Guide 7: Plan how to make and deliver your product

Your goal

Explain how your business could provide its good or service. Work out what resources it needs and how the product would reach the customer.

A useful idea also needs a practical way to operate. Start at a small scale that you can explain clearly.

What to produce

A supply chain plan, including the process for producing the good or providing the service.

You can use a flow diagram, a table, or written steps on paper or in your own document. Follow your teacher's submission instructions. The prompts below are support, not extra project requirements. You are planning; you do not need to buy equipment or materials to complete this guide.

Key terms

- **Inputs:** resources used to produce a good or provide a service.
- **Supplier:** a person or business that provides resources to another business.
- **Production process:** the steps used to make a good or provide a service.
- **Supply chain:** the connected people, businesses, and activities that help move a product from resources to the customer.
- **Capacity:** how much the business can produce or provide in a period.

Step 1: Choose an appropriate process

Think about how your product could be provided.

- A small handmade product may use an artisan process: a skilled person makes items individually or in small groups.
- A manufactured product may use machines and repeated processes.
- A service needs a process for people, time, equipment, and customer contact.

Your business might use more than one approach. Explain why the process fits the product, likely demand, and available resources. Do not assume that a factory is necessary for a small project.

Step 2: List the main inputs

Consider materials, tools, equipment, people, skills, space, and time. For a service, staff time and access to equipment can be as important as physical materials.

State where the resources could come from. Use a real source when you have one and record where you found the information. If a supplier, cost, or delivery time is unknown, mark it as something to check.

A supplier's advertisement is not a confirmed agreement. Free access to a tool or workspace also needs permission.

Example: Ready Pouch maps a possible process

Ready Pouch is our fictional example business. Its proposed product is a small pencil pouch for students.

A possible small-scale process is:

Obtain fabric and fasteners → cut pieces → sew → check the pouch → package → deliver to the customer.

The team would need sewing skills, safe equipment, workspace, materials, and time. Each pouch should be checked for secure seams and an opening that works.

This is a proposed process, not a claim that production has happened. The team would need to check access to equipment and the time required. It could also compare making pouches with obtaining suitable ready-made items from a supplier.

If sewing is too slow, the team should change the process, scale, or product. It should not simply assume that unpaid labour has no cost or limit.

Step 3: Map production and delivery

Start with obtaining resources. Continue through the key production or service steps, checks, and delivery.

For each step, ask who does it, what they need, and what must happen first. Include how you check quality before the customer receives the product.

For a service, your sequence might include booking, preparation, providing the service, and checking that it met the agreed need. Adapt the plan to your business rather than copying a goods example.

Step 4: Find weak points

What could stop the process? Consider delayed supplies, missing skills, limited equipment, quality problems, or more orders than you can handle.

Connect the plan to your earlier PESTEL work. For example, a material shortage could affect cost and delivery. A school rule could limit where you operate.

Choose a response to an important risk. A backup supplier, a smaller starting scale, or a simpler design may help. Explain the trade-off: a backup may cost more, while simpler production may limit features.

Your turn

Create your supply chain plan. Use these questions:

1. What are our main inputs and possible sources?
2. What steps turn those inputs into our product or service?
3. Who is responsible for each step?
4. How will we check quality and deliver to customers?
5. What limits our capacity? What is our response?

Explain whether the process would still work if orders increased. You do not need to promise unlimited growth.

Check your work

- My plan runs from resources to the customer.
- I included the production or service process.
- I identified people, skills, and time as well as materials.
- I marked unconfirmed costs and suppliers clearly.
- I explained a weak point and a realistic response.

Next: Review your business idea

In Task 8, you will choose the idea to carry forward and update your market analysis using what you learned in Unit 1.

Independent guidance based on the AP Business with Personal Finance CED, printed page 158. This is not an official College Board resource.