

Inner Melbourne VET Cluster (IMVC) and Career Education Association of Victoria (CEAV)

Three north east Melbourne schools, three inner eastern Melbourne schools and the Inner Melbourne VET Cluster (IMVC), with the Career Education Association of Victoria (CEAV) as overarching project manager, formed a Community of Practice (CoP). Collectively, the CoP employed an action research methodology to review and assess the *Blueprint* appendices in a range of school environments.

IMVC/CEAV Community of Practice members sought to:

- Use the *Blueprint* competencies for curriculum planning
- Evaluate career education services
- Assess the development of career management competencies across the curriculum, and
- Evaluate and refine implementation guides for career education in schools.

What did the CoP do?

The COP members tested the suitability of all of the *Blueprint* appendices and the applicability of the eleven competencies to student learning, by:

- Using the competencies for curriculum planning
- Evaluating a career education short course
- Evaluating a career education product
- Evaluating a career education service
- Assessing the development of career management competencies across a curriculum
- Evaluating career information sources and resources, and
- Evaluating and refining the implementation guides.

The main competency focussed on was Competency 9: *Maintain Balanced Life and Work Roles*, at developmental Phases I and II. The CoP used a lesson plan called *Leisure Time* (from ReCaP, DEST, 2004) which has been mapped and coded against the *Blueprint* framework). This lesson was chosen as it spans both Phases I and II for Competency 9. However it does not give any indication as to which learning stage of the competency the student would have achieved upon completion. Commensurate with this, the CoP struggled somewhat with the concept of the 'local standard' and how it applied to the lesson. Furthermore, it was thought that some students would have difficulty ever achieving the stage IV actualisation step of the competency.

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Did they find the *Blueprint* helpful?

It was found that the competencies themselves required considerable “unpacking” for use in the school context. Where performance indicators could be mapped to current practice in existing subjects, the *Blueprint* proved more immediately actionable.

Generally, it was found that the *Blueprint* was useful in providing a common terminology for career development activities, and a standard framework by which to measure “individual school experience.” One participant felt that, with some modification, “all schools would be able to use the eleven competencies to assist in the development of career education programs.”

