



Review of the Professional Standards for Australian Career Development Practitioners

Briefing Paper 2

How have the Professional Standards changed? What do the changes mean to career development practitioners and other stakeholders?

This paper is the second of two briefing papers on the Review of the Professional Standards for Australian Career Development Practitioners that have been distributed by CICA to career development practitioners who belong to the member associations of CICA and other stakeholders.

The aim of this briefing paper is to assist career development practitioners and other stakeholders to understand the nature of the changes to the Professional Standards for Australian Career Development Practitioners and how it may impact them.

Why did the Professional Standards need to be revised?

Professional Standards are the systems and procedures that define the career industry, its membership and services. Professional Standards are living documents that need to be responsive to changed contexts. Much has changed since 2006 when the Professional Standards were first published and 2012 when they were implemented. At the CICA Council meeting on 26 October 2017, it was unanimously agreed by the CICA Member Associations that a review of the Professional Standards for Australian Career Development Practitioners should be undertaken.

In particular, a review was needed of the Core Competencies and Specialisations of the Professional Standards that guide the training of career development practitioners in Australia to ensure those entering the profession are provided with skills and knowledge appropriate for contemporary career development practice.

Who conducted the review of the Professional Standards?

CICA called for nominations from its Member Associations to form the Professional Standards Review Working Group. The Working Group comprised the Chair and four members with support from the CICA Executive Director: one member from each of the school, elite sport, higher education and private practice sectors. The members of the Working Group were:

Dr Mary McMahon – Chair, CICA Vice President
 Dr Nathan Simmons – Secondary Education
 Dr Julie Howell – Higher Education
 Dr Ann Villiers – Private Practice
 Megan Fritsch – Elite Athletes, CICA President
 David Carney – CICA Executive Director

How was the review conducted?

The introduction of Professional Standards for Australian Career Development Practitioners in 2006, followed an extensive consultation process with practitioners and other stakeholders to ensure respect for diverse contexts and constituencies. A similar process was followed for the review to ensure that it was respectful, inclusive, consultative, and collaborative. CICA is committed to the Professional Standards being context appropriate and practitioner owned and endorsed.

- Briefing Paper 1 was sent to stakeholders
- The Working Group independently reviewed the professional standards and concluded a need to:
 - Edit and update explanatory material from first edition
 - Revise the Code of Ethics (minor revision)
 - Update Entry-level qualifications
 - Revise the Competency Guidelines to better reflect contemporary practice
 - Revise the Glossary
 - Revise the format to achieve a user-friendly document with a more contemporary format
- Working group feedback was collated in first draft revision
- Online survey sought feedback on Competency Framework
- Data Analysis
- Working group considered the implications of the results of the data analysis in terms of changes to the Competency Framework
- Draft Revised Professional Standards reviewed by Boards of CICA Member Associations who provided further feedback
- Final revision of Professional Standards based on Member Association Board feedback
- Revised Professional Standards presented to CICA Council on 22 February 2019

What is contained in the revised Professional Standards?

The Professional Standards for Australian Career Development Practitioners comprise 6 elements, all of which were retained in the revised Professional Standards. The elements are:

- Terminology
- Membership of the Profession
- Code of Ethics
- Entry-Level Qualifications
- Continuing Professional Development (CPD)
- Competency Framework that informs the development of entry-level qualifications

What does the revision mean for the elements of the Professional Standards?

Terminology

“Career development” was adopted in 2006 as the overarching term in the Australian career industry and has been retained in the revision.

Membership of the Profession

No changes have been made to how membership of the profession is determined i.e.,

“The Professional Standards for Australian Career Development Practitioners apply to any person who provides career development services and/or programs and who belongs to a CICA Member Association. Such practitioners meet the minimum standards defined by the Professional Standards for Australian Career Development Practitioners, and the Specialised Competencies relevant to their role.”

Code of Ethics

The major sections of the Code of Ethics remain unchanged. Redundancy has been removed and wording refined where appropriate.

A point has been added regarding the use of technology under the section Ethical principles for career development Practitioner-Client Relationships: Equity and diversity. The additional point is: Apply, and inform clients about, ethical issues (such as privacy, identify, information-sharing practices) associated with media technologies, including social networking

Potential consequences for a Breach of the Code of Ethics has been strengthened by flagging Cancellation of Membership as a possible consequence.

Entry-Level Qualifications

Reference to vocational qualifications (e.g., vocational graduate certificate) has been removed as these qualifications no longer exist.

Greater distinction has been made between Professional and Associate Career Development Practitioners through the addition of the following text.

Professional Career Development Practitioners work in a range of settings, coordinate teams including Associates Career Development Practitioners, and in supervisory roles. Associate Career Development Practitioners work in support roles.

No change has been made to entry-level qualifications for Professional and Associate Career Development Practitioners.

Sections on RPL and Implementation have been deleted as these applied to first edition.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

The number of hours of CPD required of practitioners remain the same at a minimum of 15 hours of CPD per annum.

The responsibilities of CICA Member Associations and Career Development Practitioners in relation to CPD remain the same.

Competency Framework that informs the development of entry-level qualifications

- Some Core and Specialised Competencies have been renamed to make them clearer in meaning and content coverage.
- Where appropriate, the Core and Specialised Competencies have been strengthened in relation to the use of technology and social media.
- Specialised Competencies have been presented separately from the Core Competencies.
- The Competencies have been refined e.g.; duplication has been removed.

- Quick reference tables have been added for the Core and Specialised Competencies.
- The Core Competencies of 6a Collect, analyse and use information, 6b Keep up-to-date with emerging technologies and innovations, and 7c Use enterprise Skills contain behaviours that may apply to only some practitioners. See Appendix 1 for a summary of the changes.
- The Specialised Competencies of S3 Career development program delivery and S4 Diverse clients include behaviours that may apply to only some practitioners. See Appendix 2 for a summary of the changes.

A detailed summary of the changes to the Core and Specialised Competencies is provided in Appendices 1 and 2.

The renaming of the Core Competencies is shown in Table 1.

Table 1 also shows how in the first edition of the Professional Standards, the Specialised Competencies were related to some of the Core Competencies.

Table 1

First Edition	Revision
Career development theory Specialised competency: Assessment	Career development theory
Labour market	Labour market information
Advanced communication skills Specialised competency: Counselling; program delivery	Communication and interpersonal skills
Ethical practice	Ethical practice
Diversity Specialised competency: Working with people with disabilities	Diversity and inclusion
Information and resource management	Technology, information and resources
Professional practice Specialised competency: Project management; employer liaison	Professional practice application

An overview of the revision of the Core Competencies in relation to their sub-sections is contained in Table 2.

Table 2

First Edition	Revision
Career development theory 9 sub-sections	Career development theory 2 sub-sections
Labour market 2 sub-sections	Labour market information 2 sub-sections
Advanced communication skills 5 sub-sections	Communication and interpersonal skills 3 sub-sections
Ethical practice 4 sub-sections	Ethical practice 3 sub-sections
Diversity 2 sub-sections	Diversity and inclusion 2 sub-sections
Information and resource management 3 sub-sections	Technology, information and resources 3 sub-sections
Professional practice 6 sub-sections	Professional practice 4 sub-sections

An overview of the revision of the Specialised Competencies is contained in Table 3.

The titles of some of the Specialised Competencies was changed and a new Specialised Competency of Research skills was added.

Table 3

First Edition	Revision
Assessment	Career assessment
Counselling	Career counselling
Program delivery	Program delivery
Working with people with disabilities	Working with diverse clients
Project management	Project management
Employer liaison	Employer liaison
	Research skills

Glossary of Terms

The Glossary of Terms has been revised to be more aligned with the terminology of the Professional Standards rather than the industry more broadly. Some terms included in the first edition have been removed and some new terms added (e.g., associate career development practitioner, benchmarking, career management skills, job, occupation, profession, professional career development practitioner, professional standards, specialised competencies). Definitions have been revised.

Why does the document look different?

The aim of the revision was to achieve a user-friendly document with a contemporary format. The numbering system was changed to simplify the document. Each competency is expressed in terms of career development practitioner behaviours.

What does the revision mean for training providers of endorsed courses?

The CICA Course Endorsement process will continue to be guided by the CICA Professional Standards. Course Providers seeking future endorsement are required to comply with revised CICA Professional Standards.

Course Providers are advised to consider the changes to the Core and Specialised Competencies when revising courses for submission for Course Endorsement.

See Appendices 1 and 2 for a summary of the changes.

What does the revision mean for Career Development Practitioners?

Entry-level qualifications are still required for membership of CICA Member Associations.

CPD requirements in terms of the minimum number of CPD hours remain unchanged.

Career development practice is still guided by Member Association's Codes of Ethics which accord with the CICA Code of Ethics.

Registration is still available through the CICA website.

Career Development Practitioners are advised to consider the changes to the Core and Specialised competencies in identifying their CPD needs.

See Appendices 1 and 2 for a summary of the changes.

What does the revision mean for employers?

The Career Development industry self-regulates through the Professional Standards for Australian Career Development Practitioners. CICA advocates with stakeholders about the employment of appropriately qualified Career Development Practitioners.

Employers, however, make their own decisions about the qualifications required of employees.

What does the revision mean for Continuing Professional Development?

CICA Member Associations and Career Development Practitioners are reminded to consider the changes to the Competency Framework in relation to Continuing Professional Development. CICA Member Associations should continue to provide CPD based on the Core Competencies and, where appropriate, the Specialised Competencies. In summary, the changes include greater reference to:

- Technology: Code of Ethics, 6a, 6b, S3
- Decision-making: 1b, 2b
- Knowledge of laws, policies, practices: 2a, 4b, 5a, 6b
- Entrepreneurial opportunities: 2b
- Reframing, questioning, reflection: 3b
- Diversity and Inclusion and Diverse Clients: 5a, 5b, S4
- Sound business practices: 7c
- Conducting research: S7

Appendix 1

What specifically has changed in the Core Competencies?

This appendix provides a summary of changes where competencies are new or considerably revised. Minor changes, removal of redundancy, word changes etc. are not included.

1. Career Development Theory

Nine sub-sections were reduced to two sub-sections related to knowledge and application of career development theory.

Section 1a now includes 'Understand models of career decision-making and their application'.
Section 1b now includes 'Apply models of career decision-making to practice'.

2. Labour Market Information

Two sub-sections were retained related to sourcing, understanding, applying labour market information and using it to assist clients.

Section 2a now includes 'Understand current workplaces, workers' rights, conditions, and employment and recruitment practices'.

Section 2b now includes 'Assist clients in creating their own opportunities, including entrepreneurial opportunities'.

3. Communication and Interpersonal Skills

Five sub-sections were reduced to three sub-sections related to knowledge and application of rapport building, verbal and written communication, and teamwork.

Section 3b now includes 'Use verbal communication skills including reframing, questioning, reflection and active listening skills'.

4. Ethical Practice

Four sub-sections were reduced to three sub-sections related to knowledge and application of ethical practice.

Section 4b now includes 'Demonstrate reflective practice to identify areas for improvements that will enhance practice' and 'Understand how public policy, legislation, and regulation relevant to career work impact on their role and practice'.

5. Diversity and Inclusion

Two sub-sections relate to career development work with diverse clients. The two original sections, Recognise diversity and Respect diversity were combined in the new section 5a 'Recognise and Respect diversity'. A new section was added: 5b 'Conduct career development work in culturally sensitive ways'.

Diversity is now broadly described as including, but not limited to, 'age, gender, disability, sexual orientation, geographic location, sporting prowess, culture, religion, Aborigines and

Torres Strait Islanders, refugee and migrant backgrounds, socio-economic status, mental health, and exceptional ability e.g. in sport, the arts or academic achievement’.

Section 5a now includes ‘Be knowledgeable about legislation related to discrimination’ and ‘Demonstrate awareness of, reflect on, and self-critique cultural beliefs, values, and historical positioning, and how these impact on one’s practice with clients from other cultural backgrounds’.

6. Technology, Information and Resources

Three sub-sections were retained related to the knowledge and application of technology, information and resources. Two of the sub-sections were renamed: ‘Keep up to date with technology’ was renamed ‘Keep up-to-date with emerging technologies and innovations’ and ‘Identify the major organisations, resources and community-based services for career development’ was renamed ‘Identify relevant support organisations, resources and services’.

Section 6a now includes ‘Apply appropriate research strategies to retrieve information needed, including the appropriate use of information technology (e.g. social media and on-line information sources)’, and ‘Help clients use relevant information technology resources and tools ethically and effectively’, plus for some practitioners where appropriate, ‘Produce career information and resources that support their work’.

Section 6b now includes ‘Use appropriate forms of electronic communication and social media’ and ‘Are aware of changing contexts, including the political, economic, technological, social, environmental, and organisational contexts’, plus for some practitioners, where appropriate, ‘Create and deliver information and resources using technology (e.g. presentations, videos, webinars, multimedia resources)’.

7. Professional Practice Application

Six sub-sections were revised to four sub-sections related to knowledge and application of professional practice. Section 7a ‘Conduct needs assessment’ was relocated from Career Development Theory.

Section 7c now includes for some practitioners, where appropriate, ‘Apply sound business practices’. This means business practices that relate to the work of Career Development Practitioners rather than essential, core business knowledge.

Appendix 2

What specifically has changed in the Specialised Competencies?

The Specialised Competencies are described as ‘the additional skills, knowledge and attitudes that may be required by some Career Development Practitioners to undertake specific career development roles or cater for the needs of specific client groups’.

The Specialised Competencies emphasise that Career Development Practitioners undertaking such roles or working with such client groups are expected to undertake additional study and training. Descriptors are provided for each of the Specialised Competencies.

S1. Career Assessment

This Specialised Competency is now described as ‘Assess, develop and apply career assessment’. It now includes ‘Gain qualifications in assessment processes’.

S2. Career Counselling

This Specialised Competency is now described as ‘Apply career counselling skills’. It now includes ‘Engage in regular supervision appropriate to the role’.

S3. Career Development Program Delivery

This Specialised Competency is now described as ‘Assess the need for, design, deliver and evaluate career development programs’. It now includes ‘Understand the importance of technology for scalability in the delivery of career development programs’, plus for some career development practitioners, as appropriate, ‘Create resources, career information, and tools to best facilitate programs and market programs’.

S4. Diverse Clients

This Specialised Competency is now described as ‘Working with diverse people’. A broad description of diversity is included. It now recognises the broad scope of the specialisation while also including a section relevant to career development practitioners whose focus is primarily on rehabilitation work.

S5. Project Management

This Specialised Competency is now described as ‘Design, develop, implement, and evaluate projects’. It remains essentially the same with some editing.

S6. Industry Liaison

This Specialised Competency is now described as ‘Liaise with employers and other organisations’. It now includes ‘Apply effective networking, presentation, negotiation, and influencing skills’.

S7. Research Skills

This is a new Specialised Competency described as ‘Conduct research’. This new Specialised Competency recognises that a) some career development practitioners work as specialised researchers, and b) Career Development Practitioners increasingly need to understand, interpret, and undertake research