



# **2025 Review of the CICA Professional Standards for Australian Career Development Practitioners**

## **Briefing Paper 2**

### **What Changed in the Updated Professional Standards**

This paper outlines the key changes introduced following the 2025 review of the CICA Professional Standards for Australian Career Development Practitioners.

The review aimed to ensure that the Professional Standards remain contemporary, relevant, and aligned with the evolving contexts in which career development services are delivered.

#### **What Has Stayed the Same**

Although the review led to several updates, the overall structure and purpose of the Professional Standards remain the same.

Career development practitioners continue operating in diverse settings, including schools, higher education institutions, employment services, community organisations, government initiatives, business and industry, and private practice.

Key features of the Professional Standards remain consistent, including:

- The two practitioner levels: Associate Career Development Practitioner and Professional Career Development Practitioner
- Entry-level qualification requirements
- Continuing Professional Development requirements
- The competency framework
- The role of CICA and its Member Associations in maintaining and applying the Standards.

Maintaining these foundations ensures continuity for practitioners, employers, and training providers while allowing the Standards to evolve in response to emerging developments.

#### **Digital Practice and Artificial Intelligence**

A key development discussed in the review was the growing impact of digital technologies and Artificial Intelligence.

Digital platforms, online career information tools, and AI-driven systems are increasingly utilised within career development services. Individuals often access career information via digital platforms before engaging with practitioners, who may also use digital tools to support service delivery.

The revised Professional Standards acknowledge these advances and emphasise practitioners' ability to critically assess digital tools, recognise their limitations, and apply them responsibly in professional practice.

Importantly, the updated Standards emphasise that technology should support professional judgment and human-centred career development practice rather than replace them.

## **Updates to the Competency Framework**

The number of Core Competencies remains unchanged; however, the scope of these competencies has expanded to reflect contemporary practice.

Greater emphasis is now placed on digital literacy, emerging technologies, and the ability to interpret labour market information within rapidly changing workforce environments.

These developments reflect the increasing complexity of the information environment in which career decisions are made.

## **Specialised Competencies**

As part of the review, the Specialised Competencies within the Professional Standards were also considered.

The review concluded that the structure of the Specialised Competencies did not need to be changed. However, it noted that the contexts in which these competencies are used have changed significantly.

In the 2026 edition of the Professional Standards, the practice expectations related to the Specialised Competencies were expanded to reflect developments in the field, including:

- Digital career services
- The use of artificial intelligence and emerging technologies
- Hybrid delivery environments combining online and in-person services
- Accessibility considerations and digital equity
- Increasingly complex client needs and career transitions.

These updates recognise the changing environments in which career development practitioners operate while maintaining continuity in the overall competency framework.