

# CHANGE-OVER-TIME GRAPH

**A CHANGE-OVER-TIME GRAPH IS A WAY OF IDENTIFYING TRENDS. THE INFORMATION THEY SHOW CAN BE USED TO MAKE PROJECTIONS OF PROBABLE FUTURE SCENARIOS**

## How to use the tool:

- 1 Identify the trends that are relevant to the issue you are exploring. For example, you might look at population growth, energy consumption or climate change.
- 2 Draw a chart with two axes. Label the X-axis 'Time' and the Y-axis the trend you want to analyse. Choose appropriate scales for each axis.
- 3 Research the information and plot the data on your graph.
- 4 Add notes to explain any significant changes in the trend over time, for example financial investment, population change, or the availability of a new product or invention.
- 5 Use your change-over-time graph to look at trends and patterns that have occurred in the past.
- 6 Importantly, you can use past trends to make projections of probable future scenarios. Your projections should consider the future if the trends continue broadly as shown on your graph.
- 7 Ask yourself some critical questions. For example:  
*What might cause the trends to accelerate or slow down?*  
*What will life be like in 10 years? What will be the consequences for people and the environment?*  
*What positive opportunities might there be?*  
*What stresses and challenges might emerge?*
- 8 Be creative about how you present your probable future scenario. A thumbnail sketch, short story, info-graphic, video or imaginary news report from the future – it doesn't matter what format you choose, just make it compelling.

## NXTHINKING

**This tool can help you think about patterns and trends from the past in order to allow you to make projections about the future**

It helps you to consider the potential impact on people, the environment and events should these trends continue.



Thinking about Change



Thinking about The Future

“  
**Looking at the past can help us to make projections about what might happen in the future... and to consider uncertainties too.**”

