



# Curriculum Council

## Course of Study Economics

### *Preliminary Consultation Draft*

The *Economics* Course of Study investigates the choices which all people, groups and societies face as they confront the on-going problem of satisfying their unlimited wants with a limited amount of resources. The economic literacy developed through this course of study is a key aspect of personal development and education for life. In addition to providing a foundation for the personal decisions we all have to make about the way in which we earn and spend our income, it imparts an appreciation of the role of other people and institutions in our economic system, and an ability to contribute to the decision-making process in business and government.

**The Curriculum Council's commitment to consultation is a key feature of the implementation process and this concept plan will be presented to all interested parties in consultation meetings during May and June 2004. It is a working draft at an early stage of development. There will be three periods of consultation during the course of study development process as well as an extended period for testing aspects of the courses of study in the classroom.**

#### **Course development (6-12 months)**

*Course of study reference groups, comprising members nominated by bodies represented on the Council work with the secretariat and writers to develop the draft course and support materials. Initial consultation with interested parties on the concept plan for each course of study is gathered through an open consultation forum.*

#### **Preliminary consultation (2 months)**

*All stakeholders are consulted on draft courses of study and have opportunities to provide feedback through consultation meetings, already established processes for consensus and moderation, and a formal questionnaire. Data are used to identify issues to be addressed in subsequent action research.*

#### **Action Research and redrafting (6 months)**

*Working with individual teachers, focus groups, professional associations and others, the Council will undertake action research to address issues identified in the preliminary consultation. An assessment, review and moderation panel established during this period will provide advice on issues raised and curriculum officers will collect exemplar assessment tasks and student work samples. This research will be used to inform the redrafting of the courses of study.*

#### **Formal consultation (4 months)**

*Redrafted courses of study are communicated to all providers and stakeholders for consultation and final feedback. Final amendments are made and courses of study are prepared for accreditation.*

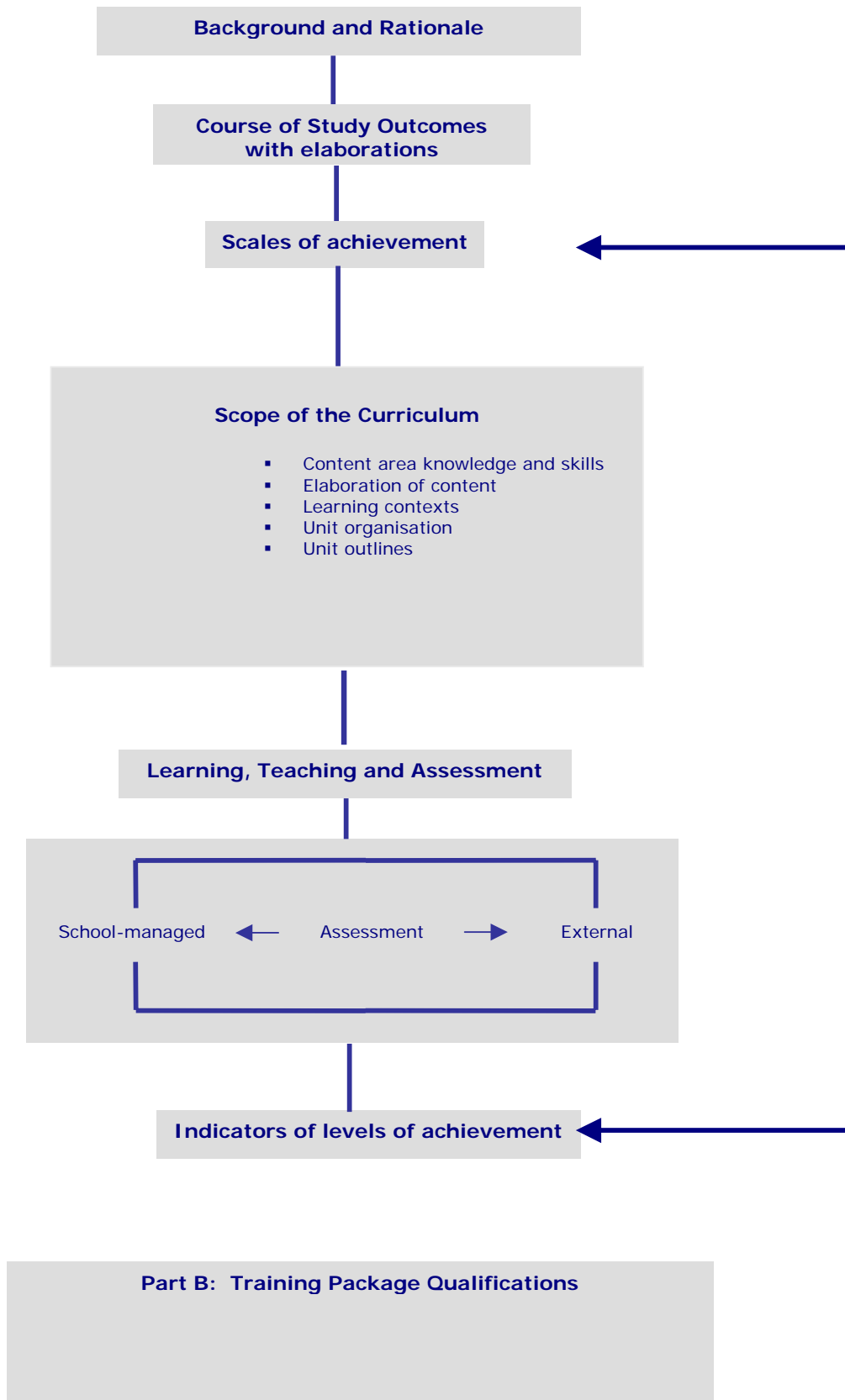
#### **Accreditation and distribution to schools (2 months)**

*Courses of study are accredited by the Council for implementation for a five-year period and will be distributed to providers 18 months prior to their implementation. There will be further opportunities to modify the courses of study after the first year of implementation.*

**24 May 2004**



# Course of Study Overview



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## Background

The *Economics* Course of Study is focused on student achievement of three outcomes related to the use of resources, the economic system, and economic inquiry. These outcomes are a synthesis of *Curriculum Framework* outcomes from the *Society and Environment* learning area.

Through engaging with this course of study, students also have significant opportunities to further their achievement of Overarching Learning Outcomes **1 Communication**, **2 Using numerical and Spatial Concepts**, **3 Investigating and Using Information**, **4 Using Technologies**, **5 Thinking Critically**, **6 Exploring Ideas Opportunities and Solutions**, **8 Active Australian Citizenship**, **12 Learning Independently and Collaboratively**

The *Economics* Course of Study subsumes the following current Year 11 and Year 12 subjects: Economics (D304); Economics (E304).

The *Economics* Course of Study is inclusive of general and vocational education. That is, the course outcomes provide unifying ideas and purposes for learning that are intended to cater for the full range of student achievement in Years 11 and 12. This will include students who wish to pursue studies in economics, commerce, business and management at the tertiary level, students who intend to continue study in the vocational area, students wishing to proceed directly to the workplace and students wishing to develop skills for their own development.

Units of competency and qualifications from the Business Services and Tourism training packages were considered during the development of the course, but no relevant units of competency were identified as suitable for integration. If a school wishes to consider units of competency for integration, refer to Part B.

## Rationale

The *Economics* Course of Study investigates the choices which all people, groups and societies face as they confront the on-going problem of satisfying their unlimited wants with a limited amount of resources. As a key discipline in the social sciences, Economics develops concepts, knowledge and methods that form an important component of an understanding of personal, business and government behaviour at the local, regional and global level. Its aim is to analyse and understand the allocation, distribution and utilisation of scarce resources that determine our wealth and well-being.

The *Economics* Course of Study encompasses the key intellectual features which characterise an economist's approach to an issue: the ability to simplify the essence of a problem; to collect evidence which assists analysis and reasoning; to think critically about the limits of analysis in a social context; and to draw inferences which assist decision-making, the development of public policy and improvement in economic welfare. The subject matter of economics frequently relates to business principles (such as finance and management), with other social sciences (such as politics and law), with environmental science, and with mathematics and statistics.

The economic literacy developed through this course of study is a key aspect of personal development and education for life. In addition to providing a foundation for the personal decisions we all have to make about the way in which we earn and spend our income, it imparts an appreciation of the role of other people and institutions in our economic system, and an ability to contribute to the decision-making process in business and government.

The *Economics* Course of Study aims to continue the development of concepts and skills which enhance the extent to which students can successfully and productively participate in their society's activities. The logical thinking and decision-making skills developed in this course are well regarded in the world of work, business and government. They articulate to a variety of qualifications in vocational, technical and university education contexts. The learning activities available in this Course of Study explore the facts, values and opinions which surround the complex range of economic issues which face our community, such as unemployment, income distribution, business strategy and international relations. Economic literacy enables the active participation that promotes individual and collective welfare.

# Course organisation and requirements

This section provides an overview of the way that this course of study has been organised and how the various sections are to be used by teachers to plan learning programs. It also explains how English language competence has been embedded and what is required for a student to complete a course of study.

## Course of Study Outcomes

The *Economics* Course of Study is designed to facilitate the achievement of three course of study outcomes. **Outcomes** are statements of what students should know, understand, value and be able to do as a result of their learning. They are written as open-ended statements and are subsequently elaborated to identify underpinning knowledge, concepts and skills. There is a **scale of achievement** consisting of five progressive levels of student performance for each outcome. This is used to identify the level of student achievement in each task and at the completion of a course. The levels of achievement on the scale are consistent with those for the Kindergarten to Year 12 progress maps.

## The scope of the curriculum

This section details the **essential content** that must be taught for students to achieve the outcomes and includes underpinning knowledge and skills for selected VET units of competency. The essential content is described at increasing levels of complexity in three pairs of **semesterised units**. The units are designed with starting points appropriate for students achieving in a particular range of levels on the scales of achievement. This means that schools can offer the course at the level of difficulty that best suits its students to ensure that they make progress. The units offered should be based on knowledge of students' prior learning and achievement.

Each unit has a broad area of focus and examples of **learning contexts** are suggested. Teachers need to choose learning contexts that are relevant to their students' interests and needs. At the same time they should assist students to appreciate the relevance of economics to their everyday experiences and help them build a robust understanding of important concepts.

## Learning, teaching and assessment

This section outlines the learning and teaching principles and practices from the *Curriculum Framework* that are best suited to achieving the outcomes for this course of study and will explain how the outcomes are to be assessed.

### Learning and teaching

In planning a program with learning experiences best suited to the needs of their students, teachers would need to start with the course of study outcomes and any relevant VET units of competency, while considering the complexity of the conceptual knowledge and skills and the most appropriate learning contexts for these students.

### Assessment and reporting

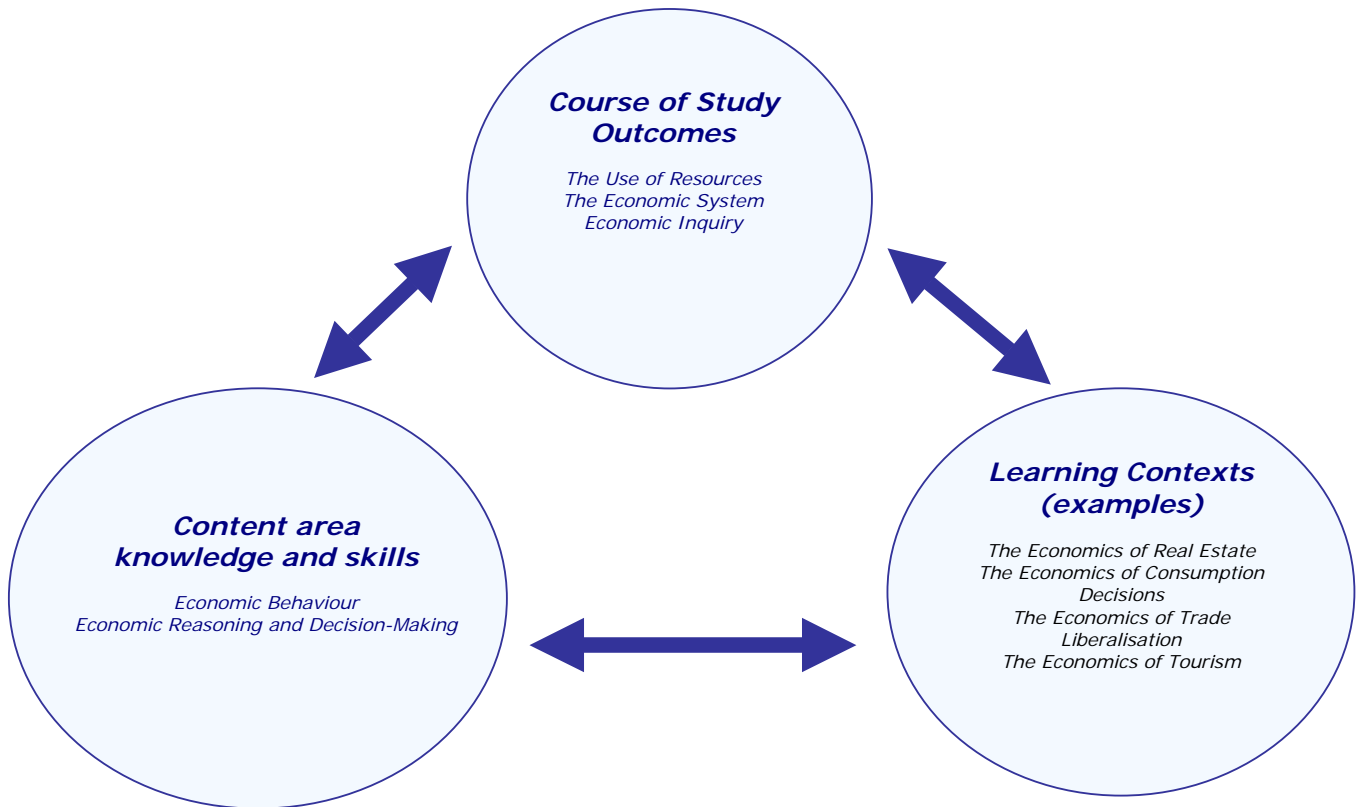
A range of assessment strategies considered appropriate to enable students to demonstrate their achievement of the outcomes in particular contexts will be identified. Included will be a range of assessment types to cater for the needs of the full range of post-compulsory students and to judge achievement of VET units of competency where applicable.

For each course of study outcome, student achievement will be rated using the scale of achievement. The procedures for arriving at an on-balance judgment in relation to the level on the scale of achievement will be detailed in assessment support materials. Assessment involves both **school-managed and external assessment processes**.

Student achievement is reported in terms of a level on the scale of achievement for each course of study outcome and the awarding of a grade (or equivalent) for each unit completed. All completed VET Units of Competency are also reported.

# Overview of course of study outcomes, content and learning contexts

The diagram below represents an overview of the outcomes to be achieved by students and the essential content and suggested learning contexts through which their understanding and achievement of the outcomes will be developed. In this course of study, the content listed is essential while the learning contexts can be chosen to meet students' needs and interests and to accommodate school resources.



## English language competence

In developing English Language Competence within the *Economics* Course of Study, students will employ specific economic terminology in the collection, analysis and communication of information, and will use language to express the attitudes and values that underpin that information.

English language competence developed through achievement of the outcomes of the *Economics* Course of Study will contribute to students' overall achievements in this area. The demonstration of English language competence for eligibility for the Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE) will be through Curriculum Council designated processes and will be reported in terms of the level achieved.

## Satisfactory completion

In order to complete a course of study, a student would need to demonstrate achievement for all of the course outcomes. In addition they will need to complete the assessment requirements, and be awarded a grade, for at least one of the semesterised units. It is expected that the typical pattern of study for a course will be either a two year program of two pairs of semesterised units (four units) or a year long program of one pair of semesterised units (two units).

It should be noted that there might be additional requirements for satisfactory completion if a student wishes to have achievement in a course of study credited for selection by a post-school destination.



# Course of Study Outcomes

Student achievement of the three outcomes, listed below, provides the focus for the *Economics* Course of Study. Through their participation in the course, students will engage in learning experiences designed to facilitate progress in their achievement of these outcomes. This focus provides students and teachers with the basis for determining learning experiences, teaching practices and assessment procedures.

The three outcomes of this course are:

## **Outcome 1**

### ***The Use of Resources***

Students understand that individuals and groups attempt to satisfy wants by making optimal use of limited resources.

## **Outcome 2**

### ***The Economic System***

Students understand that economic systems consist of a number of interrelated sectors which facilitate production, consumption and exchange.

## **Outcome 3**

### ***Economic Inquiry***

Students apply economic concepts, knowledge and methods to recognise opportunities and test options at personal, business and societal levels.

## Elaboration of outcomes

Each course of study outcome is elaborated to amplify its meaning in terms of what students achieve. This assists when developing programs of learning and identifying student achievement in relation to the level statements of the scales of achievement.

### ***Outcome 1: The Use of Resources***

**Students understand that individuals and groups attempt to satisfy wants by making optimal use of limited resources.**

*In achieving this outcome, students:*

- understand that the scarcity of economic resources, relative to wants, means that decisions involve choices and tradeoffs;
- understand that the economic decision-making process is influenced by incentives and reflects the values of the decision-makers; and
- understand that peoples' desire to improve their economic well-being brings continuous change in the nature of resource use over time.

### ***Outcome 2: The Economic System***

**Students understand that economic systems consist of a number of interrelated sectors which facilitate the processes of production, consumption and exchange.**

*In achieving this outcome, students:*

- understand that economic systems are comprised of a number of sectors (elements) which facilitate production, consumption and exchange flows;
- understand the coordinating features of the economic system (such as the ownership of resources; specialisation and interdependence);
- understand that allocation of limited resources by markets impacts on efficiency and equity; and
- understand that economic systems respond and evolve as a result of social, political, environmental and ethical influences.

### ***Outcome 3: Economic Inquiry***

**Students apply economic concepts, knowledge and methods to recognise opportunities and test options at personal, business and societal levels.**

*In achieving this outcome, students:*

- plan and conduct an economic inquiry to analyse economic events and inform economic decisions;
- process economic data and information to apply the principles of positive economics in exploring options and developing solutions;
- visualize and evaluate the impact of decisions on economic well-being at personal, business and societal levels, both in the short term and long term; and
- use appropriate language, data, graphs, tables and models to communicate economic understandings to different audiences for a range of purposes.

# Scales of Achievement

On-balance judgments about the level of student achievement in each of the outcomes of the *Economics* course of study are made using the scales of achievement below. The scales also inform what progress to higher levels of achievement of the outcomes means. Achievement of each outcome is continuous across the five levels, but differs qualitatively as the student progresses to each higher level. It would be assumed that a student demonstrating achievement at Level 7 was able to demonstrate consistently the requirements of Level 6 and below, but not those at Level 8.

<b>Outcome 1:     <i>The Use of Resources</i></b>	
<b>Students understand that individuals and groups attempt to satisfy wants by making optimal use of limited resources.</b>	
<b>Scale of Achievement</b>	
Level 8	The student understands that the optimal use of scarce resources is an objective that requires the development of justified solutions which reflect values positions.
Level 7	The student understands that the pattern of resource allocation reflect decisions individuals and groups make, taking into account their perspectives and values
Level 6	The student understands the nature of incentives which guide decision-makers in a range of situations, and the values that influence those incentives.
Level 5	The student understands that individuals and groups, faced with the problem of scarcity, consider how resources should be allocated by comparing relative costs and benefits.
Level 4	The student understands that people's desire to satisfy their wants causes them to consider how scarce economic resources (physical, capital, human) can best be used.

<b>Outcome 2:     <i>The Economic System</i></b>	
<b>Students understand that the economic system consists of a number of interrelated sectors which facilitate production, consumption and exchange.</b>	
<b>Scale of Achievement</b>	
Level 8	The student understands that the economic system is socially constructed, its features, premises and values determined by its interaction with other systems, such as the environment and democratic processes.
Level 7	The student understands that the economic system is one of the systems that determine the nature of production and consumption and welfare in society. Awareness of the social and environmental consequences of economic decisions, and the assumptions and premises on which they are based, may improve understanding of efficiency and equity.
Level 6	The student understands that the performance of the economic system and the sectors of the economy can be evaluated on the basis of efficiency (productive, allocative and dynamic efficiency) and equity outcomes.
Level 5	The student understands how the economic system coordinates the processes of production, consumption and exchange.
Level 4	The student understands that the economic system consists of a number of sectors in which decisions are made to facilitate production, consumption and exchange.

**Outcome 3 Economic Inquiry**

**Students apply economic concepts, knowledge and methods to recognise opportunities and test options at personal, business and societal levels.**

**Scale of Achievement**

Level 8	The student seeks to validate economic models in collected data, information and viewpoints. They apply detailed understandings of economic concepts and processes as they form opinions, recognise options and propose solutions. They recognise assumptions and potential fallacies in points of view and test the validity of their own and others arguments to present normative views about 'what should be'.
Level 7	The student considers the predictions of economic models and theories in planning investigations. Their analysis of findings shows awareness that conclusions are uncertain and should not be over-generalised. Their conclusions consider potential social, ethical, and environmental implications. Presentation of findings communicates the complexity of interrelationships.
Level 6	The student formulates hypotheses which are grounded in economic laws and theories; collects evidence from a suitable range of perspectives; applies analytical techniques in attempting to distinguish causation from association; and makes informed predictions or forecasts which can be tested and validated.
Level 5	The student clarifies the purpose of an investigation; selects information and evidence which is appropriate to the hypothesis or question; draws tentative conclusions about relationships by reference to appropriate models; and presents results in a logical, reasoned and informative manner. Inferences, generalisations and points of view are supported by evidence.
Level 4	The student identifies appropriate sources of information and data for economic inquiries, records information accurately; describes relationships with reference to examples; and communicates concepts and knowledge as positive (testable) statements. The student considers other perspectives and begins to generalise beyond the immediate context when presenting findings.

# Scope of the Curriculum

This section outlines the essential content that needs to be the focus of learning programs to enable students to maximise their achievement of the outcomes. Through engaging with this essential content, students are able to demonstrate their achievement in school-managed and external assessment and satisfy any requirements of post-school destinations for which the course of study is a prerequisite. Suggestions of motivating and engaging learning contexts through which content is delivered are provided. Flexibility in the selection of appropriate learning contexts is expected.

Three two-unit combinations of semesterised units will be packaged to assist in the planning of programs to meet student needs and interests. The content described for each successive combination of units will contribute to a deeper understanding and higher level achievement of the outcomes.

## Content

The following essential content area knowledge, skills and values are essential to the achievement of outcomes in the *Economics* Course of Study and should form the basis of the teaching/learning program. They are included in each of the course of study units and should be read in conjunction with the elaboration of content that appears on the following pages.

The concepts and skills will be embedded as appropriate by teachers in rich, authentic learning tasks that are meaningful to individual students and relevant to their goals and aspirations.

Economic behaviour	Economic thinking skills and processes
<p>Through understanding the decisions which individuals and groups in society make about the use of scarce resources, and the way in which people interact in carrying out these decisions, students develop conceptual understandings relevant to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• decision-making and choice</li><li>• the organisation of production, consumption and exchange</li><li>• the role of government</li></ul>	<p>Economics applies the scientific method to analyse human behaviour and the decisions made by people and groups. In this course of study, students develop investigation, communication and participation skills relating to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the planning and conduct of an economic investigation</li><li>• the analysis of economic information</li><li>• communication and economic discourse</li><li>• the economics of social action</li></ul>

## Learning contexts

Progress in the achievement of course of study outcomes will be facilitated through learning contexts that will enable teachers to deliver the content.

To ensure maximum flexibility, teachers can select the most appropriate learning contexts to cater for the needs and interests of their students within the constraints of school resources. Schools can develop their own titles for units to match the chosen context.

To encourage breadth and depth of experience of Economics, the teaching program should enable students to work across a range of learning contexts.

## Elaboration of Content

This section provides more detail about the essential knowledge, understandings, skills and values around which each of the units will be framed. In each of the units the content will be described at increasing complexity and depth while retaining the flexibility for teachers to choose learning contexts appropriate to their students.

### Economic behaviour

The key concept of economics is how individuals and groups attempt to solve the economic problem of unlimited wants and limited resources. In attempting to understand the way people make resource allocation decisions, this course of study considers the incentives which guide their choices, the way in which they interact in the economic system, and the economic policies which may be implemented to improve efficiency and equity of resource allocation. In studying economic behaviour, this course of study considers the way in which decision-makers apply economic criteria to evaluate available options (whilst recognizing a variety of valid viewpoints), in order to choose or propose a response that increases welfare.

This course of study stresses the desirability of students' understanding the implications of economic events for individual, business and government decision-making, at various levels of complexity. In studying economic behaviour, students develop conceptual understandings and skills relevant to:

#### **Decision making and choice**

In studying the choices that individuals, business firms and governments make when allocating scarce resources to satisfy unlimited wants, students appreciate that every decision (whether it be at individual, family, regional, corporate, national or global level) involves the appraisal of a number of options concerning how to best use physical, human and capital resources to satisfy wants and needs over time. They come to understand that the decision making process always involves a trade-off of opportunities.

#### **The organisation of production, consumption and exchange**

In this course of study, students appreciate that the economic system is the underlying pattern of organisation which determines what goods and services will be produced, how they will be produced, and how the benefits of the productive process will be distributed. As they develop career and lifestyle aspirations, students need to understand that their economic welfare will be governed by the role they play in the processes of production, consumption and exchange. They will recognise that all people are part of that system, and appreciate that it has considerable influence on personal decisions such as career choices and patterns of consumption and savings. Students also develop an appreciation of how social, political, environmental, legal and ethical considerations influence the organisation of the economic system as it evolves over time.

#### **The role of government**

In this course of study, students understand that, as well as providing the infrastructure which enables the economic system to function effectively, it is accepted that governments should, if necessary, intervene in the processes of production, consumption and exchange to improve the efficiency and equity of resource allocation. In prioritising economic objectives and implementing policies to achieve these, students recognise that governments are subject to changing economic conditions as well as influence of political, environmental and social conditions.

## **Economic thinking skills and processes**

The purpose of economic inquiry is to discover and record positive statements that are consistent with what we observe in the real world, and which enable us to understand how the economic world works. Repeated observation and careful recording of results enables us to build economic models through which the relationships between variables can be visualised. Economic models enable us to understand and predict economic behaviour and inform decision-making, whether it is at individual or group level.

Economic inquiry can be viewed as a 'way of thinking'. As a scientific study of human behaviour, its objective is to construct meaning from the complexity of the real world. Economic thinking skills and processes could collectively be described as an 'economic toolkit' which enables investigators to collect, analyse and interpret information, communicate findings and monitor the impact of decisions taken in the past. As students develop their inquiry skills, they are more likely to become involved in active learning, to develop higher order learning skills, and to see links between economic theory and the 'real world'.

In developing these techniques as part of this course of study, students should be taught, and given opportunities to practice and demonstrate:

### **The planning and conduct of an economic investigation**

Economic investigations seek to find information on economic performance and options for resource use choices. They are iterative in nature. Students studying this course of study formulate strategic questions and hypotheses which are (a) grounded in the conceptual understandings developed in the course of study, (b) testable (i.e. positive) and (c) achievable. The planning process guides the efficient and relevant investigation of an issue or event. In conducting economic investigations, students make use of appropriate data sources to collect, organize and evaluate information which enhances factual description and analysis and, where necessary, informs them about the viewpoints of people and groups related to an issue. Investigation of economic issues necessarily involves the use information and communications technology (ICT). Information collected in the investigation process must be checked for relevance and bias.

### **The analysis of economic information**

The purpose of analysing economic information is to identify relationships and make predictions. The objective of analysis is to describe, explain, synthesise, model and predict economic trends and relationships. In this course of study, information and data will be manipulated using inductive or deductive methods. This will often involve mathematical procedures of number, space, measurement and probability and statistics, and may be enhanced by the use of software applications to assist with computation and produce graphical output.

### **Communication and economic discourse**

Like other disciplines, economics has developed specific language and conventions. Communication will use appropriate terminology and discourse to convey precise meaning to the intended audience, and may incorporate graphical, tabular and statistical forms, or non-written forms such as discussions, debates or multimedia presentations.

### **The economics of social action**

The conceptual and analytical tools developed in this course of study enable students to investigate and contribute to the understanding of issues surrounding contestable choices. Engagement in social issues is a cyclical process, as described in the Curriculum Council's document on the social action cycle. Application of economic concepts and techniques to problems and issues enables the development of testable statements which inform reflection, analysis, planning, implementation and monitoring of actions, and shape normative views about 'what should be'.

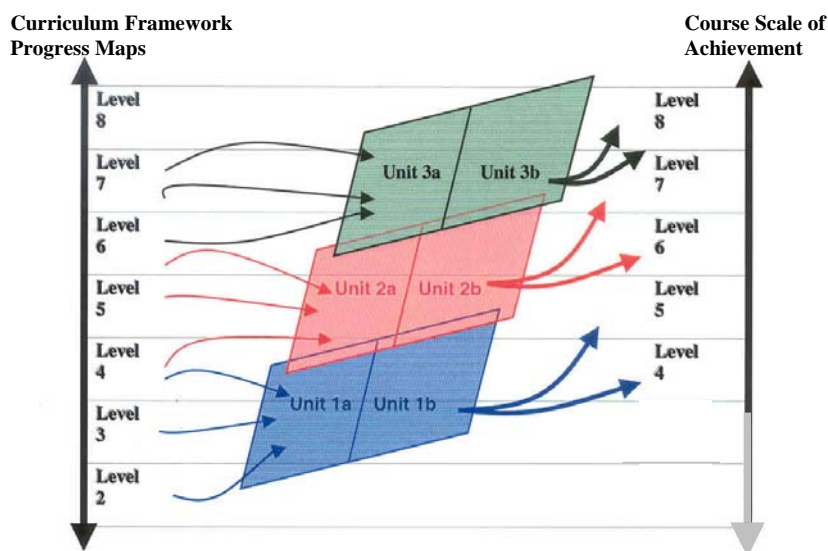
## Unit organisation

The *Economics* Course of Study is typically studied over two years and consists of semesterised units organised into two-unit combinations. It is expected that most students will, in two years, undertake the full two-year course and complete at least four units; however, students may elect to study only one two-unit combination over the course of a year and some students may complete only one unit.

The notional hours for each unit are intended to be 55 hours. In an outcomes focus, however, the emphasis is on achievement of the outcomes rather than the number of hours studied. Achievement of outcomes to a desired level may occur in shorter or longer periods of time and schools are encouraged to be flexible in their timetabling in order to meet the needs of all of their students.

To cater for the full range of students, six units have been developed. The units are designed with starting points appropriate for a range of student achievement levels and these have been identified as suggested entry levels. To provide continuity and coherence across a two-year course, each pair of units will be designed around the same essential content areas, which increases in complexity from one unit to the next, and each unit will allow the students to achieve all of the course of study outcomes.

This means that a school can offer the course at the level of complexity that best suits its student population, and teachers and students have the flexibility to undertake learning activities appropriate to students' needs, interests and/or post-school destinations.



The diagram above illustrates the flexibility of the entry and exit points of the units to meet the range of student achievement levels when they commence the course of study.

- The first two units (ECO1A and ECO1B) are designed for students who typically have had limited experience and introduce students to the basic content and skills that will prepare them for further studies in the area.
- The next two units (ECO2A and ECO2B) include more complex content and are suitable for students who are entering at levels 4/5 and are ready for further development. These units would typically be a pre-requisite for the third pair of units.
- The final two units (ECO3A and ECO3B) are for students who have advanced skills and understandings and are ready to work with content at a sophisticated level of complexity. Students who aspire to university destinations would normally undertake these units.



## Organisation of learning contexts

Each unit has a broad focus within which a wide range of learning contexts can be identified. Teachers are encouraged to choose learning contexts that will cater for the interests and needs of their students and should not limit themselves to the examples listed below.

The examples selected within each broad focus area are not discrete and should not constrain the development of learning programs. Variations of particular contexts will reappear across the focus areas ranging from personal, concrete and practical to more impersonal, abstract and theoretical. Over whatever period that a student is enrolled in a course, there needs to be the opportunity for a rich, engaging, motivating and varied program of learning.

Suggested examples of learning contexts for the *Economics* Course of Study are listed below. The contexts help to create an authentic perspective in which students develop and apply knowledge and skills. Each begins with “the economics of ...” in order to highlight the perspective with which each context should be taught, investigated and assessed.

<b>ECO1A</b>	Examples of learning contexts within the broad focus of <b>personal economics</b> : The economics of employment and career options; the economics of income distribution; the economics of savings and personal investment decisions; the economics of major consumption decisions (e.g. buying a car; renting accommodation; entering into a mobile phone contract).
<b>ECO1B</b>	Examples of learning contexts within the broad focus of the <b>economics of the local area</b> : The economics of land subdivision / housing development; the economics of local business sector (e.g. tourism; the economics of a local issue ( e.g. extending a rail line or freeway; coastal development).
<b>ECO2A</b>	Examples of learning contexts within the broad focus of <b>markets and market failure</b> : The economics of a commodity market (e.g. agriculture, oil, a mineral); the economics of a financial market (e.g. the stock market, the foreign exchange market); the economics of a retail market (e.g. real estate; used motor vehicles); the economics of a service market (e.g. entertainment; sport, tourism); the economics of a factor market (e.g. the labour market, software); the economics of an electronic market (e.g. online auctions).
<b>ECO2B</b>	Examples of learning contexts within the broad focus of <b>market forms and business strategy</b> : The economics of monopolistic competition (e.g. the real estate industry, mobile telephone retailing, clothing boutiques, restaurants, newsagencies, the taxi industry); the economics of monopoly and oligopoly (e.g. domestic airlines, banks, media, motor vehicles, petroleum refining); the economics of entrepreneurship; the economics of business strategy.
<b>ECO3A</b>	Examples of learning contexts within the broad focus of <b>macroeconomics</b> : the economics of current national performance; the economics of national performance over time; the economics of public management and policy formulation.
<b>ECO3B</b>	Examples of learning contexts within the broad focus of <b>international economic problems and issues</b> : the economics of free trade and protection; the economics of foreign debt; the economics of globalisation.

# ECO1A Unit Outline

*Suggested entry levels up to 3/4 – typically for students whose achievement in Curriculum Framework outcomes has been limited. This unit introduces students to content and skills as a foundation for further studies in Economics.*

- Outcome 1      The Use of Resources**  
Students understand that individuals and groups attempt to satisfy wants by making optimal use of limited resources.
- Outcome 2      The Economic System**  
Students understand that economic systems consist of a number of interrelated sectors which facilitate the processes of production, consumption and exchange.
- Outcome 3      Economic Inquiry**  
Students apply economic concepts, knowledge and methods to recognise opportunities and test options at personal, business and societal levels.

To survive economically, people require financial knowledge, effective planning and the skills to select and interact with providers of goods, services and information.

Individuals acquire income from a variety of sources and distribute this income in both discretionary and non-discretionary ways. The way in which people acquire and spend their income is an illustration of how personal decisions involve choices and tradeoffs. Because wants are unlimited, goal setting and planning are important life skills that help to achieve sound economic decisions.

Individuals require an understanding of their involvement in the economy as a consumer and as a producer (e.g. career choice options), and an appreciation of and commitment to the social, economic and legal systems that provide the infrastructure and protection (e.g. contract laws, social welfare) of a modified market economy.

This unit has a ‘**personal economics**’ focus as its knowledge and skills relate to decisions which students and their families will, at some stage, be closely involved.

## Essential content knowledge and skills

This unit of study will include knowledge and understanding of the following essential content.

### *Use of Resources*

**Decision making and choice:** The nature of needs, wants and resources. The link between the use of personal resources and the choice set available as a result. Common features of personal economic goals (wants and needs) as they change over time. Options for acquiring earned income from personal resources. Personal savings and investment. Formulation and comparison of budgets which plan current and future (expected) income and expenditure preferences. Generalised budgeting patterns (such as the profiles of various age groups). Costs and benefits of personal financial choices. Options for the management of personal financial assets over time. Recognition of the impact of opportunity cost on personal financial decisions. The impact of time on the benefits and costs of personal decisions.

**The organisation of production, consumption and exchange:** Monetary and real flows. Patterns of earning and spending. The nature and extent of specialisation and interdependence. The effect of education and training on lifetime income. Establishing values for scarce resources in the production process. The economic functions of contracts.

**Role of government:** The general nature of government systems and institutions that provide the information, infrastructure and protection of a modified market economy (e.g. contract law, social welfare). Forms of transfer income. The nature and impact of laws/regulations that protect consumers and cause them to modify their economic behaviour (e.g. contract law, employment legislation/regulations, consumer protection legislation and agencies, social welfare payments, subsidised services such as housing, transport, health, energy). The nature and purpose of consumer and employment legislation. Regulations and policies economic policies that modify economic behaviour (e.g. changes in tax rates, changes in social welfare payment levels and eligibility).

## ***Economic reasoning and decision making***

**The planning and conduct of an economic investigation:** How to negotiate a personal economic or financial topic for investigation; ways to predict economic behaviour (e.g. reflecting on current understandings and past personal experiences); how to formulate focus questions and/or hypotheses to guide the inquiry; the need to plan a process to use in an investigation; the need to establish indicators of progress, review progress during the inquiry and modify the plan as required; sources of economic information relevant for personal economic or financial events/decisions/behaviours (e.g. brochures and websites of businesses, financial institutions and consumer groups); methods of collecting economic information from consumers (e.g. surveys, interviews); methods for identifying relevant information within sources; appropriate methods of recording economic information (e.g. graphs, tables, forms, photos, audio recordings, video recordings); the need to respect the views of others (be inclusive/considerate) and intellectual property when conducting an investigation.

**The analysis of economic information:** Economic concepts/relationships/theories/principles that assist effective personal economic or financial decision making (e.g. relative scarcity, opportunity cost); mathematical procedures related to personal economics – percentages and proportions; simple and compound interest, rates of change, rates of return; the time value of money; application of simple cost/benefit analysis, including explicit and implicit measures, to personal choice options (e.g. career choice, consumption choice); the need to identify similar information from different sources and discard irrelevant information; methods of combining information from different sources; reasons for differences in economic information (e.g. different definitions, omission, error, bias/perspective); how to identify patterns and trends in economic and financial statistics; methods used to logically organise information (e.g. tables, graphs, flow diagrams); how to make simple conclusions/decisions based on collected economic information; the need to use evidence to justify a conclusion/decision; how to make generalisations about consumer behaviour.

**Communication and economic discourse:** Language conventions of grammar, spelling, punctuation and layout. Communicate literal information in a variety of forms (written and oral reports; tables and graphs). The use of economic terminology and discourse using third person impersonal style, tailored to the intended purpose and audience. Translating information from one form to another (e.g. written to oral, cause and effect to models). Integrating economic discourse and techniques to inform individuals and families in making personal economic choices.

**The economics of social action:** The impact of beliefs and attitudes on personal economic decisions (e.g. what work do I value; do I donate to charity, do I buy products which have been tested on animals?). The right to work and achieve a minimum standard of living; possible forms of social action (e.g. changing mobile phone plans, changing bank accounts, using a personal budget, creating extra income from spare cash, researching possible careers).

### **Learning Contexts**

Within the broad area of **personal economics and finance**, teachers may choose one or more of the following learning contexts. This list is not exhaustive.

The economics of employment and career options

The economics of income distribution

The economics of savings and personal investment decisions

The economics of major consumption decisions (e.g. buying a car; renting accommodation; entering into a mobile phone contract).

# ECO1B Unit Outline

*Suggested entry levels up to 3/4 – typically for students whose achievement in Curriculum Framework outcomes has been limited. This unit introduces students to content and skills as a foundation for further studies in Economics.*

## **Outcome 1      The Use of Resources**

Students understand that individuals and groups attempt to satisfy wants by making optimal use of scarce resources.

## **Outcome 2      The Economic System**

Students understand that economic systems consist of a number of interrelated sectors which facilitate the processes of production, consumption and exchange.

## **Outcome 3      Economic Inquiry**

Students apply economic concepts, knowledge and methods to recognise opportunities and test options at personal, business and societal levels.

The ability of people in the 'local' region (the area immediately familiar to students) to satisfy their wants reflects the nature and relative scarcity of resources available in the region and the amount of economic value which can be added by the process of production and exchange.

Over time, the economic base of the region is subject to growth and decline due to market forces and technological and structural change, influenced by government policy. These changes involve costs and benefits for the community and its economic sustainability.

In this unit, students develop an appreciation of their place in the **regional economic system**, and identify the problems and opportunities which it faces in trying to better satisfy wants with limited resources.

## **Essential Content Knowledge and Skills**

This unit of study will include knowledge and understanding of the following essential content.

### *Economic behaviour*

**Decision making and choice:** The economic base of the local area, as determined by resource allocation decisions in the past, given technology and influenced by values and attitudes. The nature and impact of structural change in the local area over time. Options available for adding value to outputs in the local economy. Strategies and policy options to better meet the wants and needs of people in the region. Application of cost-benefit analysis in community decisions.

**The organisation of production, consumption and exchange:** The circular flow of income reflected in patterns of industry (primary, secondary, tertiary); employment (occupational distribution), trade and income in the local region; the influence of economic and structural factors in determining resource use (e.g. land prices).

**The role of government:** Policy measures to bring about growth or change (e.g. transport policy, health policy). The general nature of government systems and institutions that provide the information, infrastructure and protection of a modified market economy (e.g. contract law, social welfare). Government intervention / regulation / policy in the local economic system. Regulations and policies economic policies that modify economic behaviour in the local area (e.g. transport policy; development policy).

### *Economic reasoning and decision making*

**The planning and conduct of an economic investigation:** How to formulate focus questions and/or hypotheses to guide the inquiry. The need to plan a process to use in an investigation. The need to establish indicators of progress, to review progress during the inquiry and modify the plan as required. Sources of economic information about the local economy (e.g. consumer and business groups, local government and business groups, the ABS, specialist providers of economic data). Methods of collecting economic information from consumers and producers (e.g. surveys, interviews). Cross sectional (point in time) and longitudinal (time series) data. Methods for identifying relevant information within sources. Appropriate methods of recording economic information (e.g.

graphs, tables, forms, photos, audio recordings, video recordings). The need to respect the views of others by being inclusive and considerate when conducting an investigation. The critical use of information (verify source, check accuracy etc). Sources of economic information, evidence and opinion (e.g. private/government; official /non-official). Types of strategic questioning. Methods of locating, collecting, evaluating and recording information. Respecting intellectual property and cultural differences in the conduct of an investigation.

**The analysis of economic information:** Economic concepts/relationships/theories/principles that assist effective local area decision making (e.g. relative scarcity, opportunity cost); mathematical procedures related to local economic activity – percentages and proportions, rates of change, stem and leaf plots, mean, median, mode; application of simple cost /benefit analysis, including explicit and implicit measures, to community choice options (e.g. development proposals); the need to identify similar information from different sources and discard irrelevant information; methods of combining information from different sources; reasons for differences in economic information (e.g. different definitions, omission, error, bias/perspective); how to identify patterns and trends in economic and financial statistics; methods used to logically organise information (e.g. tables, graphs, flow diagrams); how to make simple conclusions/decisions based on collected economic information; the need to use evidence to justify a conclusion/decision; how to make generalisations about consumer behaviour. The difference between positive and normative statements (facts and opinions).

**Communication and economic discourse:** Language conventions of grammar, spelling, punctuation and layout. Communication forms (written and oral reports; tables and graphs). Positive and normative statements (facts and opinions). The use of economic terminology and discourse using third person impersonal style, tailored to the intended purpose and audience. Translating information from one form to another (e.g. written to oral, cause and effect relationships to models). Integrating economic discourse and techniques to inform decision-makers in development choices. Writing in a persuasive genre. Presentation skills (e.g. seminar, debate).

**The economics of social action:** Examine a range of viewpoints that stakeholders have about local area decisions. Justify viewpoint(s) by reference to evidence. Analyse possible consequences of a decision of stakeholders. Potential forms of active participation in local economic issues; preparation and presentation of views to key stakeholders.

## Learning Contexts

Within the broad area of the **economics of the local area**, teachers may choose one or more of the following learning contexts. This list is not exhaustive.

The economics of land subdivision / housing development.

The economics of local business sector (e.g. tourism).

The economics of a local issue ( e.g. extending a rail line or freeway; coastal development).

# ECO2A Unit Outline

*Suggested entry levels up to 4/6 – typically for students who able to relate abstract understandings to the real world.*

- Outcome 1      The Use of Resources**  
Students understand that individuals and groups attempt to satisfy wants by making optimal use of scarce resources
- Outcome 2      The Economic System**  
Students understand that economic systems consist of a number of interrelated sectors which facilitate the processes of production, consumption and exchange.
- Outcome 3      Economic Inquiry**  
Students apply economic concepts, knowledge and methods to recognise opportunities and test options at personal, business and societal levels.

This unit enables students to understand the key role markets play in the welfare of individuals and society.

**Markets** bring together buyers and sellers for the purpose of exchange. In allocating scarce resources, they fundamentally determine the value of goods and services, the incomes that people can earn from participating in the production process, and the nature of goods and services which consumers can buy.

This unit enables students to understand the workings of many ‘real world’ markets which are relevant to them, such as local markets that allow the exchange of day-to-day items between households and business firms; commodity markets (e.g. wheat, wool, coffee and oil); and financial markets (e.g. the share market, the foreign exchange market).

Markets are also an economic model - an abstraction and simplification of reality. In theory, markets are an efficient way to allocate scarce resources because they reflect the value which buyers and sellers place on the goods and services produced from those resources. Despite this, there are many examples of market failure, which occurs when the forces of demand and supply do not allocate/price resources in a way which society would regard as equitable or sustainable. Where **market failure** occurs, there are a range of policy options that can be applied to achieve more desirable outcomes.

## Essential Content Knowledge and Skills

This unit of study will include knowledge and understanding of the following essential content.

### *Economic behaviour*

**Decision making and choice:** Individual and market demand and supply. Price and non-price determinants of demand and supply. Changes in demand and supply. Final and factor markets. The effect of market price on resource allocation in factor markets. The implications of elasticity for consumers, business firms and governments.

**The organisation of production, consumption and exchange:** Why markets exist. Property rights underpin market activity. Factor and final markets. The price mechanism. Market clearing, equilibrium and disequilibrium. Markets and the key questions for an economic system (what to produce, how to produce, for whom to produce?). Linkages between markets. Final and derived demand. Types of market failure.

**The role of government:** Reasons for government intervention in markets (e.g. to protect consumers or businesses, control externalities, ensure competition). Types of market failure (e.g. lack of competition; externalities; failure to provide public goods; failure to ensure minimum standards of living). Market and non-market economic policies to correct market failure i.e. the ways governments intervene in markets (e.g. price controls, quotas and licences, quarantine regulations, tariffs, taxes, subsidies, consumer protection legislation).

## ***Economic reasoning and decision making***

**The planning and conduct of an economic investigation:** How to formulate focus questions and/or hypotheses to guide the inquiry. The need to plan a process to use in an investigation. The need to establish indicators of progress, to review progress during the inquiry and modify the plan as required. Sources of economic information relevant for particular markets (e.g. consumer and business groups, the ABS, specialist providers of economic data). Methods of collecting economic information from consumers and producers (e.g. surveys, interviews). Cross sectional (point in time) and longitudinal (time series) data. Methods for identifying relevant information within sources. Appropriate methods of recording economic information (e.g. graphs, tables, forms, photos, audio recordings, video recordings). The need to respect the views of others by being inclusive and considerate when conducting an investigation. The critical use of information (verify source, check accuracy etc).

**The analysis of economic information:** The nature and role of economic models. The need for assumptions in economic models. Functional relationships between variables; prediction of the impact of changes in independent variables on the dependent variable (including ceteris paribus variables). Economic methods and models used to analyse a particular market (e.g. demand and supply curves, elasticity coefficients). The impact of exogenous shocks (e.g. oil price shocks, SARS). The need to identify similar information from different sources and discard irrelevant information; methods of combining information from different sources; reasons for differences in economic information (e.g. different definitions, omission, error, bias/perspective); methods used to logically organise information (e.g. tables, graphs, flow diagrams); how to draw simple conclusions based on collected economic information; how to make generalisations about market operation; the need to use evidence to justify a conclusion.

**Communication and economic discourse:** The translation of data between written, tabular and diagrammatic forms. Mathematical skills (e.g. constructing line & bar graphs and calculating means) and applications of ICT technologies (e.g. spreadsheets, graphing packages) used to present findings. Appropriate forms to use when sharing economic understandings with others (e.g. written reports, oral presentations, video presentations). The need to self-reflect on an inquiry and suggest improvements.

**The economics of social action:** Respect personal and group connectedness to systems. The trade-off between efficiency and equity in markets. Trade-offs between personal and social goals; market and non-market goals. Possible forms of social action (e.g. clarify personal opinion and have an informed stance (e.g. on a market issue such as the regulation/deregulation). Present this view to key stakeholders in that market such as business groups, politicians or the local community)

### **Learning Contexts**

Within the broad area of **markets and market failure**, teachers may choose one or more of the following learning contexts. This list is not exhaustive.

- The economics of a commodity market (e.g. agriculture, oil, a mineral)
- The economics of a financial market (e.g. the stock market, the foreign exchange market)
- The economics of a retail market (e.g. real estate; used motor vehicles)
- The economics of a service market (e.g. entertainment; sport, tourism)
- The economics of a factor market (e.g. the labour market, software)
- The economics of an electronic market (e.g. online auctions)

# ECO2B Unit Outline

*Suggested entry levels up to 4/6 – typically for students who have consolidated their knowledge of economic concepts and are able to relate abstract understandings to the real world.*

## **Outcome 1      The Use of Resources**

Students understand that individuals and groups attempt to satisfy wants by making optimal use of scarce resources.

## **Outcome 2      The Economic System**

Students understand that economic systems consist of a number of interrelated sectors which facilitate the processes of production, consumption and exchange.

## **Outcome 3      Economic Inquiry**

Students apply economic concepts, knowledge and methods to recognise opportunities and test options at personal, business and societal levels.

Economics provides a number of concepts and techniques that enable us to understand the operation and management of individual business firms (both for profit and not-for-profit), and the strategies they use to compete with other businesses in the market.

Firms exist to provide goods and services to consumers who could not provide them for themselves (or could only do so at higher cost). Driven by the profit motive, firms explore ways to efficiently combine economic resources to produce goods and services which satisfy consumer needs, in the face of competition from other firms.

Rational business owners and managers constantly try to reduce their costs and produce products that have greater appeal to buyers in the market. The drive for improvement (entrepreneurship) leads to constant change, which manifests itself in product promotion and pricing, technological change and innovation.

In developing an understanding of **market forms and business strategy**, students develop an understanding of their future roles, as the owners of productive resources, consumers of goods and services, and potential business owners and managers.

## **Essential Content Knowledge and Skills**

This unit of study will include knowledge and understanding of the following essential content.

### ***Economic behaviour***

**Decision making and choice:** Profit maximisation and other goals of a firm. The operational (internal) constraint – efficient use of inputs (production and cost theory in the short and long run). The market (external) constraint – the need to be competitive with other firms). Strategic choice (e.g. pricing methods; product differentiation; entry; alliances; innovation; marketing; advertising) decisions of business firms. The measurement of performance of firms and industries. Comparing the efficiency of resource use of firms in the four market types. Risks faced by businesses (e.g., technological, government policy, changes in tastes and fashions, new entrants, exchange rate risks). The role of management in business success. Three generic types of business strategy (product differentiation, cost minimisation and market niche).

**The organisation of production, consumption and exchange:** Types and legal definitions of firms (sole trader, partnership, private company, public company). Reasons for the existence of firms (to add value; to reduce transactions costs). The relationship between consumers and producers (consumer or producer sovereignty). Characteristics of the four market types on the competitive – monopolistic market continuum (i.e. perfect competition, monopolistic competition, oligopoly and monopoly). Firm behaviour in the short run (production and costs) and long run (minimum efficient scale and strategy).

**The role of government:** Criteria used by regulatory agencies to evaluate industry / market performance. Competition policy and its impact. Effects of taxes and subsidies on output and price; economic performance policies (e.g. training, R&D, skills and business migration).



## ***Economic reasoning and decision making***

**The planning and conduct of an economic investigation:** How to formulate focus questions and/or hypotheses to guide the inquiry. The need to plan a process to use in an investigation. The need to establish indicators of progress, to review progress during the inquiry and modify the plan as required. Sources of economic information about market forms and competitive methods (e.g. consumer and business groups, the ABS, specialist providers of economic data; the Internet). Methods of collecting economic information from consumers and producers (e.g. surveys, interviews). Cross sectional (point in time) and longitudinal (time series) data. Methods for identifying relevant information within sources. Appropriate methods of recording economic information (e.g. graphs, tables, forms, photos, audio recordings, video recordings). The need to respect the views of others by being inclusive and considerate when conducting an investigation. The critical use of information (verify source, check accuracy etc).

**The analysis of economic information:** Graphical analysis of production, costs and revenue in order to analyse the efficiency and profitability of a business and understand the operation of the market. The role of assumptions (e.g. perfect knowledge) in building and applying economic models. Measures of competition (e.g. concentration ratios). Performance measures. Techniques for analyzing firm performance or strategy in a business environment (e.g. Porter's five forces; SCP; PEST; SWOT). The need to identify similar information from different sources and discard irrelevant information; methods of combining information from different sources; reasons for differences in economic information (e.g. different definitions, omission, error, bias/perspective); methods used to logically organise information (e.g. tables, graphs, flow diagrams); how to draw simple conclusions based on collected economic information; how to use economic models to make generalisations about firm and market behaviour; the need to use evidence to justify a conclusion.

**Communication and economic discourse:** The translation of data between written, tabular and diagrammatic forms. Mathematical skills (e.g. constructing line & bar graphs and calculating means) and applications of ICT technologies (e.g. spreadsheets, graphing packages) used to present findings. Appropriate forms to use when sharing economic understandings with others (e.g. written reports, oral presentations, video presentations). The need to self-reflect on an inquiry and suggest improvements.

**The economics of social action:** The costs and benefits of specialization and interdependence. Questioning the appropriateness of firm and market performance measures. The ability of governments to control multinational firms. The principal-agent problem and the costs and benefits of divorcing ownership from management. Economic performance and social responsibility (triple bottom line measures). Ethical investment criteria. Respect personal and group connectedness to systems. Trade-offs between personal and social goals; market and non-market goals. Possible forms of social action (e.g. clarify personal opinion and have an informed stance).

### **Learning Contexts**

Within the broad area of **market forms and business strategy**, teachers may choose one or more of the following learning contexts. This list is not exhaustive.

The economics of monopolistic competition (e.g. the real estate industry, mobile telephone retailing, clothing boutiques, restaurants, newsagencies, the taxi industry).

The economics of monopoly and oligopoly (e.g. domestic airlines, banks, media, motor vehicles, petroleum refining).

The economics of entrepreneurship.

The economics of business strategy.

# ECO3A Unit Outline

*Suggested entry levels up to 4/6 – typically for students who have consolidated their knowledge of economic concepts and are able to relate abstract understandings to the real world.*

- Outcome 1      The Use of Resources**  
Students understand that individuals and groups attempt to satisfy wants by making optimal use of scarce resources.
- Outcome 2      The Economic System**  
Students understand that economic systems consist of a number of interrelated sectors which facilitate the processes of production, consumption and exchange.
- Outcome 3      Economic Inquiry**  
Students apply economic concepts, knowledge and methods to recognise opportunities and test options at personal, business and societal levels.

Whilst economies typically follow a long-term trend of growth in production and output, they tend to face cyclical fluctuations in the level of economic activity. As business cycles impact upon the levels of output, income and employment in the community, an appreciation of their nature and causes has important applications to personal and business decision-making.

A key economic role of government, on behalf of people in society, is to manage business cycles using a range of policy options to improve national economic performance over time.

The ability to critically analyse **macroeconomic events and policy options** is a key aspect of active citizenship, due to the link between national and personal welfare. This unit explores the concepts and techniques that enable such analysis and prediction.

## Essential Content Knowledge and Skills

This unit of study will include knowledge and understanding of the following essential content.

### *Economic behaviour*

**Decision making and choice:** Economic goals of the government (low inflation, low unemployment, external stability, equitable distribution of income, sustainable economic growth). Compatible and incompatible economic goals. Trade-offs resulting from incompatible economic goals (e.g. increased inflation as a result of increased economic growth). The costs and benefits of economic growth. Fiscal policy measures (tax rates, government spending levels). Monetary policy measures (interest rates). The nature and objectives of microeconomic reform policy.

**The organisation of production, consumption and exchange:** Measurement of and factors influencing macroeconomic aggregates (GDP; consumption; investment; government expenditure; imports and exports). Macroeconomic equilibrium. The business cycle as a model of the level of economic activity over time. Leading, coincident and lagging indicators of economic activity. The impacts of endogenous and exogenous events (domestic and international) on the macroeconomy. Criteria against which macroeconomic performance is judged (sustainable growth in GDP; low unemployment; low inflation and trade balance). Demand management policies. Interrelatedness of international economic forces. Time lags in macroeconomic relationships.

**The role of government:** Macroeconomic policy stances (expansionary, neutral, contractionary); how macroeconomic policies can be used to stabilise economic activity, time lags (recognition, implementation, impact) and the implementation of policy; output, income, employment and distribution impacts of macroeconomic policies on groups of consumers and businesses.

## ***Economic reasoning and decision making***

**The planning and conduct of an economic investigation:** How to formulate focus questions and/or hypotheses to guide the inquiry. The need to plan a process to use in an investigation, establish indicators of progress; review progress during the inquiry and modify the plan as required. Sources of macroeconomic information (e.g. newspapers, business magazines, ABS, RBA, banks, the OECD, the World Bank, specialist providers of economic data). Methods for identifying relevant information within sources; appropriate methods of recording macroeconomic information (e.g. databases, graphs, tables). The need to respect the intellectual property of others by acknowledging all sources of information used when conducting an investigation.

**The analysis of economic information:** Economic methods and models used to demonstrate macroeconomic behaviour and predict appropriate macroeconomic policy decisions (e.g. trade cycle, the Keynesian aggregate expenditure model, the aggregate demand and supply model). The application of mathematical techniques relevant to macroeconomic analysis, such as the compilation and use of index numbers in measuring economic indicators; the calculation and interpretation of rates of change (e.g. GDP growth). Preparing and interpreting cross-sectional and time-series graphs. Forecasting by interpolation. The need to identify similar information from different sources, discarding irrelevant information. Methods of combining information from different sources. Reasons for differences in macroeconomic information (e.g. different definitions, omission, error, bias/perspective). Methods used to logically organise information (e.g. tables, graphs). How to draw conclusions based on collected economic information. How to make generalisations about macroeconomic performance. The need to use evidence to justify a conclusion.

**Communication and economic discourse:** The translation of collected data and information between written, tabular and diagrammatic forms. Mathematical skills (e.g. constructing line & bar graphs and calculating means) and applications of ICT technologies (e.g. spreadsheets, graphing packages) in presenting findings about economic relationships. Appropriate forms to use when sharing economic understandings with others (e.g. written reports, oral presentations, video presentations). Using macroeconomic models (e.g. aggregate demand / aggregate supply; Keynesian aggregate expenditure) as tools for communicating analysis of economic events and policy decisions.

**The economics of social action:** Review the impact of policy decisions on stakeholders. Expectations of the extent of government involvement. Possible forms of social action (e.g. clarify personal opinion and have an informed stance on macroeconomic performance and government economic policy decisions and their impacts; present this view to key stakeholders such as politicians or the local community).

### **Learning Contexts**

Within the broad area of **macroeconomics**, teachers may choose one or more of the following learning contexts. This list is not exhaustive.

- The economics of current national performance.
- The economics of national performance over time.
- Macroeconomic policy during a specific time period (eg 1970's)
- Economic growth and structural change over time.

# ECO3B Unit Outline

*Suggested entry levels up to 5/7 – typically for students who have developed an advanced understanding of economic concepts and techniques which equips them to work at a sophisticated level of depth and complexity about current issues.*

## **Outcome 1 The Use of Resources**

Students understand that individuals and groups attempt to satisfy wants by making optimal use of scarce resources.

## **Outcome 2 The Economic System**

Students understand that economic systems consist of a number of interrelated sectors which facilitate the processes of production, consumption and exchange.

## **Outcome 3 Economic Inquiry**

Students apply economic concepts, knowledge and methods to recognise opportunities and test options at personal, business and societal levels.

This unit applies some of the key intellectual features which characterise an economist's approach to an issue: the ability to simplify the essence of a problem; to collect evidence which assists analysis and reasoning; to think critically about the limits of analysis in a social context; and to draw inferences which assist decision-making, the development of policy and improvement in economic welfare.

The unit allows students to explore the facts, values and opinions that surround some of the complex **international economic issues** and policy-making options that face our community.

Awareness of these issues from an economic perspective enables students, as citizens, to actively participate (in an informed manner) in debate, promoting individual and collective welfare.

## **Essential Content Knowledge and Skills**

As this unit is 'issues based', the selection of essential knowledge and skills will be influenced by the context/s chosen for teaching and learning.

### ***Economic behaviour***

**Decision making and choice:** Renewable and non-renewable resources. The valuation of resources in alternative uses and different time periods. The concept of optimal resource use. Free trade vs protectionism. The costs and benefits of globalisation. The interrelationships between economic systems (e.g. trade, foreign investment, tourism, education); multinational companies and globalised production; barriers to trade (e.g. tariffs, subsidies, quotas); development assistance (foreign aid); the impact of factors affecting trade (e.g. changes in domestic economic conditions, overseas economic conditions, exchange rates and exogenous factors such as war and drought).

**The organisation of production, consumption and exchange:** The dynamic nature of economic systems, as products of traditions and current forces for change. Australia's trade activity (size, pattern and changes). The size and distribution of global trade activity. The nature and extent and causes of globalisation. The impact of globalisation on employment, productivity, world poverty, foreign debt, and the environment. The impact of globalisation on Australia.

**The role of government:** Trade policy. Trade liberalization. Trade agreements (e.g. US-Australia FTA). Trade organisations (e.g. WTO). Trade blocs (e.g. the EU, ASEAN, APEC). Policy measures to bring about growth, change or 'reform' (e.g. trade policy, microeconomic reform).

### ***Economic reasoning and decision making***

**The planning and conduct of an economic investigation:** How to negotiate a trade and globalisation topic for investigation. Ways to predict economic behaviour (e.g. reflecting on current understandings and past personal experiences). How to formulate focus questions and/or hypotheses to guide the inquiry. The need to plan a process to use in an investigation. The need to establish indicators of progress and review progress during the inquiry and modify the plan as required. Sources of economic information on trade and globalisation (e.g. newspapers, business magazines, DFAT, Austrade, ACTU, OECD, World Bank, UNO). Methods for identifying relevant information within sources. Appropriate methods of recording macroeconomic information (e.g. databases, graphs,

tables). The need to respect the intellectual property of others by acknowledging all sources of information used when conducting an investigation.

**The analysis of economic information:** Economic concepts and relationships that assist effective analysis of trade and globalisation issues (e.g. exchange rates, terms of trade, balance of payments); economic methods and models used in international trade (e.g. comparative advantage, demand and supply of currencies, GDP, HDI); the need to identify similar information from different sources and discard irrelevant information; methods of combining information from different sources; reasons for differences in information about trade liberalisation and globalisation (e.g. different definitions, omission, error, bias/perspective); methods used to logically organise information (e.g. tables, graphs); how to draw simple conclusions based on collected economic information; how to make generalisations about the overall impact of globalisation; the need to use evidence to justify a conclusion.

**Communication and economic discourse:** Mathematical skills (e.g. constructing line graphs and calculating rates of change) and applications of ICT technologies (e.g. spreadsheets, graphing packages) in the preparation and presentation of findings. Appropriate forms to use when sharing economic understandings with others (e.g. written reports, oral presentations, video presentations). The need to self reflect on an inquiry and suggest improvements.

**The economics of social action:** Possible forms of social action (e.g. clarify personal opinion and have an informed stance on globalisation and trade liberalisation and their impacts; present this view to key stakeholders such as politicians or interested groups). The role of pressure groups in economic issues and decisions.

## Learning Contexts

Within the broad area of **economic problems and issues**, teachers may choose one or more of the following learning contexts. This list is not exhaustive.

The economics of free trade and protection.

The economics of foreign debt.

The economics of globalisation.

# Learning, Teaching and Assessment

This section, which describes the learning, teaching and assessment practices for the *Economics* Course of Study, is built on the principles in the *Curriculum Framework*. The assessment strategies outlined for the course of study are integral to the learning and teaching strategies, which in turn are fundamental to the nature of the Society and Environment outcomes around which this course has been developed. The range of assessment strategies used should enhance learning as well as provide information about student achievement of the outcomes.

## Learning and Teaching

### *Opportunity to Learn*

Achievement of the outcomes of this course of study would require students to have opportunities to learn through the processes and skills described in the *Use of Resources*, *Economic Systems* and *Economic Inquiry* outcomes. While there is no single best approach to the teaching of concepts, inquiry and analysis, opportunities to learn would be increased when students engage in a variety of learning experiences.

In the *Economics* Course of Study students would need to have direct experience of:

- the economic way of thinking - the use of economic concepts and models describing and explaining real world relationships and events
- the application of the skills of economic inquiry in examining resource use issues in a variety of contexts
- applying their understanding of economic concepts and processes, and communicating personal stances, when investigating and proposing solutions to current economic issues; and
- exploring the values stances of themselves and others in decision-making processes concerning society and the environment.

### *Connection and challenge*

Students need to build on existing experiences, knowledge and values, and connect them to less familiar contexts. The *Economics* Course of Study enables them to make stronger connections to familiar environments as they build their knowledge and skills, and to view their economic environment with a broader perspective. They move to learning about unfamiliar events and relationships in which they can use economic concepts and skills to critically evaluate new information and adjust their stances where necessary. They will be challenged as they explore complex issues arising from decisions about how best to apply scarce resources to satisfying wants.

### *Action and reflection*

The *Economics* Course of Study encourages students to be active learners through meaningful tasks involving the inquiry process and addressing real issues in practical ways. They are also asked to reflect on their thinking processes during and after activities so that they can be better critical thinkers and life-long learners. In doing so, students develop their ability to use the language of economics and the social sciences in different contexts and conceptual frameworks.

### *Motivation and purpose*

*Economics* provides a range of contexts for activities that are both meaningful to students and relevant to their daily lives. The issues addressed are real and of concern to the students. They are involved in the rewarding and empowering process of actively seeking solutions to these issues, creating a sense of purpose in their studies. Students can investigate areas of personal interest and further their vocational education through and Units of Competency from National Training Packages that may be incorporated into some of the units.

### *Inclusivity and difference*

Providing a wide range of learning experiences as indicated above recognises that students learn in different ways, and individuals bring to their learning unique experiences, motivations, capabilities and predispositions. The process of concept building and economic inquiry enables the accommodation of various styles and rates of learning. The possibility of selecting from a broad range of contexts accommodates the variety of experiences and starting points of students across the state.

***Autonomy and collaboration***

In investigating economic issues, students will collaborate to establish the views and perspectives of others and to solve problems. They will be encouraged to establish the points of view of stakeholders and examine possible courses of action that take into account and empathise with these perspectives. Students will also have opportunities to develop autonomy, responsibility and independence in learning as they conduct individual investigations and formulate personal opinions and values.

***Supportive environment***

The *Economics* Course of Study provides challenging and achievable tasks at a range of levels, allowing students to experience success in a variety of individual and group activities. The key values of ethical behaviour, social justice and democratic process are embedded in the course, leading to students acknowledging the welfare and dignity of all people, the need for equitable participation in decision making, and the need for just and peaceful conflict resolution. Students are encouraged to take risks in forming and expressing their opinions while respecting the views of others.

## **Assessment**

Evidence of levels of achievement of the course of study outcomes will be derived from both external and school managed assessment, with the levels of achievement from each of these sources being recorded separately on the student's record of achievement. Students who choose not to undertake external assessment will have their levels of achievement recorded for each of the outcomes based on school-managed assessment only.

### ***External Assessment***

An external assessment or validation process will be held annually with items designed to provide information about student achievement according to the scale of achievement for each of the outcomes. External assessment is likely to be a requirement for students aspiring to university selection.

Students will have the opportunity to undertake external assessment based on the course assessment types which may include: a written paper including items requiring the application of economic inquiry skills, correct use of terminology, identifying and explaining connections between concepts, and open-ended (multi-level) questions structured to allow students to respond at their highest level of understanding. The main aim of the external examination paper is to assess achievement of the conceptual outcomes of the *Economics* Course of Study.

### ***School Managed Assessment***

School managed assessment will provide evidence of achievement of all of the outcomes with an emphasis on skills that may not be readily measured through an external process, for example, evidence of achievement in Outcome 3: Economic Inquiry. The details for school-managed assessment are provided on page 33 and 34.

### ***VET Assessment***

#### ***Assessment of VET Units of Competency***

In assessing VET Units of Competency, teachers need to ensure that students are assessed against industry standards from within the Training Package. Only those schools and training providers that meet the AQTF standards through the State Recognition Authority are eligible to make judgments about student achievement of the competencies.

#### ***Evidence of a unit of competency contributing to an outcome***

The outcome under which a unit of competency is assessed must be indicated on a scheme of assessment. Achievement of competencies demonstrated by students must also be considered as contributing to the student's achievement of outcomes. This may mean that a school will use one instrument or task to assess a complete unit of competency, or part thereof, or may use a variety of instruments or tasks to assess the various elements of a unit of competency.

### **Authentication**

Samples of students' work submitted to demonstrate achievement of course of study outcomes will only be accepted if the teacher can attest that, to the best of their knowledge, all uncited work is the student's own.

### **Ranking for University Entrance selection**

Universities through the Tertiary Institutions Service Centre (TISC) will be provided with finer grained information about students' levels of achievement of course of study outcomes.



## Assessment Types for Economics

A scheme of assessment, based on the assessment types for this course, will need to be developed and submitted for each class group enrolled in each of the course of study units, as illustrated on page 34. Flexibility exists within this assessment framework for teachers to design school-managed assessment tasks to meet the learning needs of their students, and for students to negotiate tasks that meet their needs and interests within the constraints of course and assessment requirements. Comparability of standards will be maintained through a moderation process based on evidence from a range of student work.

Each student will need to keep samples of their work that demonstrate comprehensively their highest achievement of each outcome in various contexts. The samples must be representative of the range of assessment types outlined in the scheme of assessment. Students should be given at least two opportunities to demonstrate achievement of each outcome. The samples assembled by the student must be representative of the range of assessment types outlined in the scheme of assessment. The collection will need to be accompanied by the scheme of assessment and a statement that indicates the contexts, outcomes and level of achievement of each of the outcomes. It will indicate how ‘on balance’ judgments in relation to each of the outcomes and particular contexts were made.

The types of assessment listed are consistent with the learning and teaching strategies considered to be the most supportive of student achievement of the outcomes in the *Economics* Course of Study. These assessment types are inclusive of all students and, to varying degrees, are considered to be suitable for both school managed and external assessment.

Assessment Type	Supporting Information
<b>Investigations</b>	<p>Investigations occur over extended periods of time and at various degrees of complexity, and are based on questions or hypotheses that focus the collection, organisation analysis and communication of economic information. They are typically presented in a report format using sections such as introduction / statement of problem, investigation questions / hypotheses, a description of methods used to collect data; presentation of data and information; analysis of data / information, conclusions and recommendations. Reports include tables of data, diagrams, graphs, and models, as appropriate for the purpose and audience of the investigation. Written material may be substituted or supplemented using an oral presentation or the use of multimedia forms.</p> <p>The objective of economic investigations as an assessment strategy is for students to apply and develop their ‘economic toolkit’ (concepts and inquiry techniques) to issues and problems typically faced at personal, business and government level.</p>
<b>Data interpretation</b>	<p>‘Data’ refers to tabular, graphical, diagrammatic, mathematical or written (e.g. newspaper article) pieces of information, derived from primary or secondary sources. One ‘piece’ of data interpretation may comprise 2-3 separate sets of data and questions. Interpretation implies ‘reading’ the data, performing calculations, finding relationships and trends, suggesting causes and relating data to economic models. The data may be unseen or may have been seen prior to the assessment (e.g. derived from an investigation). Responses are typically presented in written form using economic discourse, although it may be appropriate to substituted or supplement written material using oral presentation or the use of multimedia forms.</p>
<b>Scenarios</b>	<p>Economic scenarios require students to demonstrate the application of economic concepts, knowledge and methods to predict the impact of, or propose justifiable solutions to an economic event or problem typically faced at personal, business and government level. The scenario will be unseen. Responses are typically presented in written form using economic discourse, although it may be appropriate to substituted or supplement written material using oral presentation or the use of multimedia forms.</p>

### Rating Procedure

Students will be assessed, on each task, for each relevant course of study outcome, using the scale of achievement level descriptions and indicators. A grading procedure will also be established based on information gathered from teachers during the trial process. School-managed and external assessment will be reported separately.

# School Managed Scheme of Assessment

Each student will keep a portfolio of samples of work to reflect the range of assessment types outlined in the scheme of assessment. Teachers will be required to construct and submit a scheme of assessment for their particular student or class group, based on provided samples.

The sample scheme of assessment below represents the essential requirement of three formal tasks in each semesterised unit for one year. Over two years, four tasks of each assessment type (twelve tasks) would provide the range necessary for teachers to form an on-balance judgment of students' levels of performance in each outcome. Apart from these requirements it is expected that teachers will make day-to-day informal judgments about student performance based on a range of learning experiences and minor tasks.

Each of the tasks in the sample scheme is designed to elicit evidence of student achievement for one or more of the outcomes. The large ticks indicate that the task provides an opportunity to gather comprehensive evidence of student achievement of the outcome while smaller ticks indicate where supporting evidence may be gathered.

## A sample scheme of assessment for the *Economics* Course of Study

### Semester 1 Unit ECO2A Markets and market failure

Task type	Outcome 1 Resources	Outcome 2 The Economic System	Outcome 3 Economic Inquiry
Economics investigation	✓	✓	Analyse price movements in a market
Data interpretation	✓	Analyse media reports on demand and supply shifts in a specific market	✓
Economic scenarios	Given increasing scarcity of a natural resource, forecast direct and indirect impacts on markets.	✓	✓

### Semester 1 Unit ECO2B Market forms and business strategy

Task type	Outcome 1 Resources	Outcome 2 The Economic System	Outcome 3 Economic Inquiry
Economics investigation	✓	For a chosen business, analyse the characteristics of its market, and develop a business strategy for the next two years.	✓
Data interpretation	Examine production and cost data to determine the profit maximizing output and price	✓	✓
Economic scenarios	✓	✓	A new product, based on new technology, has just come onto the market. Advise management on factors affecting market share, profitability and long term prospects

Sample tasks and annotated student responses are provided for teachers in assessment support materials.

# Indicators of Level of Achievement

For each scale of achievement, each level is elaborated with indicators of achievement. Teachers will use these to help them to make on-balance judgments about student achievement in relation to the outcomes.

<b>Outcome 1: The Use of Resources</b>				
<b>Students understand that individuals and groups attempt to satisfy wants by making optimal use of limited resources.</b>				
<b>Level 4</b>	<b>Level 5</b>	<b>Level 6</b>	<b>Level 7</b>	<b>Level 8</b>
<p>The student understands that people's desire to satisfy their wants causes them to consider how scarce economic resources (physical, capital, human) can best be used.</p> <p><i>This will be evident when students, for example:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use evidence from familiar situations to describe how economic resources are scarce relative to unlimited wants.</li> <li>• Understand, using detailed descriptions, how an economic decision has different costs and benefits to different people, even in the same familiar situation.</li> <li>• Understand, using descriptions which compare and contrast a number of situations, that economic well-being at any point in time depends upon the availability and use of economic resources.</li> </ul>	<p>The student understands that individuals and groups, faced with the problem of scarcity, consider how resources should be allocated by comparing relative costs and benefits.</p> <p><i>This will be evident when students, for example:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand, by generalising from a number of situations, how relative scarcity necessitates choice, the cost of which is foregone opportunities.</li> <li>• Understand the incentives and disincentives which influence economic decisions in a range of familiar situations, by reference to examples,</li> <li>• Understand, by linking cause and effect, ways in which people seek to improve their economic well-being over time by expanding the resources base and/or using resources more efficiently.</li> </ul>	<p>The student understands the nature of incentives which guide decision-makers in a range of situations, and the values that influence those incentives.</p> <p><i>This will be evident when students, for example:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand that economic decisions involve consideration of the costs and benefits (both explicit and implicit) of alternative course of action.</li> <li>• Understand by generalising from a number of situations, how the incentives which economic decision-makers consider are shaped by the way they value resources.</li> <li>• Understand, by reference to techniques grounded in conceptual models, how patterns of resource use can be improved over time (e.g. economies of scale, enterprise, innovation).</li> </ul>	<p>The student understands that the pattern of resource allocation reflects decisions individuals and groups make, taking into account their perspectives and values.</p> <p><i>This will be evident when students, for example:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand, by referring to appropriate evidence, how economists use conceptual models to inform the decision-making process by clarifying the nature of rational choice.</li> <li>• Understand, by applying economic models to the decision-making process, that the conflicting incentives which shape the valuation of economic resources can be clarified using economic concepts and techniques.</li> <li>• Understand that the concept of well-being is a multifaceted construct that means that change is non-linear, reflective and requires monitoring.</li> </ul>	<p>The student understands that the optimal use of scarce resources is an objective which requires the development of justified solutions that reflect values positions.</p> <p><i>This will be evident when students, for example:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand, by applying theoretical frameworks and symbolic relationships, the impact of complex economic decisions on the notion of 'optimal' use of resources.</li> <li>• Understand, in the context of a complex, multifaceted issue, that options for improved resource use are shaped by competing normative views about what should be.</li> <li>• Understand, by interpreting results using theoretical frameworks, how changes in patterns of resource use have lead to more optimal use of limited resources (e.g. in reference to microeconomic reform and productivity results).</li> </ul>

# Indicators of Level of Achievement

For each scale of achievement, each level is elaborated with indicators of achievement. Teachers will use these to help them to make on-balance judgments about student achievement in relation to the outcomes.

<b>Outcome 2: The Economic System</b>				
<b>Students understand that economic systems consist of a number of sectors which interrelate and facilitate the processes of production, consumption and exchange.</b>				
<b>Level 4</b>	<b>Level 5</b>	<b>Level 6</b>	<b>Level 7</b>	<b>Level 8</b>
<p>The student understands that the economic system consists of a number of sectors in which decisions are made to facilitate production, consumption and exchange.</p> <p><i>This will be evident when students, for example:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand how the sectors of the economic system are interrelated by the flows of goods and services through markets.</li> <li>• Understand that the relationship between consumers and producers is the basis of the market economy.</li> <li>• Understand, using generalisations supported by evidence, how the price mechanism coordinates activities of buyers and sellers in free markets.</li> <li>• Understand, using generalisations supported by evidence, that the economic system is a response to the needs of producers and consumers.</li> </ul>	<p>The student understands how the economic system coordinates the processes of production, consumption and exchange.</p> <p><i>This will be evident when students, for example:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand that the economic system is based on complex (unwritten) signals between sectors that have different, yet complementary economic objectives.</li> <li>• Understand, using appropriate economic laws and models, how specialisation and interdependence result from the need to coordinate the activities of sectors of the economy to satisfy wants.</li> <li>• Understand how free markets allocate resources efficiently; and why the answer to the ‘for whom’ question is determined by patterns of resource ownership.</li> <li>• Understand that the economic system evolves over time in response to achieve more efficient and equitable allocation of resources</li> </ul>	<p>The student understands that the performance of the economic system and the sectors of the economy can be evaluated on the basis of efficiency (productive, allocative and dynamic efficiency) and equity outcomes.</p> <p><i>This will be evident when students, for example:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand that the economic system performs optimally when production is specialised in recognition of comparative advantage, and surplus production is traded.</li> <li>• Understand the criteria by which efficiency and equity can be assessed, and how they can be applied in complex settings.</li> <li>• Critically assess the extent to which efficiency and equity criteria apply to the way resources are allocated in real markets.</li> <li>• Understand, using detailed analysis and evidence, why non-economic influences (e.g. political, environmental) cause change in the economic system over time.</li> </ul>	<p>The student understands that the economic system is one of the systems that determine the nature of production and consumption and welfare in society. Awareness of the social and environmental consequences of economic decisions, and the assumptions and premises on which they are based, may improve understanding of efficiency and equity.</p> <p><i>This will be evident when students, for example:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand that the markets that form the foundation of the economic system may not always allocate resources according to society’s priorities.</li> <li>• Understand that the extent to which economic efficiency is achieved in the real world is constrained by the desire to achieve other objectives.</li> <li>• Recognise that the presumed efficient allocation of resources is free markets requires assumptions to be made about the nature and purpose of exchange.</li> <li>• Understand, by offering a detailed exploration, how the economic system would develop in response to a complex social or political shift.</li> </ul>	<p>The student understands that the economic system is socially constructed, its features, premises and values determined by its interaction with other systems, such as the environment and democratic processes.</p> <p><i>This will be evident when students, for example:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand that the functioning of the economic system is supported by other institutions (such as the law’s provision for complete contracting) that develop in a complementary way.</li> <li>• Understand that the need for, and impact of, specialisation and interdependence reflects technological progress and the drive for greater efficiency, tempered by the effects of change in the short term.</li> <li>• Understand the need to draw on a number of perspectives in balancing the efficiency and equity objectives of the economic system.</li> <li>• Understand how the socially constructed nature of the economic system means that it is a balance of complex perspectives on what should be produced, the method of production and the benefits of production.</li> </ul>

# Indicators of Level of Achievement

For each scale of achievement, each level is elaborated with indicators of achievement. Teachers will use these to help them to make on-balance judgments about student achievement in relation to the outcomes.

<b>Outcome 3: Economic Inquiry</b>				
<b>Students apply economic concepts, knowledge and methods to recognise opportunities and test options at personal, business and societal levels.</b>				
<b>Level 4</b>	<b>Level 5</b>	<b>Level 6</b>	<b>Level 7</b>	<b>Level 8</b>
<p>The student identifies appropriate sources of information and data for economic inquiries, records information accurately; describes relationships with reference to examples; and communicates concepts and knowledge as positive (testable) statements. The student considers other perspectives and begins to generalise beyond the immediate context when presenting findings.</p> <p><i>This will be evident when students, for example:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Select and access appropriate sources of economic information and data to answer literal questions in response to a topic or question, following a suggested methodology.</li> <li>• Accurately record factual information and data in a format that enables further manipulation; process and translate information to identify economic relationships and trends over time.</li> <li>• Reflect on the issues raised by inquiry to identify the consequences of actions taken by stakeholders.</li> <li>• Communicate using appropriate economic terminology to describe economic relationships and trends over time.</li> </ul>	<p>The student clarifies the purpose of an investigation; selects information and evidence which is appropriate to the hypothesis or question; draws tentative conclusions about relationships by reference to appropriate models; and presents results in a logical, reasoned and informative manner.</p> <p><i>This will be evident when students, for example:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarify a topic of inquiry and use a balance of literal, inferential and interpretive questions to collect information and data.</li> <li>• Select and manipulate information and data, using mathematical techniques where relevant, to account for relationships and draw conclusions.</li> <li>• Reflect on the issues raised by inquiry to evaluate the appropriateness, effectiveness and results of actions taken by stakeholders.</li> <li>• Communicate using appropriate economic discourse (focus on positive statements) to explain relationships, referring to evidence.</li> </ul>	<p>The student formulates hypotheses which are grounded in economic laws and theories; collects evidence from a suitable range of perspectives; applies analytical techniques in attempting to distinguish causation from association; and makes informed predictions or forecasts or draws inferences which can be tested and validated.</p> <p><i>This will be evident when students, for example:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop hypotheses and focus questions that reflect a well-developed knowledge of economic concepts and processes.</li> <li>• Evaluate the information by checking whether it confirms the relationships specified in economic models.</li> <li>• Assess the scope for public policy and social action in bringing about a more efficient and just outcome in solving economic problems.</li> <li>• Communicate critically the purpose, process and results of investigation, using economic discourse.</li> </ul>	<p>The student considers the predictions of economic models and theories in planning investigations. Their analysis of findings shows awareness that conclusions are uncertain and should not be over-generalised. Their conclusions consider potential social, ethical, and environmental implications. Presentation of findings communicates the complexity of interrelationships.</p> <p><i>This will be evident when students, for example:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use models, theories and predictions to develop hypotheses as the basis for investigations.</li> <li>• Recognise that there are limitations of analysis and interpretation that mean that investigation and analysis should be repeated and verified.</li> <li>• Recognise potential social, ethical and environmental implications of the results of inquiry.</li> <li>• Communicate complex economic relationships using a range of economic models involving equations, graphs and diagrams.</li> </ul>	<p>The student seeks to validate economic models in collected data, information and viewpoints. They apply detailed understandings of economic concepts and processes as they form opinions, recognise options and propose solutions. They recognise assumptions and potential fallacies in points of view and test the validity of their own and others arguments to present normative views about 'what should be'.</p> <p><i>This will be evident when students, for example:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop comprehensive research proposals to inquire into complex economic issues so that results are objective and valid.</li> <li>• Use empirical results to assess or modify existing models.</li> <li>• Apply and defend democratic processes as the basis for accountable solutions, and persuade others of the efficacy of an action or policy.</li> <li>• Critically appraise the results of analysis information to justify complex decisions from different viewpoints.</li> </ul>

# PART B: Training Package Qualifications

## General Requirements for National Training Framework

During the preparation of this course of study, no relevant units of competency have been identified which are considered suitable for integration.

If a school wishes to consider units of competency for integration, the following information is relevant.

All VET programs must meet the requirements of the National Training Framework (NTF).

The key components of the NTF are:

### **The Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)**

The AQF is a policy framework that defines all qualifications recognised nationally in post-compulsory education and training within Australia. The AQF comprises titles and guidelines, which define each qualification.

### **National Training Packages**

Training Packages are an integrated set of nationally endorsed standards, guidelines and qualifications for training, assessing and recognising people's skills. They are developed by industry to meet the training needs of an industry or enterprise.

Training packages consist of endorsed components, comprising competency standards, assessment guidelines and qualifications. In some cases ANTA has funded the development of support materials such as learning strategies, assessment resources and professional development materials.

### **The Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF)**

The Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) is a series of national standards for the vocational education and training sector.

The AQTF is based on a quality assured approach to the registration of training organisations seeking to deliver training, assess competency outcomes and issue Australian Qualifications Framework qualifications and/or Statements of Attainment. The AQTF ensures the recognition of training providers, and the Australian Qualifications Framework qualifications and Statements of Attainment they issue, across Australia.

Schools that want to provide students with recognition for achievement of VET units of competency will need to meet the AQTF standards either by gaining Registered Training Provider (RTP) status or in a partnership with a Registered Training Organisation (RTO).

Australian Quality Training Framework standards include:

- Systems for quality training and assessment
- Compliance with Commonwealth, State/Territory legislation and regulatory requirements
- Effective financial management procedures
- Effective administrative and records management procedures
- Recognition of qualifications issued by the RTOs
- Access and equity and client service
- The competence of RTO staff
- RTO assessments
- Learning and assessment strategies
- Issuing AQF qualifications and Statements of Attainment
- Use of national and State/Territory logos
- Ethical marketing and advertising

## Quality Audits

All vocational education and training is subject to audits, which are conducted to ensure the RTOs and RTPs are meeting their obligations. Registered Training Provider schools will also need to ensure that:

- human resources necessary to implement the course, as outlined, are available
- students have been provided with information relating to the implementation of the vocational education and training components of the course, including:
  - code of ethics of the training organisation
  - course information, including recognition status of the units of competency
  - entry and exit points for the course
  - arrangements for recognition of prior learning
  - advanced standing and articulation arrangements
  - requirements for satisfactory completion
- internal quality review processes are documented
- arrangements are made for internal review by an independent review panel, which includes industry representatives or community representatives as appropriate. Student feedback should also be part of the internal review.
- all records relating to the implementation of the course are maintained.

## Assessment of Units of Competency

The student will need to be studying in a school which meets AQTF standards as a Registered Training Provider or is in a partnership with an RTO.

Assessment is competency-based. Competency-based assessment is the process of collecting holistic evidence and making judgments in order to decide whether a student has achieved a standard of competence, that is, has the ability to perform tasks and duties to the standard expected in the workplace. Assessment may take place in a workplace or simulated work environment.

Whilst the complete unit of competency must be assessed, elements of competency do not have to be assessed individually. Holistic assessment techniques can be used and integrated assessment is encouraged. Where appropriate, elements of competency from different units of competency can also be assessed at the one time, in an integrated way. The teacher, however, should be satisfied that the student has consistently demonstrated competency in *each* of the associated elements of competency.

Students who are not competent on their first attempt at assessment are to be provided with opportunities to be reassessed. Ideally, this reassessment would occur when deficiencies identified in the first assessment have been rectified through, for example, further learning activities.

Where the nature of the competency is such that it is not possible to assess it using demonstration or observation, alternative forms of assessment such as simulations, tests, work-based projects or assignments can be undertaken. Teachers must be aware that by asserting that a student has demonstrated competency it is signaled that the competency can be sustained in the workplace. Once the teacher is satisfied that a student has demonstrated competency over a period of time (that is on more than one assessment), no unnecessary additional demands, such as supplementary tests, training or examinations should be required.

### ***Skills Recognition***

Students must be made aware of the opportunity to apply for Skills Recognition for any of the units of competency integrated in this course of study. Skills Recognition describes a number of assessment processes used to determine the skills and knowledge that a person has attained through either previous study, work, and/or life experience. The assessment methods may include RPL, RCC, Credit Transfer, Exemptions, Overseas Equivalence or RPL for entry. Where a student can demonstrate current competence in a particular unit of competency, the student is eligible to be exempted from having to undertake training in that area. In determining Skills Recognition, the practical outcomes of the competencies should be assessed through either a practical demonstration (where appropriate), either within a simulated or real environment or by other evidence-gathering techniques such as questioning or presentations. Once a student demonstrates competency in a unit of competency, that unit of competency need not be assessed again.

### ***Evidence of a unit of competency contributing to an outcome***

The outcome under which a unit of competency is assessed must be indicated by the school on the scheme of assessment. Achievement demonstrated by the student in the assessment instruments and tasks involving competencies must be considered as also contributing to the student's achievement of the outcome. This may mean that a school will use one instrument or task to assess a complete unit of competency, or part thereof, or may use a variety of instruments or tasks to assess the various elements of a unit of competency. A unit of competency must be assessed using a minimum of two different assessment tasks.

## **School-Based Traineeships**

School-based traineeships provide a valuable opportunity for students still in school to begin preparing themselves for a career in the workforce. During the course of a traineeship, a trainee gains work experience, has the opportunity to learn new skills in a hands-on environment and gets paid at the same time.

There are a large number of occupations in which school-based traineeships are offered. For further details, including course outlines, visit [www.apprenticeships.training.wa.gov.au](http://www.apprenticeships.training.wa.gov.au) or call 13 19 54.

### **Useful Contacts**

The Department of Training and Employment - Traineeship Information

Phone: (08) 9235 6121

Training Information Centre

Phone: (08) 9325 9322 or toll free: 1800 999 167



## Appendix

The outcomes in the *Economics* Course of Study are elaborations of a number of the Society and Environment outcomes. They also connect to certain aspects of the outcomes in Mathematics. Outcomes specifically relevant to Economics have been used to form three outcomes. For example:

- **Outcome 1: Use of Resources is an elaboration of two aspects of the Society and Environment Learning Area outcome Resources**; this outcome is also linked to Overarching Learning Outcomes 2: *Using numerical and spatial concepts: Investigating and using information*, 4: *Using technologies*, 5: *Thinking critically*, 6: *Exploring ideas, opportunities and solutions*, and 8: *Active Australian citizenship*.
- **Outcome 2: Economic Systems is an elaboration of one aspect of the Society and Environment Learning Area Outcome Natural and Social Systems**; this outcome is also linked to Overarching Learning Outcomes 2: *Using numerical and spatial concepts: Investigating and using information*, 4: *Using technologies*, 5: *Thinking critically*, 6: *Exploring ideas, opportunities and solutions* and 8: *Active Australian citizenship*
- **Outcome 3 Economic Inquiry is an Economic elaboration of the Society and Environment Learning Area outcome Investigation, Communication and Participation; it also links to aspects of the Mathematics outcomes, specifically to aspects of Number and Chance and Data**. This outcome is also linked to Overarching Learning Outcomes 1: *Communication*, 2: *Using numerical and spatial concepts*, 3: *Investigating and using information*, 4: *Using technologies*, 5: *Thinking critically*, 6: *Exploring ideas, opportunities and solutions*; and 12: *Learning independently and Collaboratively*.