



The Shape of the Australian Curriculum: Economics and Business

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Purpose

1. Drawing on the guiding principles in *The Shape of the Australian Curriculum v3.0*, this shape paper sets the context and directions for the development of an Australian Curriculum in Economics and Business. It suggests the way forward for designing a world-class, future-oriented curriculum for all young Australians.

Defining Economics and Business

2. In the late nineteenth century, economics was described as 'a study of mankind as they live and move and think in the ordinary business of life' (A. Marshall, 1890). This has not fundamentally changed over time. More formally, and recently, Economics has been defined as 'the study of the production, distribution and consumption of wealth in human society' (Bannock, Baxter and Davis, 2003), which focuses on how individuals, businesses and the government sector behave and interact, and how economies work. Economics explains how people interact within markets, how individuals and groups make decisions with limited resources to meet their unlimited needs and wants, and often reveals why people, businesses and governments behave in certain ways.
3. The study of Business, in tandem, broadly encompasses all activity by the producers and suppliers of goods and services, and the enterprising endeavours that our society undertakes to meet our needs and wants. Business activity affects the daily lives of all Australians as they participate in all aspects of society - whether it be a simple purchase in a convenience store, formal or informal working, or creating innovative and technological responses to a variety of local and global challenges and opportunities. The business sector, be it for profit or not-for-profit, plays an integral part within the economy by providing social and economic benefits for the whole community.

Context

4. Economics and Business education involves the development of the knowledge, skills, attitudes, beliefs and values that will inform and encourage students to participate in economic and business activities personally, locally, nationally, regionally and globally. It explores the dimensions of economics and business that infuse daily life. If young Australians are to actively participate in their community, it is essential they develop an understanding of the effects that economic and business decisions have upon daily life. This will allow them to make sense of the world, understand their role in contributing to society and appreciate the interdependence of decisions made, as well as the results and effects of these decisions on individuals, households, business organisations, governments, groups and other economies.
5. Economics and Business education will involve students learning about the challenges and successes of economic systems and the impact on society in terms of living standards and economic growth, through an understanding of fundamental economic concepts such as scarcity and opportunity cost, and business concepts, such as revenue, cost, profit and return on investment.
6. The pace of change in our community, due to factors such as globalisation, the effects of technology and demographic trends, means that Australia will benefit from the development of young people's capacity to be enterprising (such as showing initiative and being innovative). A capability to develop creative and imaginative solutions to complex problems is required including strategies to improve Australia's productivity and economic wellbeing, and to encourage the development of ethical and responsible decisions as global citizens. The study of Economics and Business curriculum will assist students to develop this skill set and therefore develop the capacity to contribute to a prosperous society.

Rationale

7. A contemporary view of Economics and Business education affirms that while a distinction can be made between Economics and Business, they are interrelated and an integrated approach towards developing a curriculum for this learning area should be adopted. The Australian Curriculum: Economics and Business comprises Economics, which is seen as the underpinning discipline, and Business, where the economic concepts apply across a range of business contexts.
8. The *Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians* (MCEETYA, 2008 pp. 8-9) states that all young Australians should be 'enterprising...make informed learning and employment decisions...work for the common good [and] are well prepared for their potential life roles as family, community and workforce members'. The Economics and Business curriculum, with its focus on making choices; encouraging active and informed decision-making and enterprising behaviours; and developing consumer and financial literacy skills, has an important and unique contribution to make to the realisation of this goal.
9. Economics and Business education knowledge, understanding and skills underpin the development of consumer and financial literacy skills in students. The National Financial Literacy Strategy proposes that consumer and financial literacy skills be integrated and embedded into the Australian Curriculum as they will equip students with the skills, knowledge and attributes to make responsible and informed consumer and financial decisions. Young Australians are interacting with goods and service providers and making consumer choices from an early age in a society where money is increasingly invisible; and where there is a growing range of choice and complexity in consumer and financial products. Individuals carry a greater level of responsibility for the decisions they make in these contexts. The Economics and Business curriculum will incorporate the knowledge, understandings, competencies, responsibilities and enterprise skills that are set out in the National Consumer and Financial Literacy Framework. Economics and Business education is the most natural and powerful fit for consumer and financial literacy education to be integrated and embedded into students' learning.
10. The Economics and Business curriculum considers the economic and business relationships between Australia and the global economy, especially Asia, and the importance of developing closer regional integration through the development of stronger trade and investment flows, and cross cultural understandings. It is important to develop an appreciation of the role that the Asia region will play in Australia's economic and business future.
11. The Economics and Business curriculum explores the dimensions of economic prosperity and equitable and sustainable futures by evaluating the interrelated nature of economic and ecological sustainability.

Sustainable development was defined by *Our Common Future* as development that "meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." Sustainable development is not a destination, but a dynamic process of adaptation, learning and action. It is about recognising, understanding and acting on the interconnections – above all those between the economy, society and the natural environment (United Nations, 2012).

Rationale

Long-term economic prosperity depends upon sustaining and improving the quality of environments, addressing biodiversity loss, managing consumption and minimising pollution so that future living standards will not be affected in a negative way.

12. The Economics and Business curriculum develops students' knowledge and understanding about key economic and business concepts such as markets and trade relationships, production and consumption from the perspective of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, both through acknowledgement of longstanding traditions of trade and exchange and consideration of the changes that have led to contemporary economic and business practices.
13. By developing Economics and Business knowledge, understanding and skills, young people will be better placed now and in their adult lives to actively participate in economic and business activities, contribute to the development of a prosperous, sustainable and equitable Australian and global economy, and secure their own financial wellbeing.

14. The Australian Curriculum: Economics and Business makes a unique contribution to the general educational aims set out in *The Shape of the Australian Curriculum* v3.0. Its specific focus is on developing the capacity to make informed and rational choices that enable students to actively engage with the economy locally, nationally, regionally and globally, both now and in the future.
15. An Australian Curriculum: Economics and Business will:
 - I. develop the knowledge, understanding and skills that will enable students to actively and ethically participate in the local, national, regional and global economy as business and financially literate citizens.
 - II. develop knowledge and understanding of the nature of economics and business decision-making and its role in creating a prosperous, sustainable and equitable Australian economy.
 - III. make sense of the world through investigating and developing an understanding of the work and business environments within the Australian economy and its interactions and relationships with the global economy, in particular with the Asia region.
 - IV. develop an understanding of the role, rights and responsibilities of consumers, goods and service providers, savers, investors, workers and the role that government and other policy-making institutions, including the legal environment, play in influencing individuals, households, businesses and the economy.
 - V. develop enterprising behaviours and capabilities that can be transferable into life, work and business opportunities.

Key ideas underpinning the Economics and Business Curriculum

16. The Economics and Business curriculum underpinned by active, informed and ethical decision-making approaches, developing a world view and, where possible, adopting a futures focus will be informed by four overarching and interconnected key ideas based on economic and business concepts:

a. Resource allocation and making choices

The process of using available, limited resources for competing alternative uses that satisfy our society's unlimited needs and wants is the focus of economic and business decision-making. As every need and want cannot be satisfied with available resources, choices must be made as to how the resources are allocated most effectively, based on the actions of consumers, producers and governments.

b. The business environment

The business environment is rapidly transforming due to internal and external factors. An understanding of the way businesses are structured and operate, how they respond to challenges, and the role of interest groups in this sphere, including the role of governments, along with the effect of legal and regulatory constraints, is necessary for developing students' economic and business literacy.

c. Consumer and financial literacy

Consumer and financial literacy education develops students' knowledge, skills, values and behaviours in making responsible and informed decisions about consumer issues and managing money and assets, to improve individual and community financial wellbeing. The making of these decisions is a core skill that affects the individual's and the community's quality of life, sense of security, awareness of future options and the overall economic wellbeing of society.

d. Work and work futures

The development of the skills, attitudes and knowledge that individuals need to effectively manage their life, learning and work roles in the 21st century is vital. The nature of work has changed significantly in the last generation and the nature and type of jobs available to young people is changing faster than ever. Understanding rights and responsibilities in the workplace enables active participation in the workforce, which in turn contributes to a prosperous society, and affects individual and community wellbeing.

Organisation of the Economics and Business Curriculum

17. The two organisational strands of the *Australian Curriculum: Economics and Business* are:
- Economics and Business Knowledge and Understanding - where the knowledge and understandings as a whole cover the four key ideas and are not proportional or hierarchical.
 - Economics and Business Skills - where the skills to be applied are divided into four main categories.
18. These strands of the Economics and Business curriculum are underpinned by enterprising behaviours and capabilities. This involves developing and practising a suite of skills including adaptability, initiative, critical and creative thinking, intercultural understanding, interpersonal communication, ethical behaviour, curiosity, managing, calculating, leading and problem-solving; and associated behaviours such as teamwork, planning and organising, using resources effectively, analysing issues and managing identified risks.

19. Economics and Business Knowledge and Understanding

The knowledge and understanding will be drawn from the following:

- Key elements of how economies and businesses operate, the role of consumers, producers, governments and non-government organisations in decision-making, and the interdependence of and interactions between the various sectors of the economy.
- The role of production, distribution and exchange along with trade and globalisation in influencing Australia's living standards and that of other countries.
- The nature of resource allocation, the role of the market system, opportunity cost and incentives in economic and business decision-making, the trade-offs involved when making decisions, and the immediate and future consequences of these decisions.
- The effect of key economic and business decisions related to sustainable development, social justice and equity in local, national, regional and global contexts.
- Consumer and financial literacy strategies and the importance of making effective, informed consumer and financial decisions.
- The importance and role of enterprising behaviours, along with dynamic entrepreneurship and innovation, in the development and enrichment of an economy.
- Aspects of business management and decision-making, such as business planning, marketing, operations, human resources, finance and using accounting information to make financial decisions.
- How the changing nature of work tasks affects the interests of employers, employees, unions and work-related groups, and the role of governments in this area.
- The way in which technology has transformed the business environment and the different skill sets and capabilities, including leadership, teamwork and collaborative effort are required to meet the needs of dynamic work environments in a local, national,

Organisation of the Economics and Business Curriculum

regional and global environment.

20. Economics and Business Skills

The set of skills that students should develop in order to be active and informed participants in their economy will be drawn from the following:

21. Research, analysis and synthesis

This involves identifying and clarifying contemporary economic and business issues from a variety of sources including the electronic media, reports, and graphs and tables that display data using digital platforms and other emerging technologies; selecting and organising economic and business information including developing and evaluating the credibility of data sources; planning and conducting investigations in order to research economic or business issues; interpreting, calculating and analysing data; using and applying models to enhance explanations or to illustrate change; and interpreting and critiquing media messages, including the interests and value systems that underpin them.

22. Application

This involves developing and applying economic and business reasoning and interpretation including forecasting and predicting; developing and applying a range of consumer and financial literacy strategies personally and across economic and business contexts. It also includes applying economic and business operation principles, including cost-benefit analysis and return on investment to inform decision-making and solve problems across a range of economic and business scenarios.

23. Collaborative decision-making

This involves developing teamwork skills in order to work in a cooperative and creative way to achieve productive outcomes; making effective and informed decisions, and recognising the effect of these decisions on themselves and others; and evaluating economic, social and environmental consequences of proposed decisions, innovations, policies and practices in local, national, regional and global contexts.

24. Reflection, evaluation, communication

This involves developing the capacity to reflect on, evaluate and refine existing ideas and beliefs to form and express opinions and communicating the intended and unintended consequences of economic and business decisions, particularly in the context of economic viability, social equity and justice and environmental sustainability.

Learners and learning: F to12

25. The draft *Shape of the Australian Curriculum: Economics and Business* provides broad direction on the purpose, structure and organisation of an Australian curriculum for Economic and Business.
26. The Economic and Business curriculum will be developed from Years 5 to10. It is assumed that all students will be taught Economic and Business across Years 5–8. In Years 9 –10 students will have the opportunity to continue their study of Economic and Business, so they may deepen their understanding in preparation for Senior secondary study in the humanities or other areas.
27. The Australian Curriculum has been developed so that it can be taught within 80 per cent of the available teaching time. With this in mind, the writers will use a notional time allocation of 20 hours per year as a guide as they develop the Economic and Business curriculum.
28. The curriculum focus of Economics and Business shows that learning is cumulative and spiral in nature. It is intended to build depth of student knowledge, understandings and sophistication of skills in the economics and business area in local, national, regional and global contexts.
29. In the early years of schooling, children have a natural curiosity about their world, and their desire to make sense of it provides a platform to construct and review their learning through interactions with others, experimentation, purposeful teaching and play in the classroom and beyond. Students are encouraged to connect with what is familiar to them, drawing on their experiences. This helps them to make sense of a world that is outside their immediate experience, as they connect new knowledge with what they already know or believe, and see the effect of this upon themselves and others.
30. As students progress from the early years towards Year 4, they are progressively engaging with an increasing breadth of ideas. They begin to understand and recognise different points of view and become aware of economic and business perspectives. They draw upon a broader range of experiences to inform their thinking and decision-making. Students increasingly engage with and value learning that helps them to understand the interconnectedness of their world.
31. While Economics and Business does not have a formal entry point in the curriculum until Year 5, there are prior informal learning experiences across Foundation to Year 4 that students may bring with them. These experiences could be drawn from students' participation in family life, their community, and possibly from activities within other learning areas. For example, students may have been exposed to simple economic and business-based concepts and experiences that fit within the four underpinning key ideas:
 - Resource allocation and making choices: such as identifying resources, the way local resources are used to make goods and services that meet local people's needs and wants as well as the needs and wants of people in other places; making choices that recognise the alternative ways of using resources, such as how they spend their

Learners and learning: F-12

money, or their time.

- Consumer and financial literacy actions: such as saving and spending and why they would choose to do either, and the effects of their decisions on themselves and others.
- The business environment: such as recognising what a business does, different types of businesses, how businesses decide what to produce or sell and what making a profit means.
- Work and work futures: such as the nature of work, for example why people need to work, paid and unpaid work like volunteering, the contribution of work to society, working collaboratively with others to achieve a common goal, work and leisure choices.

Years 5 to 6 (typically 10–12 years of age)

32. During these years, students often begin to question established conventions, practices and values. Their interests extend beyond their own communities and they develop a broader awareness of national and regional issues. The Economics and Business curriculum will provide opportunities to engage with these issues.
33. In Years 5–6, students will have the opportunity to develop their knowledge and understanding of the underpinning economic and business key ideas in the context of personal, local and state or territory based communities, with extension to national, regional and global communities where appropriate. Students will have the opportunity to plan investigations about contemporary economic and business issues of personal or local interest and develop skills to form and communicate conclusions based on evidence. It will also provide opportunities for students to develop enterprising behaviours such as initiative and problem solving and apply these in a variety of personal and community settings.
34. The content will provide opportunities for students to begin to understand and appreciate the concepts of making choices, the difference between needs and wants, and the role and the embedded interdependence of consumers, workers and producers within an economy. Students begin to appreciate the way decisions about how resources are used influence the wellbeing of themselves, their family and others. They begin to develop personal consumer and financial strategies, understand the importance of making informed decisions, and the effect these decisions have on individuals, others and the environment. They develop a knowledge and understanding of the world of work, the changing nature of work and the rights and responsibilities expected in the workplace. They explore the changing business environment, the way in which consumer decisions may influence what businesses produce and sell, and why some businesses are successful and others less successful.

Years 7 to 8 (typically 12–14 years of age)

35. During these years, students begin to see themselves as active members in community, business and economic life, and are often concerned about local, national, regional and global social and environmental issues, human rights and the ethical implications of

Learners and learning: F-12

human activity and knowledge. They start to develop a sense of their strengths, interests and goals. Students at this phase of learning are beginning to work with more abstract concepts, follow more complex explanations including entertaining divergent approaches and solutions to problems, enjoy debating ideas and develop increasing independence in critical thinking and skill application.

36. In Years 7 and 8, students will continue to develop their knowledge and understanding of the underpinning economics and business key ideas at a personal, local and state scale with a greater emphasis on the national and regional perspective, while also including a purposeful introduction, where appropriate, to global perspectives. Students will be provided with opportunities to integrate these ideas by planning economic and business investigations into contemporary issues in, for example, employment patterns at local, national, regional and global levels. . Students learn to apply their knowledge, understanding and skills, including enterprising behaviours and capabilities in a range of economics and business contexts. They analyse and interpret economic and business data; form and express opinions; and communicate conclusions based on evidence.
37. The content will provide opportunities for students to develop personal financial literacy skills and understand the importance of being an informed consumer. They learn to identify the risks within the consumer and financial landscape and the rights and responsibilities of consumers in a 'real-world' context. They learn about the nature of business, its ownership and operations and the legal and regulatory settings surrounding them. Students will develop their knowledge and understanding of the changing nature of work, the importance of work and active participation in the workforce, their rights and responsibilities in the workplace and study/work/life balance. Students begin to gain an understanding of markets, the role of price, competition and government in influencing economic activity, wellbeing and living standards. They also begin to understand the role and importance that enterprising behaviours and capabilities play in a market-based economy.

Years 9 to 10 (typically 14–16 years of age)

38. During these years, students further develop their awareness of global, national and community issues. They increasingly engage in activities and investigations, with a focus on more complex contemporary issues. The Economics and Business curriculum for Years 9 and 10 will build on the knowledge, understanding and skills developed in Years 5 to 8.
39. The curriculum for Years 9 and 10 will provide students with a richer and more applied context. Increasingly, the curriculum should have a regional and global perspective, with opportunities to understand the complex interdependencies involved with the economics and business area. Students will participate in activities that are more sophisticated, develop economic and business reasoning and interpretation skills, acknowledge the complexities of contemporary life, and make connections to related everyday issues and events.
40. The knowledge, understanding and skills for each year will be grouped into a number of depth studies (areas) which students will study using a relevant contemporary economic

Learners and learning: F-12

and/or business issue or event as the context. The depth studies will bring together the four key ideas of the Economics and Business curriculum in an integrated way.

41. Students will investigate an event or issue of interest related to economics and/or business to develop their knowledge and skills in analysis, synthesis and evaluation of economic and business information and data. They will use relevant economic and business concepts and relationships in arguing the validity or otherwise of their hypothesis or proposal. They will develop their skills of economic and business reasoning when debating the costs and benefits related to the issue or event. Students form conclusions based on evidence and communicate their findings to a range of audiences.
42. The depth studies will be developed so that schools have the flexibility to deliver them in the sequence that best meets the learning needs of their students.
43. Depth studies at Year 9 and 10 based around the knowledge, understanding and skills of Economics and Business could focus on contemporary events or issues such as the changing nature of the retail industry; managing natural resources; the role of the mining industry in the Australian economy; the economic and business effect of natural disasters; structural change within the economy; and why businesses fail or survive. Students could also focus on more personal concerns like purchasing apps and games for smartphones and tablets; moving out of home; buying a car; and understanding budgeting.
44. These depth studies, while taking account of local and national perspectives, should also have a regional and global relevance. They will exhibit the interconnections and interdependence between sectors of the Australian economy and between economies and how the decisions made by one group have the potential to affect other groups. Schools will be able to choose the issue or event they wish to use as context however it is expected that at least one depth study will have a national and/or global perspective, while at least one depth study another will have a personal and/or local perspective.

Senior secondary (typically 16–18 years of age)

45. Students, typically, will have developed a clearer sense of their strengths, interests and goals compared with the middle years of schooling. They can now start to apply their understanding about local, national, regional and global economic, social and environmental issues, and the ethical implications of human activity and knowledge to their experience as active members in community, business and economic life.
46. The Senior secondary years of schooling can be seen as a period of transition into life beyond school and as a full participant in society. The subjects offered across the realm of an Economics and Business education build on the knowledge, understanding and skills developed from Years 5 to 10 and focus on the key ideas underpinning the Economics and Business curriculum.
47. Students will have opportunities to study microeconomics (a focus on the actions of individuals and industries) and macroeconomics (a focus on a much broader analysis of the economic activity of a country within the global economy) using contemporary economic events and issues, across local, national, regional and global contexts. They

Learners and learning: F-12

will consider the various dimensions of business that affect daily life which could include operations systems, human resources, theories of management, basic financial operations, business plans for small businesses and marketing. Students will undertake the recording, reporting, interpreting and analysing of the financial transactions of a business, as well as make informed decisions, based on financial data, concerning the future operations of the business. They will also learn about the reporting of financial information to stakeholders.

48. The focus of the courses proposed for the Economics and Business Senior secondary curriculum will be subject to the development of a shape paper that will provide the scope and detail for the curriculum in the senior years.

Economics and Business and diversity of learners

49. The Australian Curriculum is shaped by the propositions that each student can learn and that the needs of every student are important.
50. Students in Australian classrooms have multiple, diverse and changing needs that are shaped by individual learning histories and abilities, as well as gender, cultural and language backgrounds and socio-economic factors. The Economics and Business curriculum provides the flexibility required to personalise learning and build on each student's needs, strengths and abilities, and take in to account the different rates at which students develop. This approach will ensure that all students have the same opportunities and choices in their education.
51. The curriculum provides opportunities for difference of interest, capabilities and future pathways of students. It delivers equality of opportunity, engaging students and enabling them to make active and informed decisions, as well as equipping them with the skills to participate actively in the broader community.
52. The Economics and Business curriculum provides a platform for all students to develop inclusive attitudes, beliefs and practices as well as challenging stereotypes by using a socially critical perspective.
53. The curriculum will draw upon the principles of the Universal Design for Learning framework (www.cast.org/udl/) to provide flexibility for teachers to select learning experiences, language, feedback and assessment practices that are inclusive, supportive and value difference. Consideration of how best to engage every student will be given so as to reduce barriers and to optimise levels of challenge.

Economics and Business and General capabilities

54. In the Australian Curriculum, the knowledge, skills, behaviours and dispositions that students need to succeed in life and work in the 21st century have been identified as general capabilities. Over the course of their schooling, students develop and use these capabilities within and across learning areas and in their lives outside school. General capabilities and learning areas have a reciprocal relationship. Learning areas provide opportunities for students to develop and use general capabilities. Similarly, wherever general capabilities are made explicit in learning areas, they can enrich and deepen learning. In the Economics and Business curriculum each of the seven identified general capabilities will be embedded in the content descriptions and/or elaborations where appropriate.

Literacy

55. Students become literate as they develop the knowledge, skills and dispositions to interpret and use language confidently for learning and communicating in and out of school, and for participating effectively in society. Literacy involves students in listening, reading, viewing, speaking, writing and creating oral, print, visual and digital texts and using and modifying language for different purposes in a range of contexts.
56. In the Economics and Business curriculum, students learn to critically examine a variety of sources, including print, online and other media to acquire economic and business information. They will learn to effectively use the specialised language and terminology of economics and business when interpreting and analysing, and then communicate this information through a range of multimodal approaches, such as presentations, reports, written, spoken, visual, print, digital/online forums and to a range of audiences. Students will learn to make increasingly sophisticated language choices and consider divergent approaches to problems and issues when participating in debates and arguments related to economic, business and social issues, and when communicating their opinions.

Numeracy

57. Students become numerate as they develop the skills and confidence to use mathematics confidently across all learning areas at school and in their lives more broadly. Numeracy involves students in recognising and understanding the role of mathematics in the world and having the dispositions and capabilities to use mathematical knowledge and skills purposefully.
58. In the Economics and Business curriculum, students apply relevant numeracy knowledge and skills when creating and using charts, statistics, graphs and models that display economic and business data. They will use their numeracy knowledge and skills to display, analyse and interpret economic and business data, draw conclusions and make predictions and forecasts. Through the study of the Economics and Business curriculum, students will appreciate the way numeracy knowledge and skills are used in society and will be able to apply these through real life experiences such as budgeting on a personal basis, calculating tax expenses, comparing interest rates, identifying the costs of credit or calculating profit or loss.

Economics and Business and General capabilities

Information and communication technology (ICT) capability

59. Students develop information and communication technology (ICT) capability as they learn to use ICT effectively and appropriately to access, create and communicate information and ideas, solve problems and work collaboratively in all learning areas at school, and in their lives beyond school. The capability involves students in learning to make the most of the digital technologies available to them, adapting new ways of doing things as technologies evolve and limiting the risks to themselves and others in a digital environment.
60. In the Economics and Business curriculum, students develop the knowledge and skills to use ICT as an investigating tool to locate, research, access and display information, analyse and interpret data, and create, communicate and present economic and business information to a variety of audiences. They will also use ICT to develop skills in managing their personal finances and to inform their consumer and financial decisions. Students will develop an understanding of the way that changes in technology have transformed, and continue to transform, the business environment and society in general. They will learn to question the validity and reliability of online information sources, and to apply appropriate social and ethical protocols and practices to protect their personal security and to collaborate and communicate online.

Critical and creative thinking

61. Students develop capability in critical and creative thinking as they learn to generate and evaluate knowledge, clarify concepts and ideas, seek possibilities, consider alternatives and solve problems. Critical and creative thinking are integral to activities that require students to think broadly and deeply, using skills, behaviours and dispositions such as reason, logic, resourcefulness, imagination and innovation in all learning areas at school and in their lives beyond school.
62. In the Economics and Business curriculum, students develop critical and creative thinking as they identify, explore and clarify issues, plan investigations, apply logical and inventive reasoning when interpreting and analysing data, and communicate complex decisions in relation to economics and business problems. They will be encouraged to develop enterprising behaviours, such as showing initiative and adaptability, and to develop entrepreneurial approaches to imagine possibilities, consider alternatives, test hypotheses, seek and create innovating pathways and draw conclusions.

Personal and social capability

63. Students develop personal and social capability as they learn to understand themselves and manage relationships, lives, work and learning more effectively. The capability involves students in a range of practices including recognising and regulating their emotions, developing empathy for and understanding of others, establishing positive relationships, making responsible decisions, working effectively in teams and handling challenging situations constructively.
64. In the Economics and Business curriculum, students learn to appreciate the interconnectedness of economic and business activities, and the effect of these on their lives and those of others. They understand the economic and business dimensions of

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the world of work and society more broadly, and develop and use personal and social skills and enterprising behaviours while working independently or collaboratively to achieve productive outcomes. Students will participate in economic and business investigations and enterprise activities, and be provided with opportunities to develop personal and social skills such as leadership and initiative, developing and maintaining positive relationships, negotiating and resolving conflict and making informed and responsible decisions.

Ethical behaviour

65. Students develop capability in learning to behave ethically as they identify the nature of ethical concepts, values, character traits and principles, and understand how reasoning can assist ethical judgment. Ethical behaviour involves students in building a strong personal and socially oriented ethical outlook that helps them to manage conflict and uncertainty, and to develop an awareness of the influence that their values and behaviour have on others.
66. In the Economics and Business curriculum, students are encouraged to consider and apply ethical behaviours and judgments when working collaboratively, making informed decisions and applying economic and business principles to a range of scenarios. Students will have opportunities to investigate local, national, regional and global issues, and evaluate their findings against criteria such as economic viability, equity, corporate, and social responsibility, and environmental sustainability. By exploring such issues, students develop informed, ethical values and attitudes, and become aware of their own roles and responsibilities as participants in the economy.

Intercultural understanding

67. Students develop intercultural understanding as they learn to value their own cultures, languages and beliefs, and those of others. They come to understand how personal, group and national identities are shaped and the variable and changing nature of culture. The capability involves students in learning about and engaging with diverse cultures in ways that recognise commonalities and differences, create connections with others and cultivate mutual respect.
68. In the Economics and Business curriculum, students develop and apply the skills and knowledge of intercultural learning to enable them to engage with and communicate across cultures. Students will be given opportunities to consider the benefits of social, linguistic and cultural diversity as an economic and business resource within Australia and in regional and global contexts, and possible consequences for people in other countries of decisions made by Australian consumers, workers and organisations.

Economics and Business and the cross-curriculum priorities

69. The Australian Curriculum must be relevant to the lives of students and address the contemporary issues they face. With this and the educational goals of the Melbourne Declaration in mind, the curriculum gives special attention to three priorities:
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures
 - Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia
 - Sustainability

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures

70. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures priority ensures that all young Australians will be given the opportunity to gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures and their significance for Australia.
71. In the Economics and Business curriculum the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures priority will be recognised through investigating the past, present and continuous nature of trade relationships and exchanges within and between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, and between these communities and others. It will enable students to understand that resource allocation and choices about consumption and production have always been an innate part of all cultures. Historically and currently, trading and exchange was, and is, for community benefit and wellbeing. A futures focus will enable students to consider past enterprising behaviours and the development of possible activities and entrepreneurship in supporting the growth of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander business and economic activity, and ways of creating consumer and financial opportunities and wellbeing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals and communities.

Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia

72. The Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia priority reflects the importance of knowing about Asia and developing a better understanding about the varied and diverse countries and cultures of the Asia region. Students will acquire Asia-relevant capabilities through appreciating the historic and contemporary economic, political and cultural significance of countries in the region. In the Economics and Business curriculum, this priority is investigated through examining the reciprocal relationships between the Australian economy and other economies in the Asia region, including the ASEAN economies. Students will explore the influence and significance of the key economies of the Asia region, such as China, India, South Korea, Japan and Indonesia. Students will also explore the emerging economies of the Asia region.

Students will consider current trade relationships, the significant role that Australia plays in economic developments in the Asia region, and how business collaboration and economic engagement in the region contribute to effective regional and global citizenship.

Sustainability

73. The Sustainability priority allows young people to develop an appreciation of the need for

Economics and Business and the cross-curriculum priorities

more sustainable patterns of living and to build capacities for thinking, valuing, designing and taking action that will create a more sustainable future.

74. In the Economics and Business curriculum, this priority will be addressed through investigation of economic and business models that respond to the need for economic, social and environmental sustainability, and by exploring the importance of developing world views that recognise the effect of economic and business decisions on social justice and equity. Achieving prosperity in the context of environmental limits and global resource constraints may involve shrinking our environmental footprint through shifting to renewable energy. An appreciation of alternative measures of wellbeing, in addition to conventional GDP measures, can be used to highlight the sustainability priority in Economics and Business.

Links to other learning areas and subjects

75. Economics and Business is included in the Humanities and Social Sciences learning area, and there are opportunities to connect and build on related content in History, Geography, and Civics and Citizenship. There are opportunities to connect with the knowledge and skills that students develop in other learning areas such as: Health and Physical Education, for example; informed consumer decision-making regarding healthy lifestyle choices; Mathematics, for example calculating interest rates, rates of return; and Technologies, for example the way in which technology is transforming work and business environments. The content of the Economics and Business curriculum will avoid unnecessary repetition and maximise the potential for integration.
76. The Economics and Business curriculum makes links to a range of experiences outside the formal curriculum that a student might typically be involved in either during a school day or outside school hours. These might include:
- a. school-based curriculum activities linked to other learning areas; school-based activities such as Student Representative Council initiatives.
 - b. community activities such as community service programs, fundraising for charities and volunteer work.
 - c. extracurricular and enterprise project-based learning programs.
 - d. work experience, work placement, industry partnerships or vocational education and training in schools.

In addition, the opportunities for learning extend beyond the classroom through the use of tools such as digital media and virtual projects.

77. School authorities, schools and teachers will decide on the most appropriate organisational approaches and pedagogy.

Conclusion

78. The Australian Curriculum: Economics and Business will be developed to show the interrelated nature of economics and business. Students will develop an understanding of the key ideas and concepts of economics and business in local, national, regional and global contexts. They will develop the knowledge, understandings, skills, attitudes, beliefs and values that will encourage them to participate in the community, make sense of their world and appreciate the interdependence of all economic and business decisions, as well as the effect these decisions have on individuals, households and others.

Key terms and concepts

The following descriptions of key terms and concepts explain how they are to be used in the Australian Curriculum: Economics and Business:

business	an organisation, enterprise or firm engaged in the production and trade of goods and services usually for profit
business activity	the aggregate economic activities (buying, selling, investing) of an organisation
consumers	a person or a group that is the final user of goods and services produced within an economy
corporate social responsibility	a concept whereby organisations consider the interests of society by taking responsibility for the impact of their activities on stakeholders, as well as the environment
cost-benefit analysis	evaluating projects and opportunities on the basis of the expected net benefits (benefits minus costs)
demand	how much need or want there is for a good or service
economics	a social science that studies the decisions made by individuals, households, organisations, governments and other groups about how scarce resources are allocated
economic growth	the quantitative increase in the amount of goods and services produced in an economy over a period of time
economy	the wealth and resources in terms of the production and consumption that take place in a country
efficiency	producing the desired outcome at least cost
enterprising behaviours	covers a range of skills including adaptability, initiative, communication, managing, leading and problem-solving and associated behaviours; such as working productively with others towards common goals, planning and organising, using resources effectively, analysing issues and managing identified risks
entrepreneurship	the skills and risk taking related to the creation, organisation and management of a business or enterprise
equity	fairness of economic outcomes and a just, equitable distribution of resources
globalisation	the increasing economic and financial integration of economies round the world resulting in borderless economies

Key terms and concepts

hypothesis	a proposed explanation for a phenomenon based on observation and data
incentives	rewards for preferred behaviours
innovation	the creation of better or more effective products, services, operational processes, or ideas that are accepted by markets, governments and society
living standards	a measure of the quality of life using income per capita or per household
market	the organised exchange of goods, services, resources and assets between buyers and sellers
model/s	a simplified description of reality designed to yield hypotheses about economic behaviour that can be tested
offshoring	business processes that were originally performed in-house now moved overseas
opportunity cost	the value of the next best alternative that is foregone whenever a choice is made
organisation	an entity with a focus on a set of tasks or actions; related to the production/provision of goods and services
outsourcing	any task that could be performed by employees within an organisation being contracted out to a third party
producers	business entities involved in the production of goods and services (collectively represents the supply side of the economy)
productivity	the efficiency with which an economy employs resources to produce goods and services
resource allocation	how a society uses its scarce resources in pursuing the production, distribution and consumption of wealth
supply	the amount of goods and services that are available
sustainability	resources are used in ways that ensure continued availability
sustainable development	development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs; a dynamic process of adaptation, learning and action
wellbeing	an overall measure of the quality of life for individuals and society that can take a number of contexts
work	human labour, paid/unpaid, volunteering

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