

NSW SCHOOL TO WORK PROGRAM SCHOOL CASE STUDY

REPORTING EMPLOYMENT RELATED SKILLS

The NSW Board of Studies K-10 Curriculum Framework (2002) and the inclusion of the *Work, Employment and Enterprise* cross-curriculum content statements into all the new Year 7-10 syllabuses (2004-5) has strengthened vocational learning as an integral component of the general learning of students.

In the development of units of work consistent with these new syllabuses, teachers across all Key Learning Areas have been examining ways to more explicitly embed vocational learning into their classroom practice.

Here is an example of how one *School to Work* coordinator has made this a priority for his school.

DAPTO HIGH SCHOOL

Dapto High School is a comprehensive High School of 880 students situated near Wollongong. It boasts a strong family network with many teachers and parents being ex-students of the school. This network is reflected in the strong student welfare program which supports students to develop their potential as learners and as citizens. The school offers a traditional curriculum and has developed an excellent suite of vocational courses to meet student needs. Sporting opportunities are a strong tradition and cultural activities are highly valued in the school community. Programs utilising technology and its learning applications have been developed by the school and computer networks upgraded to improve administrative efficiency and educational resource access for students. Post-school destinations for students are evenly balanced between University, TAFE and employment. Students commute either to Wollongong or to Sydney for work.

BACKGROUND

The *School to Work Program* began with Year 10 in 1999. The school introduced the A5 *Work-related Skills Logbook* but had difficulty trying to generate sufficient students' enthusiasm for its use. When the A4 blue *Employment Related Skills Logbooks* arrived in 2002, students responded positively and teachers appreciated the electronic templates included on the floppy disk.

Some efforts were made at this time to convince staff of the benefits of the *School to Work Program* and the logbook. A booklet (adapted from the 2001 *School to Work Planning* document) was provided to all staff which listed the skills related to curriculum areas, work experience and extra curriculum activities and included examples for recording the employment related skills.

At the same time Dapto High introduced a school diary, which had pages devoted to the *School to Work Program*. Classroom teachers were encouraged at the end of their topic to have students record the employment related skills they had learnt into their diary. Students were then encouraged to transfer their skills into their logbooks at home. This system had limited success however was not strongly supported because some teachers could not see its relevance to their classroom.. In 2003, with support from the school executive, part of a school development day was devoted to improving vocational learning outcomes for students.

This was where reporting via school reports was born.

EMPLOYMENT RELATED SKILLS – A WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH

The context was the *Work, Employment and Enterprise* cross curriculum content in new syllabuses. As a professional development activity, teachers in faculty groups were provided with the relevant booklet from 8 KLA Vocational Learning booklets developed by the Vocational Education in Schools Directorate. The activity was built around the focus question, “How will we incorporate vocational learning into the curriculum and how will outcomes be reported?” The overwhelming response was to link employment related skills to KLA topics and report outcomes on to the school report.

During Term 4, 2004, all faculties were involved in writing Stage 5 teaching programs ready for implementation in 2005. Part of this process was the writing of KLA specific employment related skills. Teachers were asked to record a number of employment related skills against each topic area. These skills would then be introduced to students at the start of each new topic. At this time some Year 9 teachers volunteered to trial this in their classes, with very positive outcomes.

As a result of this planning in 2004, each faculty was asked to nominate three specific employment related skills and submit them to the careers adviser. This was to confirm representation of the skills across the entire curriculum. In practise, the skills will be written in the teacher mark book and ticked as ACHIEVED, DEVELOPING, BEGINNING & NOT ACHIEVED based on student progress. For auditing purposes, this will serve as evidence for the teacher and how they arrived at the individual results.

In 2005 the skills will appear in the half yearly reports, representing approximately 40 employment related skills in total. This will be continued into Year 10 in 2006. A sample report template is included overleaf.

From 2005 any student exiting Year 9 (or Year 10 in 2006) will be able to demonstrate to employers the explicit link between their classroom learning and its positive impact in enhancing their prospects for future employment.





Dapto High School
School report, Year 9 – Semester 1 2005

Maths

Teacher: Mrs Russell

John Smith

Class Mark	66%	Class Mark Average	66%
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Outcome	Not Achieved	Beginning	Developing	Achieved
Calculates volumes and capacity of right prisms.		✓		
Graphs and interprets linear relationships on the number plane.		✓		
Identifies similar 2D figures and solves problems related to similar figures.		✓		
Uses Pythagoras Theorem to solve problems.		✓		
Investigate and find the area and circumference of circles and the volume of cylinders		✓		
Identifying congruent 2D figures stating the relevant conditions		✓		

Personal profile	Rarely	Sometimes	Mostly	Consistently
Attends lessons	✓			
Prepared for lessons			✓	
Actively participates in lessons		✓		
Completes set work		✓		
Works co-operatively		✓		
Works independently			✓	

Employment related skills	Not Achieved	Beginning	Developing	Achieved
Calculate accurately both mentally and in written form by applying appropriate mathematical techniques.				✓
Select and apply appropriate problem-solving techniques to everyday life situations.				✓
Interpret and communicate information presented in numerical, geometrical, graphical, statistical and/or algebraic forms.				✓

Teachers Comment:

(Teacher comment on student's progress inserted here)