



## The Capstone: Career Education Curriculum

The Capstone is a rigorous learning opportunity for students to reflect and share in personally meaningful ways. It is a representation of the student's learning journey and provides an opportunity to **reflect** and **synthesize** as well as **showcase** and **celebrate**. The Capstone is a requirement for Career-Life Connections and graduation.

### Benefits of the Capstone

- Increase academic rigor for the final year.
- Increase student motivation and engagement.
- Increase education and career aspirations.
- Improve student confidence and self-perception.
- Provide an opportunity for a student to demonstrate learning and proficiency (Hanover Research, 2013; McGill, 2012; Schwering, 2015).

### Capstone Learning Standards

Reflect on experiences in school and out of school, assess development in the Core Competencies, and share highlights of their learning journey.

Design, assemble, and present a capstone to an audience, celebrating the learning journey and next steps toward preferred futures.

### Capstone Examples

A student can...

- 1) select to share their learning through oral story telling.
- 2) demonstrate disciplinary learning and research competency through a field study approach and a science display format.
- 3) choose to design and create a product that demonstrates creativity, manual dexterity, and technical expertise.
- 4) ...





## Components to a Capstone Project

1. **Self-assessment of Core Competencies and critical analysis:** Students reflect on experiences in school and out of school, assess development in the Core Competencies, and share highlights of their learning journey and preferred next steps.

### Self-assessment of Core Competencies

- Reviewing collected demonstrations of learning and reflections in Core Competencies development across the years
- Gaining clarity about their competency growth in areas that are personally meaningful.
- Applying self-knowledge to next steps they hope to pursue in this journey post-graduation.

### Critical Analysis (past present, and possible futures)

- Reflecting on what has been learned from experiences in educational, work-related, and personal life contexts.
- Identify key insights that are personally meaningful self observations, “aha” moments, learning milestones, struggles, dilemmas, uncertainties, and breakthroughs.
- Select insights that best represent their learning journey to share with a relevant audience
- Connecting personal career-life interests and aspirations with future possibilities.

“Life long learners are not supposed to be creating the perfect story about what they have done, but sharing who they are, what is important to them, how they have learned from their struggles and mistakes, and who and how they hope to be in the future.”

2. **Process and representation:** Informed by their critical analysis, and connecting to their plans for post-graduation, students engage in a deeper learning process with intent as they design, assemble, and share their capstone representation. The process is both student-driven and future-oriented. Student choice and alignment with personal plan for post-graduation is key.

**Process:** Students select a deeper learning process that aligns with their interests and strengths, their community connections, and learning areas they would like to explore more deeply in order to support their plans for post-graduation. The process is both student-driven and future-oriented. Deeper learning processes include

- Connect and Collaborate
- Create and Build
- Create and Express
- Innovation and Entrepreneurship
- Investigate and Report
- Personal Story
- Service Learning

**Representation:** The capstone representation synthesizes and integrates the students’ learning journey, self-assessment of Core Competencies, critical analysis, learning process and possible future plans. It can focus on a particular area of interest or include a range of relevant experiences and topics. Designing and assembling capstone representations may take many forms, including

- a product (e.g., a robot for a student interested in engineering projects),
- a performance (e.g., a videotaped monologue for a student seeking to join a theatre group), and/or
- a service (e.g., a series of learning activities that the student applies with children in a local Strong Start Centre).



3. **Showcase and celebrate:** Students showcase their strengths, passions, and learning journey to a relevant audience. The presentation is a celebration of learning, where students share successes both in and out of school, their reflections on Core Competency development, their contributions to their personal career-life journey, aspirations, and possible post graduation plans. This can occur at a school celebration event or in an individualized sharing format. Showcasing and celebrating provides the opportunity for students to benefit from audience feedback.

## Criteria for the Capstone Representation

**Evaluation:** The capstone is assessed by a teacher as part of the summative mark provided for CLC. Criteria for evaluation depend on the type of representation selected. Co-construction of criteria with students is one way to encourage ownership of learning and confirm understanding of expectations. There can be both common criteria and specialized criteria.

- Common rigorous learning criteria (this can be co-constructed general criteria to apply to all capstones).
- Criteria that aligns with the process and representation selected by the student (this can be negotiated specialized criteria that corresponds with relevant authentic sources and expertise).

Criteria should

- Represent quality and depth of learning.
- Complement the student's personal strengths and competence.
- Display richness of critical analysis and synthesis.
- Follow a logical sequencing of thoughts and ideas.
- Demonstrate coherent organizational structure.
- Connect appropriate content to the overarching theme.
- Provide clear explanations of key points.
- Support claims with relevant and accurate evidence.
- Include compelling features to engage the audience.
- Support their plans for post-graduation.





## District and School Support for the Capstone

- Develop capstones through a “review-plan-do” model with student reflection and revision.
- Support is provided at school, in the community, and at home.
- Clearly set process for developing the project and the product guidelines and expectations that allows student choice and creativity.
- Inclusive of teachers (mentors) support.
- Scheduled time to devote to the project (this occurs in CLC).
- Meaningful preparation throughout secondary years.

### References:

BC Ministry of Education (October 2019). *Career Education 10-12 Guide (Overview, Delivery Examples, and Capstone)*, [curriculum.gov.bc.ca/sites/curriculum.gov.bc.ca/files/curriculum/career-education/en\\_career-education\\_10-12\\_career-education-guide.pdf](https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/sites/curriculum.gov.bc.ca/files/curriculum/career-education/en_career-education_10-12_career-education-guide.pdf)

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