Stage 6 Work Studies
Content Endorsed Course (CEC) Syllabus 2012

Support material for the revised syllabus

Introduction


This resource aims to support teachers with implementation of the course. The revision of the Work Studies syllabus has occurred in the context of changes in secondary schooling, including the raising of the school leaving age to 17 years. The revised Work Studies syllabus is well placed to meet student and school needs for those students that may previously have left school. Work Studies provides a flexible and effective learning framework that relates directly to work and develops skills to assist students in the workplace. Many schools may offer non-ATAR patterns of study that include Work Studies.

The syllabus aims to be contemporary and reflect the current and potential future work environment. It includes a core learning module, elective modules and work placement opportunities which provide options for community involvement. As this is a CEC there is no HSC examination.

The Work Studies syllabus is designed to assist students in their transition from school to work. It develops knowledge and understanding of the issues faced by students in the transition to work and the skills needed for effective career planning and performance of tasks in the work environment.

Success through the Work Studies course will enable students to make well-informed, considered decisions and choices about work and other aspects of their lives, including behaviours and attitudes that contribute to their wellbeing now and in the future.

The course contains information on implementation, establishing a positive learning climate, planning, instructional strategies, portfolios, differentiating instruction and assessment.

Key aspects of the Work Studies CEC syllabus

- The course is flexible, providing a range of indicative hours from 15 to 30 for each elective module to allow teachers to tailor their programs specifically to meet the needs of particular groups of students.
- There are eight objectives and nine outcomes.
- Course themes have been identified and a table is included to show possible learning pathways through the course.
• The content is organised within ‘Key Issues’ and ‘Learning Experiences’ to clearly indicate to teachers and students the expected learning.

• The course reflects the contemporary world of work, including a focus on:
  o technology in the workplace and for job-seeking
  o the changing nature of work and the labour market
  o issues in the modern workforce.

• There is an emphasis on knowledge and skills for work-readiness, teamwork and enterprise skills.

• Work health and safety (WHS) is covered in Module 10 Experiencing Work.

• A Personal Finance module has been developed, focusing on financial literacy, assisting students to manage their income and to develop an understanding of financial matters.

• The Team Enterprise Project module provides the opportunity for students to engage in practical activities designed to develop their initiative, enterprise and teamwork skills. Such a project could include a community-based, work-focused initiative.

• Provision for school-developed modules is provided, though limited to 25 percent of total course time.

• The course is suitable for the full range of students, including more able students.

• Three modules require prior learning through prerequisite modules.

• One-module and two-module options are available for Experiencing Work (up to 50 percent of total course time); it allows for a diverse range of work-related experiences.

Course structures

The possible structures for Preliminary and HSC students indicated below means that the course is flexible and can be implemented in ways to meet student and school needs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Units</th>
<th>Indicative Hours</th>
<th>Structure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Core</td>
<td>Elective Modules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 year</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>30 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Prelim or HSC)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 year</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>30 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Prelim or HSC)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 year</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>30 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Prelim or HSC)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 year</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>30 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Prelim or HSC)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The content is organised into one core module plus elective modules. The specified outcomes must be addressed in the core and in each elective module. This flexible structure
is designed to support the diverse needs of students. The 30-hour core must be completed whether the student is studying the 60-hour, 120-hour or 240-hour course. Due to the flexibility in the number of hours for each elective module (15–30 indicative hours), there is no prescribed number of modules for each of the 60-, 120- or 240-hour courses.

Elective modules may be studied:

- for between 15 and 30 indicative hours
- in any order or pattern, with the exception that some modules require the completion of prerequisite modules. (Note: teachers can determine whether some students, through other learning opportunities and/or experiences, have completed appropriate prior learning that would allow them to undertake a module without completion of the prerequisite module).

Course content

The content in the Work Studies syllabus is organised with ‘Key Issues’ and ‘Learning Experiences’. The ‘Key Issues’ indicate the significant areas of the content that are addressed in each module. Points of content are listed under the ‘Key Issues’ to indicate to teachers and students the expected learning within each module. The ‘Learning Experiences’ further unpack the content points and guide student-centered and active learning about the content. The ‘Learning Experiences’ should be taught in an integrated and interactive manner for the related ‘Key Issue’. Teachers can determine the emphasis given to ‘Key Issues’ and ‘Learning Experiences’ to be addressed within each module.

The specified outcomes for each module must be addressed. Due to the flexibility in the number of hours for each elective module, the emphasis given to particular content ‘Key Issues’ and the selection of ‘Learning Experiences’ is a matter for school decision.

Current programs may be modified to meet the requirements of the new syllabus and many existing units of work may form the basis of effective programs. Many existing resources will continue to be relevant.

Course themes

The Work Studies syllabus includes course themes: Career planning, Performing work tasks, Working with others, and Managing change; these are integrated throughout each of the modules in the syllabus. They relate closely to the course outcomes and apply across a variety of employment and life contexts. They are required not only to gain work, but also to assist individuals’ progress within the workplace and participate as informed and active citizens.
**CORE** (30 indicative hours) This core topic is mandatory for all students.

**My Working Life**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MODULES (15–30 indicative hours each)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. In the Workplace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Preparing Job Applications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Workplace Communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Teamwork and Enterprise Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Managing Work and Life Commitments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Personal Finance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Workplace Issues (the prerequisite module is <em>In the Workplace</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Self-Employment (the prerequisite module is <em>Managing Work and Life Commitments</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Team Enterprise Project (the prerequisite module is <em>Teamwork and Enterprise Skills</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Experiencing Work (one or two of these modules may be undertaken provided that they do not exceed 50 percent of course time)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. School-developed module (one or two of these modules may be undertaken, provided that they do not exceed 25 percent of course time).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Modules 7, 8 and 9 require the completion of prerequisite modules, or appropriate prior learning.

**Credentials – RoSA and HSC**

Some students who undertake *Work Studies* may leave school before the end of Year 12 to take up post-school opportunities such as employment, an apprenticeship, a traineeship or other education. Such students will be eligible for a Record of School Achievement (RoSA) if they satisfy the eligibility requirements that indicate that a student must have:

- completed courses of study that satisfy the Board’s curriculum and assessment requirements for the RoSA
- complied with all requirements imposed by the Minister or the Board and
- completed Year 10.

The RoSA will record all courses that a student is enrolled in (but has not yet completed) at the date of leaving school, without showing a grade.

Students who leave school and who are not eligible for a RoSA will be able to receive a Transcript of Study at their time of departure. The Transcript of Study will contain the same information as the RoSA for courses satisfactorily completed.

When completed as a Year 12 course, *Work Studies* will have an un-moderated school assessment mark recorded on the HSC Record of Achievement. Students who receive their HSC will be able to receive a RoSA at the same time as their HSC, detailing their achievements in their earlier years of study.
Assessment

There is no external HSC examination of students in the Stage 6 Work Studies CEC. Schools are responsible for ensuring that marks submitted to the Board of Studies are aligned to the Stage 6 Board Endorsed Course Performance Descriptors. Depending on the length of the course (60, 120 or 240 hours), it is advised that there be three to five assessment tasks in Year 11 and/or Year 12 courses.


Aspects of assessment

Assessment is the process of identifying, gathering and interpreting information about student achievement. Assessment can be used for a number of key purposes, including to:

- assist student learning
- evaluate and improve teaching and learning programs
- provide information on student learning and progress in a course in relation to the syllabus outcomes
- provide evidence of satisfactory completion of a course
- report on the achievement by each student at the end of a course.

In Work Studies quality assessment will provide information about what students know and can do and allow teachers to form a judgement regarding the quality of a response, product or performance, including in a workplace, based on known criteria and curriculum standards. Assessment gives students a clear indication of how well they are performing, based on the syllabus outcomes and can inform students how they can improve their performance.

There are many opportunities for assessing student achievement within Work Studies. Every assessment activity can provide valuable information about student achievement. It is advised that teachers use a wide range of approaches to get a balanced view of student achievement.

Possible assessment tasks for Work Studies include:

- case studies
- checklists
- computer-generated reports
- essays and reports
- instructing others
- interviews
- investigations
- learning logs
- mind maps or other graphic representations
- observation
- peer assessment
- photographs
- portfolios
- presentations and demonstrations
- projects
- question and answer sessions
- research reports
- self-reflection and self-assessment:
  - tests in various formats
  - workplace reports
  - written work.
Workplace literacy and numeracy

Well-developed workplace literacy and numeracy skills are essential to operating successfully in the workplace. They are the skills both employers and employees rely upon at work to provide a productive, healthy and rewarding work environment. These skills allow employees to understand their job, continually improve and progress in their career, and to enjoy their work. Literacy and numeracy skills are essential to ensure that their training is successful.

Workplace literacy and numeracy skills are essential for employees to ensure safe work practices are understood and carried out. Unsafe work practices are not tolerated in the modern Australian workplace and lack of knowledge of the correct procedures and work practices is not a defence in a workplace dispute.

What are workplace literacy and numeracy skills?

Literacy and numeracy skills are often understood as the ability to read, write, multiply, add, subtract and divide. These abilities are central to success in employment but there is more to literacy and numeracy in the workplace.

Workplace literacy and numeracy skills also include the ability to:

- use written and oral skills to communicate effectively
- make informed decisions from information gathered
- solve complex problems
- understand and use workplace technologies and tools
- use mathematical reasoning skills to solve problems, deduce and predict
- use workplace information systems effectively
- create and describe new systems, practices and ideas to enhance productivity and/or profitability
- work harmoniously in a team environment
- train and educate other employees.

By building workplace literacy and numeracy skills in tandem with vocational and other training, the following benefits are achievable:

- increased workforce flexibility and responsibility
- productivity and efficiency initiatives
- quality assurance processes
- improved health and safety in the workplace
- fostering of workforce confidence and morale
- increased communication, consultation and teamwork
- creation of a training culture in the workplace.

Why are workplace literacy and numeracy skills important?

The demands upon employees to be skilled and have the capacity to learn and adapt are essential in the modern workplace. The increasing automation and use of computerised technologies are placing more reliance on employees to be literate and numerate and be able to learn how to manipulate and work with these new technologies.

The legal requirements and regulatory frameworks under which organisations operate as well as the compliance requirements demand that employees are able to participate in workplace training and understand the regulations and procedures that must be followed at work.

Employers are responsible for knowing, understanding and complying with all legislation and are monitored for their compliance, usually by outside agencies. For many enterprises,
especially small to medium business enterprises, compliance with regulations and the associated employee training may be one of their major costs. Employees who are able to learn and remain up-to-date are invaluable to an employer from a business-risk viewpoint. Employees who possess well-developed literacy and numeracy skills are very attractive to employers as their ability to learn new requirements, new processes and procedures is very much desired. These employees help the employer enormously in demonstrating compliance to the regulations.

**Workplace literacy and numeracy skills are embedded in the *Works Studies* syllabus**

The Work Studies syllabus includes the opportunity for students to engage with workplace literacy and numeracy skills through the core module and each elective module. Teachers should design their teaching and use of resources to foster the development of these skills and provide opportunities for the students to practise them. The following are possible areas for students to explore and learn these skills through the *Work Studies* syllabus. To demonstrate workplace literacy and numeracy skills students may:

- participate in the workplace through real work experience
- obtain and maintain currency of knowledge, skills, licenses and certifications such as a First Aid certificate, 'White Card' etc
- explain to other students workplace procedures, including safety procedures
- engage with workplace manuals and updates in possible future occupations
- follow written procedures and directions in an actual or hypothetical workplace setting
- communicate clearly ideas in regard to efficiency and productivity
- record and report hypothetical incidents for a workplace.

**Having well-developed workplace literacy and numeracy skills provides benefits to employees and employers alike.**

**Workplace Safety**

Workplace literacy and numeracy is essential:

- to communicate safe work practices and alert workers to safe work procedures
- to operate machinery and tools in a safe manner according to the manufacturers’ instructions
- to communicate safety policies and procedures
- for reporting injuries and hazards in the workplace
- to participate in safety training sessions and programs.

**Workplace education and training**

Employers spend a great deal on training their staff. It is often a major cost. Effective training is best implemented with a literate and numerate workforce.

Training:

- builds a knowledge base among workers
- facilitates the transference of skills
- increases workplace knowledge of appropriate staff interactions
- promotes confidence and encourages participation
- demonstrates that the employer is concerned and cares for their employees.

**Workplace relations**

Workplace literacy and numeracy skills:

- help workers communicate with fellow workers in a multicultural workplace
- improve communication and cohesiveness of the workforce
• help keep administrative costs down
• support clear communication and worker participation
• assist team-building activities.

**Workplace productivity/efficiency**

Workplace numeracy and literacy skills are needed to:
• decrease training costs
• reduce mistakes in ordering and supplying goods and services
• reduce supervision and the need to retrain
• maintain standards of service and products
• reduce miscommunication
• increase workforce capacity and job sharing.

**Resources**

There are a number of online resources that contain helpful information for teachers and students who are considering entering the workforce or undertaking training both during and after leaving school. A sample of these resources appear below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resource</th>
<th>Website</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australia’s Career Information Service</td>
<td>myfuture: Australia's career information service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Workplace English Language and Literacy (WELL) Program</td>
<td><a href="http://www.innovation.gov.au/Skills/LiteracyAndNumeracy/WorkplaceEnglishLanguageAndLiteracy/Pages/default.aspx">http://www.innovation.gov.au/Skills/LiteracyAndNumeracy/WorkplaceEnglishLanguageAndLiteracy/Pages/default.aspx</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language, literacy and numeracy advice and FAQs for RTOs and employers</td>
<td><a href="http://www.takingthelead.com.au">www.takingthelead.com.au</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Implementing Work Studies

While the teacher is responsible for the overall delivery of Work Studies, many resources, including those within the school such as the careers adviser and the school counsellor and those in the community such as employers and parents could be used to supplement lessons. Teachers are encouraged to be familiar with the available resources and utilise them at appropriate junctures in the course. Involving the community typically requires time to make contacts, develop relationships and communicate so that all parties understand the parameters of participation. Teachers may also choose to supervise targeted student activities that support the Work Studies outcomes and modules.

The implementation of Work Studies needs to be as relevant as possible for students. This means teachers need to understand the contemporary workplace and be willing to delve into topics that arise. Students will benefit if teachers have an enthusiasm for organising and a willingness to create hands-on learning experiences.

Students should be encouraged to recognise that Work Studies provides valuable learning with many opportunities to build knowledge and develop new skills and conceptual understanding. Teachers are encouraged to provide students with a comprehensive course outline that explains how and when they will be working on specific skills and concepts. Teachers should also explain how assessment and evaluation will be carried out.

Work Studies provides opportunities for students to explore personally relevant topics; teachers are advised to, where possible, allow students to choose modules and issues of
interest to them. The personal experiences of students can be a starting point to link learning and to help students recognise that they can transfer existing skills and those learnt in the classroom to the workplace and the community. Students should be encouraged to participate and contribute to class discussions and activities.

**Approaches to teaching and learning for Work Studies**

There are many different approaches to teaching and learning in the course. Below are some examples and some discussion of particular learning opportunities and activities that can be applied for Work Studies.

**Student learning journal**

Learning journals involve students keeping a personal journal about *Work Studies* and their experiences in the course. Student learning journals provide students with opportunities to:

- reflect on what they have learned
- ask questions about what is being taught
- react to recent learning activities
- respond to experiences in a workplace.

The purpose of the journal is to provide students with the opportunity to express personal thoughts and reactions to their classroom and workplace learning. Students need to understand that the journal is not intended to be a personal diary, but rather a journal about *Work Studies* that a teacher may read.

**Community involvement and guest speakers**

The community offers many resources schools can utilise to support the learning process. Guest speakers can add new information, ideas and opinions and can stimulate students to consider issues from different angles. Representatives of business, industry, government, social agencies, service groups, institutions and local clubs, as well as parents, school staff and community members, offer a wide range of services, information, resources and experiences to share with students.

Teachers are advised to provide the speaker with information about the class and the module being studied so that the presentation can be designed to best meet the needs of the students. Speakers should be encouraged to use a variety of approaches rather than just a formal lecture. Speakers might consider including question-and-answer sessions and/or activities in which students can participate. Following are some points to consider when arranging a guest presenter:

- date and time
- location and directions to the school and classroom
- transport arrangements (eg parking)
- presentation length
- module to be covered
- specific goals of the session
- equipment available for the presentation
- a brief description of the speaker to be used as an introduction
- teacher and presenter contact details.

In addition below are some tips for presenting:

- personalise information so students can relate it to their lives
- ask students what they know and think about the topic
- use visual aids and actual samples to better explain concepts
- use language and concepts that are age-appropriate
- move around the classroom, maintain eye contact and vary the pace while talking.
Students should be prepared for guest speakers by being briefed on expected behaviour and suggested topics and issues that they could research in advance. Students may gather information about the speaker, agency or group and prepare questions to ask the guest speaker.
Examples of inclusions into a career portfolio.

Students can use a career portfolio to gather, organise and demonstrate examples of their experiences and accomplishments from workplaces as well as learning from school. When creating a career portfolio students:

- document their activities and accomplishments over time
- map the development of their learning and skills
- monitor their personal growth
- communicate their learning with others
- adjust their plans and set future goals.

Career portfolios can be highly motivating for students as they promote organisational skills, autonomy, self-expression, responsibility and ownership of their work. Students select items for their portfolios that represent their best work, showcasing their own progress and learning. The following four steps are used to create a career portfolio.

1. Collect materials
2. Select the most suitable examples
3. Reflect on their value and the learning
4. Present to potential employers and other community members.

Career portfolios may be in hard copy and/or electronic format. An advantage of electronic format is that it can be transmitted to potential employers in any location.
Using career portfolios

Students can use a career portfolio to:
  • establish a path towards work and career plans
  • identify courses that provide skills needed for targeted occupations
  • match the skills they have and those required for jobs or volunteer positions
  • focus on strengths, abilities and accomplishments
  • assist in applying for apprenticeships, cadetships or scholarships
  • illustrate their skills and achievements from school, community, home or work experiences
  • use in interviews for employment
  • clarify knowledge and skills that directly relate to specific employment requirements.

Parents can use a career portfolio to:
  • monitor their child’s competencies and accomplishments over time
  • recognise progress for the transition from school to work
  • provide a basis for discussion with their child about future plans for work.

Employers can use a student’s career portfolio to:
  • examine evidence of the student’s strengths, skills and achievements
  • better understand the student’s career development initiatives such as work experience and community-based programs.

Programming the course

The sample material in this document is provided to illustrate a sample approach to programming courses in Work Studies. The general principles below apply to all possible courses within Work Studies – 60-, 120- or 240-hour courses.

The outcomes in the Work Studies Syllabus are designed to:
  • provide clear expectations of what students know and can do by the end of the course
  • identify the progress expected of students
  • assist in the development of teaching and learning programs.

In programming the course, planning units of work and developing an assessment program, it is important that teachers ensure that the outcomes are addressed. The following provide an example of an approach that teachers might find useful when developing teaching and learning programs that address the outcomes.

The Scope and Sequence allows teachers to indicate and plan:
  • the outcomes to be addressed in each topic
  • the sequencing and the time allocated to each topic
  • the relationship of the assessment program to the teaching and learning program.

In developing the Scope and Sequence the following steps may be used:
  • Step 1: Determine syllabus requirements, topics and time allocation
  • Step 2: Identify outcomes for each topic
  • Step 3: Link the targeted outcomes and the assessment program.

Placing assessment tasks within the Scope and Sequence enables clear links to be made to the related topics and indicates timing throughout the course.
Teachers should note the following features of an assessment program:

- Assessment of outcomes is an integral part of the teaching and learning process.
- Assessment of targeted outcomes occurs after they are addressed through teaching and learning strategies.
- Outcomes do not need to be assessed every time they are targeted for teaching and learning.
- Well-designed assessment tasks can effectively assess more than one outcome.
- All outcomes need to be assessed as part of the assessment program.
- Assessment tasks need to be appropriate for the learning outcomes to which they are related.