanism and the influences on consumers and producers when making economic choices and specifically how consumers and producers may potentially influence each other.

**Summary of adaptation, change, addition:** Examination of different career opportunities within the marketing, advertising and Public Relations (PR) industries related to a market economy.

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 facilitated class discussion about how consumers and producers influence each other:* Think of something you like buying, such as a favourite food or drink. What can a business do to make you more (or less) likely to buy this product? (Consider prices, consumer tastes, consumer income, market trends and quality.)
* What do you know about the way people try to influence producers to change what they produce and/or its quality, and how a product is produced (i.e. petitions, boycotts, protests)? Have you ever tried to get a business to change, bring back a product or change how it is made?
* Why does the price of petrol change?
* Why does the price of fruit and vegetables change?
* Why does the price of branded products differ from non-branded products?
* How do we know if something is overpriced?
* What happens at an auction? How is the final price determined?
* Introduce the notion of consumer sovereignty in a free market
 | Students select a specific organic food, health food, or environmentally packaged product to research.Students visit a local grocery store (or online shop), and research how the product is packaged, product features, and price. Students then collect the same data for a non ‘standard’ version of the product (e.g. the non-organic option).Students report back re findings and draw conclusions about how producers and consumers influence each other’s behaviour. (EG: How did variation in price, packaging, ingredients, etc influence their reaction to each product?)Alternatively, students conduct research comparing branded and non-branded versions of a product. For example, sportswear/shoes. Consider why are consumers prepared to pay more for a branded product.Brainstorm how consumer influences on producers affect jobs and available careers. Consider:* How does the demand for cheap imports affect local jobs?
* What occupations try to influence how people feel about products (i.e. health promotion, marketing, advertising)?
* If a business is boycotted, what happens to its employees?
* How are consumer choices influenced? What industries do this?
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| Students research an example of a famous historical product or business boycott, then present about how the business did or did not change its behaviour (see Additional resources).  | Students share the type of work they are interested in for the future, and brainstorm how consumer trends may impact those jobs. For example, they discuss how current consumer preference for organic materials might impact an aspiring farmer or designer.Students could research jobs / roles within the PR, marketing and advertising industries and the specific skills, roles and ethical implications of working in these industries. |

Considerations when adapting the learning activity

* A guest speaker from a local business could also be organised to address students about how businesses track and respond to changes in levels of consumer demand. Ask guest speakers to include information about their own career path, including education, training and other experiences that helped.
* To expand the careers’ focus, ask students to construct a flowchart depicting the supply chain and production of a product, noting occupations at each stage of the process. Students could note different occupations they observe at the supermarket, recording tasks being done, and the skills required to do these.
* As extension, ask students to consider jobs in industries they explored. Occupations within the marketing and PR industries for example. Students could also consider ways businesses collect and use consumer data to market and sell products. Analysis of skills and capabilities involved in these jobs might follow.

Additional resources to help when adapting the learning activity

* Ethical consumer, ‘[History of successful boycotts](https://www.ethicalconsumer.org/ethicalcampaigns/boycotts/history-successful-boycotts)’

Benefits for students

Know yourself – self-development:

* Presenting findings to the class develops student written and verbal communication skills.

Know your world – career exploration:

* Students could be asked to observe and identify different jobs encountered during research. This will broaden understanding of career opportunities.

Manage your future – be proactive:

* Collection, organisation, and interpretation of data about product price and features, and presentation of this information requires students to demonstrate importantemployability skillssuch as data collection and interpretation, and communication skills.
* Through research of how businesses adapt to changes in demand and feedback from consumers, students develop understanding of the changing nature of work, helping them plan and build their careers.