

## **Professional Standards for Australian Career Development Practitioners**

### **Briefing Paper 9: Implementation 1 January 2012**

*This paper is the ninth in a series of briefing papers that will be distributed by CICA to all career development practitioners who belong to the member associations of CICA. The purpose of these papers is to assist career development practitioners to be well informed and updated on the Professional Standards project. The Professional Standards and previous Briefing Papers may be downloaded from the CICA website: [www.cica.org.au](http://www.cica.org.au)*

The **Professional Standards for Australian Career Development Practitioners** were agreed to by all of the CICA member associations in December 2005 and launched in April 2006. The Professional Standards were developed as a result of extensive consultation with practitioners and collaboration with the CICA member associations. Significantly, the Professional Standards represent international best practice and Australia is seen as a world leader in this regard.

The elements of the Professional Standards for Australian Career Development Practitioners are:

1. Terminology
2. Membership of the Profession
3. A Code of Ethics
4. Entry-Level Qualifications
5. Continuing Professional Development (CPD)
6. Competency Guidelines that will inform the development of entry-level qualifications.

*Care has been taken in the development of these Professional Standards to balance the autonomy and individuality of the member associations of CICA within a nationally agreed framework of Professional Standards for Australian Career Development Practitioners.*

#### **Implementation**

The Professional Standards for Australian Career Development Practitioners represent the minimum standards required by Australian career development practitioners. Since April 2006, CICA and its Member Associations have been phasing in the Professional Standards in order that they will be fully implemented by **1 January 2012**.

CICA has developed policies to guide the implementation of the Professional Standards through the CICA Member Associations.

#### **Progress so far**

In accordance with the Professional Standards, all CICA Member Associations:

- reviewed their policies and membership requirements and where necessary, made amendments with a view to compliance on 1 January 2012
- amended or introduced Codes of Ethics that include procedures for dealing with breaches of the Code
- adopted as the minimum entry level qualification for Professional Career Development Practitioners
  - (a) an **endorsed**
    - Graduate Certificate; or
    - Vocational Graduate Certificate

- or
- (b) An alternative pathway to Professional status as may be approved on a case by case basis by the CICA Members in line with Policy and Procedures developed by the Council.
- agreed to the minimum entry level qualification for Associate Career Development Practitioners who work in the field of career development but not as Professional Career Development Practitioners
  - (a) an AQF accredited and NTIS registered Certificate IV in Career Development
  - or
  - (b) an alternative pathway to Associate status as may be approved on a case by case basis by the CICA Members in line with Policy and Procedures developed by the Council.
- require all members to engage in a minimum level of Continuing Professional Development in order to retain association membership.

In accordance with the Professional Standards, CICA:

- funded the development of an online method of recording Continuing Professional Development, Activ8
- developed policies related to the Entry-level qualifications
- developed procedures to guide endorsement of career development programs that provide entry-level qualifications to ensure that they adequately address the Competency Guidelines. A list of endorsed programs may be found on the CICA website.
- promoted the Professional Standards to a wide range of stakeholders including practitioners, policy makers, employers of career practitioners, training and service providers, business and industry
- funded the development of *Guiding Principles for Career Development Services and Career Information Products*. These Guiding Principles complement the Professional Standards by detailing principles that guide best practice delivery of career development services and information.

### **What remains to be done in implementing the Professional Standards?**

CICA will:

- continue to develop policy related to the Professional Standards and to promote the Professional Standards to stakeholder groups
- monitor and review the Professional Standards
- promote the Professional Standards to stakeholders
- apply the *Professional Standards* and the *Guiding Principles for Career Development Services and Career Information Products* in the development of quality assurance strategies for career development service providers
- advocate for the employment of appropriately qualified Career Development Practitioners.

### **What do the Professional Standards mean for career development practitioners?**

The development and implementation of the Professional Standards represent important steps in the move to raise the level of professionalism in the career development industry. In specifically identifying the knowledge and skills required by career development practitioners and aligning the Professional Standards with those of other professions, career development is consolidating its position as a profession in its own right. Following 1 January 2012 the Professional Standards will be reviewed periodically to ensure that they continue to meet the needs of the profession.

The full implementation of the Professional Standards on 1 January 2012 constitutes an important milestone in the history of the Australian career development industry. From this date, career development practitioners belonging to the CICA Member Associations will rightly be able to claim membership of the profession of career development.