



Trialling the CICA Guidelines for Facilitating the Career Development of Young People with Disability

Final Report

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The *Guidelines for Facilitating the Career Development of Young People With Disability* were developed by CICA to help service providers to improve career services for young people with disability.

They were recently trialled in different settings by service providers with different mandates and a range of professional backgrounds. Trial participants included a disability employment agency, a special education school and the career service and disability support service areas of a large VET institution.

Detailed case studies describe fully the experiences of trial participants who undertook the following activities:

- Program coordinators at the disability employment services agency assessed the extent to which their structured workplace experience and training program aligned with the guidelines.
- Existing career development programs offered by the special education school were reviewed using the guidelines.
- The team at the VET College reviewed their services against Guideline 1: *Be responsive to the unique aspirations and developmental needs of each young person*. They also reassessed their approach to counselling individual clients with a disability.

This report also synthesises and summarises the experiences of participants into a series of findings, and makes a number of recommendations to CICA.

Importantly, trial participants found that the guidelines were relatively simple to apply and that they assisted them to reflect upon and, where necessary, make changes to their practices to help young people with disability to develop their careers.

More specifically, the trial provided evidence that the guidelines:

- Align effectively with other important frameworks, such as the Disability Service Standards. At the same time they alerted users to the areas where career services in disability support organisations need to be strengthened
- Need to be flexibly applied in some contexts to meet the needs of clients with particular disabilities
- Connect services and agencies in ways that positively impact the career development of young people, by highlighting areas where service providers can collaborate to improve services for young people with disability.
- Highlight the importance of work experience to the career development of young people with disability;
- Highlight the need for service providers to have tools and processes in place that assist parents to recognise their child's need to express their own unique aspirations
- Highlight the importance of expanding personal networks to support the successful career development of young people with disability, and
- Raise awareness of the importance of appropriate professional development for staff providing career services to young people with disability.

A series of recommendations are made to CICA based on the experiences of trial participants. These include suggested changes to the Guidelines themselves, and the ways in which they might successfully be introduced to a wider audience.

Finally, we would like to thank those people who willingly participated in their development and initial testing. Their input has been invaluable.

INTRODUCTION

In 2012, the Career Industry Council of Australia (CICA) developed a set of draft *Guidelines for Facilitating the Career Development of Young People with Disability* to assist disability employment service providers and secondary school teachers who provide career information, advice and guidance to young people with disability to improve their services (See Appendix A).

The Guidelines were developed following consultation with select stakeholders in the career development and disability services fields, a review of relevant literature covering Australian and international best practice and feedback from over 250 practitioners received via an online survey.

It is CICA's intention that over time the Guidelines will contribute to the achievement of the following objectives:

Encourage disability employment service providers to strengthen career service provision

CICA is keen that clients are given the best possible opportunity for career exploration. CICA understands that some providers face contractual requirements to place clients with a disability in employment in order to secure placement performance-based funding from government. Strengthened career service provision can both support the fulfillment of these requirements and ensure more positive and long-term career outcomes for their clients.

Encourage greater commitment to the Professional Standards for Australian Career Development Practitioners

In particular, CICA hopes that career services offered by agencies working with young people with disability demonstrate a mix of professionally qualified practitioners and other support staff.

Encourage schools to provide enhanced career services for students with a disability

CICA is keen that students with disabilities be given opportunities for career exploration including work experience.

The trial of the Guidelines aimed to:

1. Demonstrate how to use the Guidelines effectively and provide examples of effective processes
2. Provide examples of case studies using these Guidelines
3. Result in the development of effective processes for implementation including promotion of career management skills and use of qualified staff, and
4. Provide examples of resources that could be utilised to support their implementation.

METHODOLOGY

CICA established the trial to assess the utility of the Guidelines and to identify any areas where they might be improved.

CICA's project brief stated that the trial would take place with at least two employment service providers and two schools and would seek feedback from providers, clients, students, parents and other stakeholders.

To this end Miles Morgan carried out the following tasks:

- **Recruited** four WA-based, voluntary participants to trial the guidelines. Two schools, a VET institution and an employment service provider were recruited. Unfortunately one school had to withdraw from the project due to internal commitments.
- **Trialled** the utility of the Guidelines at the remaining three agencies/schools.
- **Refined** the Guidelines based on the feedback of trial participants.

Trial participants were asked to:

- **Examine** how the Guidelines could be applied or reviewed within their organisation
- **Apply** or review the Guidelines, and
- **Report** on their experience of applying or reviewing the Guidelines and to respond to questions related to their effectiveness, their useability, and any actual or perceived benefits or difficulties associated with their use.

Trial participants were also invited to suggest potential areas for refinement of the Guidelines, and to identify any support materials that would encourage their uptake by schools and employment service providers.

Preparation for the Trial

Trial Sites

The trial sites were recruited during the period April 2nd – 5th. The sites included Kensington Secondary School, an education support school; Central Institute of Technology represented by staff from the disability services section and the career development service; and EDGE Employment Solutions, a disability employment service provider.

The trial commenced 16th April and was completed 11th May 2012.

Trial Materials

Miles Morgan staff developed introductory materials that included a brief information paper that made clear the requirements of the trial, a standard reporting template, and a simple assessment tool.

Introductory workshops

Miles Morgan conducted an introductory workshop (13th April) for trial participants to introduce them to the Guidelines, to explore the ways in which they might be applied, and to explain the nature and requirements of the trial. Workshop participants engaged in a hands-on activity, using the assessment tool developed for the trial. This tool was well received by the trial participants, and a modified version, based on feedback received, is included at Appendix B.

Two of the three trial sites were able to attend the introductory workshop, Central and EDGE, so a second, separate workshop was held with staff from the third trial site, Kensington Secondary School.

The Activities of Trial Participants

Each trial site conducted an assessment of the Guidelines against their current practices, as this seemed a useful first step in implementing the Guidelines in their organisations. Each of the sites carried out these assessments in a slightly different manner, according to staff availability and other organisational requirements.

EDGE Employment Solutions

EDGE Employment Solutions focused their assessment on a specific program they deliver. The Supported Work Experience and Training (SWEAT) program provides support to approximately 120 school students with disability per year. There are five Coordinators delivering this program, who support students to locate work experience in the open market, ideally with a view to this leading to an apprenticeship or traineeship.

Spearheaded by the representative who attended the workshop, program coordinators used the assessment tool provided to assess the extent to which the SWEAT program aligns with the guidelines.

On completion of the trial period, the original EDGE representative attended a debriefing meeting with Miles Morgan staff. This meeting provided a valuable opportunity discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the Guidelines, the assessment tool and the reporting template provided to all trial participants, ensuring that both parties were satisfied with the outcomes of the trial activities.

Kensington Secondary School

Kensington Secondary School is the only special education secondary school in Western Australia, with a student population of approximately 40 students with mild to severe intellectual disabilities; some students also have autism, cerebral palsy or sensory impairments.

Staff at the school were keen to use the Guidelines to review their existing career development programs. Therefore, an intensive workshop with Miles Morgan and Kensington Secondary staff, including the Deputy Principal and the VET Coordinator, was arranged. The workshop aimed to assess Kensington's career development practice against the Guidelines, identifying aspects, either of Kensington's activities or of the Guidelines themselves, which were particularly effective, or where there might be room for improvement.

During this intensive feedback session, Kensington staff were able to reflect on each of the guidelines and how they applied in the school context. While this process did not identify any obvious gaps in their own service provision, or in the usefulness and applicability of the Guidelines themselves, school staff noted that in some situations, the Guidelines would need to be approached flexibly. For example, given the severe, profound and multiple learning disabilities of many students at Kensington, advocacy, rather than self-management and self-determination (the key concepts of Guideline 2) was seen as more critical.

Central Institute of Technology

Representatives from Central's career service, *JobsCentral*, and the Disability Services Coordinator, located in the *Access and Equity Support Service*, took part in this trial.

The Central team reviewed their services against Guideline 1: *Be responsive to the unique aspirations and developmental needs of each young person*. By limiting the focus to one guideline, the team hoped to be able to produce a more focused and detailed review.

The team also examined the applicability of the Guidelines against existing processes when working with an individual client and developed a brief case study that demonstrated career counselling activities undertaken in relation to a student with Asperger's Syndrome experiencing difficulties completing his qualification.

Reporting on the Trial

Activity reports were collected from all three trial participants and this information, supplemented by notes from feedback sessions held at two of the three sites, was used to develop case studies for each trial site. These case studies are included as Appendices C, D and E.

FINDINGS

The experiences of the trial participants suggest that the Guidelines were found to use appropriate language, were easy to follow and aligned well with existing policies and practices. Overall, the Guidelines may usefully assist service providers and educators to reflect upon and, where necessary, make changes to their efforts to help young people with disability to develop their careers and transition successfully from school to further learning, work and community life.

The following findings, observations and suggestions for change have been derived from the comments of participants at the introductory workshop, the experience of trial participants and information obtained during the feedback sessions conducted with trial participants.

Alignment with other frameworks

Participants found that the CICA Guidelines align with and significantly complement the Disability Service Standards (DSS) that all Disability Employment Service providers, disability support services in VET institutions, and others offering services to people with disability, are legally required to meet. One participant noted that, "I think (the Guidelines) focus on career development helps disability employment service providers to see how their services and programs contribute to career development and where they can be improved in this regard".

The Disability Service Officer (DSO) from Central Institute of Technology also noted how closely the Guidelines aligned with the frameworks she works within, including the Disability Service Standards; Disability Access & Inclusion Plan (Central, 2007); *Disability Discrimination Act (1992)*, and Disability Standards for Education (DEST, 2005). Importantly, the guidelines highlighted to the DSO how much her work contributed to the career development of young people attending Central.

It was also apparent that in those agencies that do not employ qualified career development practitioners, professional learning and/or development opportunities should accompany the introduction of the Guidelines. For example, it is important that users of the Guidelines are introduced to the career management competencies of the *Australian Blueprint for Career Development*, in order to identify the strengths and weaknesses of their existing programs in equipping young people with lifelong career management skills.

In some cases, a lack of career development knowledge resulted in the provision of evidence against the performance indicators that, while demonstrating effective practice, did not adequately demonstrate performance from a career development perspective. For example, Kensington Secondary School provided evidence against Performance indicator 1.1 - *Deal with young people with disability fairly, equitably and without prejudice, respecting their culture, values, beliefs and life-experiences and those of their families and the communities to which they belong* - which indicated the school's policy was to be as inclusive as possible. Staff pointed to an upcoming whole of school camp where physical activities had been modified to ensure students with wheelchairs could also participate in activities as an example of how the school meets Performance indicator 1.1. This example is adequate, but to ensure the Guideline is being fully met, it would be more useful to extend this, detailing how the physical activities students participate in contribute to their career development specifically. For instance, being able to participate in physical activities can build self-esteem and self-confidence, and a positive self-concept (career management competency 1 in the *Australian Blueprint for Career Development*). This extension of the evidence can illustrate explicitly how the activity contributes in important ways to the career development of students.

Flexible application

Discussions with staff at Kensington Secondary School identified that, while the Guidelines in their existing format are effective and widely applicable, there may be instances where it is necessary to adapt them for a particular client group. For instance, a number of students at Kensington do not have the executive functioning necessary for decision-making and/or self-determination, which is the key concept of Guideline 2. To deal with such cases, users of the guidelines should be encouraged to use the Guidelines flexibly.

Connecting networks, services and agencies

An immediate outcome of the introductory workshop was that new connections began to be made between the disability and career development services located at Central. Both sections of Central had agreed to participate in the trial, and by the end of the workshop, were exploring ways they could improve the connections between their separate service delivery areas to ensure they were supporting young people in the most effective ways possible.

Trial participants at Central also used the review process as an opportunity to document the policies, processes and services the entire agency offers against Guideline 1 *Be responsive to the unique aspirations and developmental needs of each young person*. Their participation in the trial resulted in a comprehensive document that can be used to assist new staff to understand how the careers service aims to work with young people with disability and provides a clear overview of the range, quality

and linkages between services that are available to young people with disabilities at Central.

The importance of work experience

While each of the Guidelines was considered to be important, the critical importance of Guideline 3: *Assist clients to locate and arrange suitable work experience activities*, was confirmed by trial participants at both Kensington Secondary School and EDGE as both provided such activities. All participants recognised the importance of work experience activities that could adequately prepare young people for entry into a VET institution such as Central, to access an apprenticeship or traineeship, or enter employment.

Tools for parents

Participants also pointed out that parents, who have acted as an advocate for their child for many years, often find it difficult to provide space for a young person to make decisions for themselves and this can make it difficult for service providers to “be responsive to the unique aspirations and developmental needs of each young person” (Guideline 1).

To overcome this difficulty, trial participants suggested that tools to assist parents to ‘let go’ and build their trust in service providers and other agencies involved in the transition of their child are needed. A model of how to conduct an initial interview with a young person and their parent/s in a way that makes it clear that it is the young person that is at the centre of the process was also suggested. Participants also recommended that parents should be required to obtain explicit permission from their child to participate in an interview if the young person is over 18 years old.

Shared responsibility for young people’s career development

In relation to Performance indicator 2.7 *Where necessary, assist the young person to develop the life skills required for independent living, by accessing appropriate services and agencies. This might include learning how to access transport to get to and from work, or financial management skills* also elicited discussion. Although these skills were seen as critical, some trial participants pointed out that there was little funding available to the services represented for this type of assistance, despite the critical importance of these skills, and, that parents and schools had a part to play.

This was a view that was reinforced by feedback received from Kensington Secondary School, where the curriculum focus of the school is on providing students with disability with the communication and employability skills and the independence they need to move into further education, training or work. It is also congruent with participants’ views that age-appropriate preparation for young people’s transition from compulsory schooling to further education, training and/or work should begin in the early years of schooling. The value of this approach was evident in the successful preparatory program operating at Kensington Secondary School.

Critically, this discussion highlighted the shared role different agencies, services and families have in the career development of young people, and how each individual member of a young person’s network has a different role to play in each stage of their career development.

Focusing on the functional impact of disability

One trial participant suggested that it is not the disability itself, but rather the *functional impact* of disability that needs to be identified and recognised by the young person, as they consider their options for further education or work. In relation to this issue, participants drew attention to Performance indicator 2.4 *Examine the benefits and drawbacks of disclosure of disability in educational and workplace settings, allowing the young person to determine their preferred course of action*. They pointed out the importance of disclosing, not the disability itself, but rather, the functional impact of that disability. This would enable the young person to receive assistance in the form of reasonable adjustments, such as reduced workloads, the use of interpreters and/or communication technologies and so on, without disclosing the specific details of the disability itself.

The importance of understanding the functional impact of a disability was also raised in relation to “assisting young people to understand their rights and responsibilities in the workplace” (Performance indicator 2.6) as trial participants thought that young people did not always understand that they have a right to request/negotiate reasonable adjustments be made in the workplace or training environment.

The importance of personal networks

The critical importance of Guideline 4: *Actively create, expand and engage the support networks of young people*, was reinforced by the experience of trial participants. Staff at EDGE reported they receive consistent feedback from families and clients that young people are disappointed that they have not made any friends in their workplaces. Its importance was also recognised by staff at Central, where young people are supported to expand their networks through peer mentoring and support networks.

Professional learning for diverse service providers

As a result of being introduced to the Guidelines at the introductory workshop, the EDGE representative enthusiastically sought information on career development learning opportunities, and requested support from her management team to undertake a Certificate IV in Career Development. This trial participant’s management team are now considering her proposal for all supported work experience coordinators to undertake this qualification.

RECOMMENDATIONS

As mentioned earlier, feedback received from all trial participants was very favourable, and no specific suggestions for altering the language, structure or any other aspect of the Guidelines were made. Nevertheless, several recommendations can be made based on the findings from this trial.

Recommendation 1: Widespread implementation

The Guidelines should be distributed as widely as possible. As suggested by the EDGE representative, service providers likely to benefit from access to the Guidelines include Disability Employment Service providers and Disability Coordination Officers. Not only would this lead to improvements in the career information and support they already provide for young people with disability, it would also assist

them to understand how their services already contribute to the career development of their clients.

Recommendation 2: External moderation

Given that many users of the Guidelines will be unfamiliar with career development theories and practices, users seeking to assess their services using the assessment tool should be encouraged to seek assistance/moderation from an appropriately qualified and experienced career development authority to ensure their services are adequately focused on the facilitation of career development for young people.

This will also assist users to deal with those instances where the performance indicators may be inappropriate for a particular client group and where customised solutions need to be found in order to meet the requirements of the guidelines in appropriate ways.

Recommendation 3: Professional development

Professional development materials and opportunities need to be made available to users who are unfamiliar with career development theories and practices to assist them to understand:

- How facilitating the career development of young people with disability includes the development of personal management skills, career exploration skills and career building skills, and
- How their service contributes to the development of some or all of these skills.

Recommendation 4: Changes to wording of specific guidelines

There were only two instances where minor amendments to the wording of any of the Guidelines or Performance indicators were suggested.

Under Performance indicator 1.4 the word “functional” has been added when referring to the impact of a young person’s disability. This indicator has also been expanded to incorporate the identification of strategies and adjustments necessary for overcoming education challenges, in addition to those of the workplace. The indicator now reads:

Discuss the nature and functional impacts of the young person’s disability, and work with the young person to identify strategies and adjustments, which may be implemented to overcome any potential education or workplace challenges.

Similarly, Performance indicator 2.8 has been expanded to include education and training providers, along with potential employers, as organisations where young people with disability should be able to request appropriate supports and adjustments. The indicator now reads:

Assist young people with disability to develop the skills necessary to identify, discuss and request appropriate workplace and/or learning supports and adjustments with potential employers and education and training providers.

NEXT STEPS

Two tasks remain to be completed on this project. First, Miles Morgan aims to **promote** the benefits of the Guidelines using the simple, positive, concise case-studies describing the benefits that participants achieved, and by making both the Guidelines and the case studies freely available¹, on our website following CICA approval of the case studies and this final report.

Miles Morgan will also **communicate**, via email, the existence of the case studies and the refined Guidelines through a series of networks, including those organisations that contributed to the research that underpinned the development of the guidelines.²

¹ Perhaps using a free-to-use Creative Commons copyright license.

² An additional, and minor, task will be to include the new Employability Skills Framework in the useful information and resources section of the guidelines; these are due to be released mid-2012, for more information visit:

<http://www.deewr.gov.au/schooling/careersandtransitions/employabilityskills/Pages/Overview.aspx>

APPENDIX A: GUIDELINES FOR FACILITATING THE CAREER DEVELOPMENT OF YOUNG PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY

1 BE RESPONSIVE TO THE UNIQUE ASPIRATIONS AND DEVELOPMENTAL NEEDS OF EACH YOUNG PERSON

Career development service providers and disability service providers alike espouse the importance of individualised, person-centred life, learning and work planning. Its objective is to assist individuals to express their hopes and dreams, to identify their capacities and to develop strategies that help them to live their lives and participate in their communities as they see fit. It's also about supporting people in the choices they make about their lives.

- 1.1 Deal with young people with disability fairly, equitably and without prejudice, respecting their culture, values, beliefs and life-experiences and those of their families and the communities to which they belong
- 1.2 Ensure that the young person is at the centre of all career development activities
- 1.3 Assist the young person to identify for themselves the things which motivate and create satisfaction and well being in their lives, and those which create frustration and dissatisfaction
- 1.4 Discuss the nature and functional impacts of the young person's disability, and work with the young person to identify strategies and adjustments which may be implemented to overcome any potential education or workplace challenges
- 1.5 Encourage and assist the young person to develop the skills they need to be directly involved in their own exploration and decision-making processes
- 1.6 Explore and examine the full range of career and employment options with the young person, including further education and/or training, supported employment in a social enterprise (where this may be appropriate) and open employment, including self-employment
- 1.7 Avoid making decisions assumed to be best for the young person based on the personal values or beliefs of the practitioner or service provider
- 1.8 Accept the rights of the young person to make independent choices and to take responsibility for those choices and their consequences

- 1.9 In cases where a young person's preferred learning or work option is not possible, examine the underlying reasons for this choice and use this information to inform the development of a range of alternative options for exploration
- 1.10 Ensure that there is sufficient flexibility in the structure and delivery of programs to allow young people to progress at their own pace

2 ENCOURAGE AND EQUIP YOUNG PEOPLE TO BE SELF-MANAGING AND SELF-DETERMINING INDIVIDUALS

Encouraging young people with disability to make decisions and to manage their careers to the extent possible is central to their development. Actively engaging young people in planning their own future from an early age is an important part of giving them a sense of ownership of their lives and motivation to do it their way.

This does not mean that young people are left to their own devices. Instead, it means building the confidence and capacity of the young person to know when, where and how to seek assistance and support as required.

- 2.1 Challenge, encourage and support young people to realise their full potential
- 2.2 Engage young people in activities that build their confidence and self esteem
- 2.3 Encourage young people to ask appropriate questions in education, the workplace and related settings
- 2.4 Examine the benefits and drawbacks of disclosure of disability in educational and workplace settings, allowing the young person to determine their preferred course of action
- 2.5 Assist young people to develop the self-management skills³ needed to obtain and maintain employment, such as self-marketing, interacting with co-workers or asking for help when needed
- 2.6 Assist young people to understand their rights and responsibilities in the workplace and how best to advocate for themselves
- 2.7 Where necessary, assist the young person to develop the life skills required for independent living, by accessing appropriate services and agencies. This might include learning how to access transport to get to and from work, or financial management skills
- 2.8 Assist young people with disability to develop the skills necessary to identify, discuss and request appropriate workplace and/or learning supports and adjustments with potential employers and education and training providers

³ See the *Australian Blueprint for Career Development*: www.blueprint.edu.au

3 ASSIST CLIENTS TO LOCATE AND ARRANGE SUITABLE WORK EXPERIENCE ACTIVITIES

Incorporating relevant work experience activities, including structured workplace learning, volunteer work, site visits, job shadowing and mentoring, provides significant benefits for young people with a disability. Work experience provides a valuable networking opportunity, helps build a résumé, improves the young person's confidence and allows the young person to gain real experiences on which to base their career decisions.

- 3.1 Assist young people with disability to locate and arrange suitable work experience activities
- 3.2 Proactively seek workplace experiences for young people with disability
- 3.3 Ensure young people with disability are well prepared and feel comfortable before entering a workplace
- 3.4 Engage potential employers early in career planning activities to ensure both the young person and the employer are aware of each other's needs and expectations
- 3.5 Assist young people to arrange any necessary training, certification or security checks which may be required before commencing work
- 3.6 Ensure employers are aware of the supports available to them when employing people with disability, including financial assistance to make necessary adjustments in the workplace
- 3.7 Monitor closely the workplace experiences of young people until you are confident that the young person is fully supported in their placement

4 ACTIVELY CREATE, EXPAND AND ENGAGE THE SUPPORT NETWORKS OF YOUNG PEOPLE

Effective career development facilitators engage, and where appropriate, expand the young person's life, learning and work networks. They also value the role each network member plays in facilitating the young person's career development.

- 4.1 Encourage young people to identify significant people in their life—such as parents, other family members, friends, teachers, social workers, community members, healthcare workers and other service providers— who can assist them to develop their careers
- 4.2 Assist young people and their parents to develop and then utilise their own personal support network
- 4.3 Assist support network members to understand the particular roles they might play in the career development of the young person
- 4.4 Encourage all members of the young person's support network to hold high and realistic expectations for the young person
- 4.5 Where necessary, seek to align the aspirations of members of the support network with those of the young person

5 MAKE CAREER INFORMATION AVAILABLE IN A FORMAT THAT IS EASILY ACCESSIBLE TO YOUNG PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY

Easy access to a range of career information is essential for anyone engaged in career planning activities. Young people with disability may have particular requirements, and career information resources will need to be modified in response to these needs.

- 5.1 Make sure that the language used in publications and documents is clear and easily understandable for both young people and members of their support networks, particularly parents
- 5.2 Wherever possible, make sure that electronic information is made available in hardcopy format at the client's request
- 5.3 Make information available in a range of formats, according to the specific needs of clients
- 5.4 Discuss written information with young people and their immediate support network to ensure that it is understood
- 5.5 Explain the content, purposes, potential benefits and results of any planned activities in a manner easily understood by the person or persons for whom they are intended
- 5.6 Ensure that material contained in web-based programs, resource materials and career development programs is current and accurate

6 DEVELOP STRONG WORKING RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER RELEVANT AGENCIES AND SERVICE PROVIDERS

Ancient African wisdom suggests that “It takes a whole village to raise a child”.⁴ Facilitating the career development of young people is also a shared responsibility. While career development practitioners may be equipped to help young people achieve their career goals, disability employment service providers may have better knowledge of the widening range of options for young people with disability, or be able offer work experience placements, and parents may have rich insights into young people’s hopes and dreams. Creating bridges and service linkages is critical to coherent and seamless service provision.

- 6.1 Identify other services young people are accessing (such as school, disability employment services, healthcare and/or community services) and the ways they may also facilitate the career development of the young person
- 6.2 Identify any gaps in service delivery and develop a local network of providers offering these services for appropriate referral
- 6.3 Involve agencies and individuals that can assist the client with achieving their career goals in planning activities (e.g. Employment Pathways Planning, Personal Pathway Planning)
- 6.4 Refer the young person to more suitable professionals when your own skills and experience do not meet the young person’s needs, or when you are unable to continue service delivery
- 6.5 Ensure appropriate levels of support are available at times of transition and referral between agencies
- 6.6 Cooperate with other professionals and/or colleagues according to your organisation’s code of conduct and any other ethical practices and procedures relevant to the situation
- 6.7 Respect the privacy of the young person and adhere to any applicable privacy laws
- 6.8 Seek the young person’s express consent before disclosing their information to any third party

⁴ African Proverb

7 PROVIDE ORGANISATIONAL SUPPORT FOR THE DELIVERY OF EFFECTIVE CAREER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

In order for these guidelines to be most effective, staff working directly with young people with disability must be able to operate in a flexible and supportive workplace. Staff need access to appropriate training, information and resources to deliver an effective service, with the unique needs of the client being the primary determinant of need.

- 7.1 Advocate to policy-makers and administrative personnel for the development of career development programs and services that are relevant to the needs of young people with disability
- 7.2 Ensure that staff are adequately trained and have access to ongoing professional development
- 7.3 Ensure that staff have access to appropriately modified career information and career development resources that promote effective practices for young people with disability
- 7.4 Seek the feedback of young people with disability and their networks and use it to continuously improve programs and services

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

The Australian Blueprint for Career Development

To help young people develop career management skills, you may find the *Australian Blueprint for Career Development* useful. A framework for designing, implementing and evaluating career development programs for young people and adults, the *Blueprint* identifies eleven career management competencies (comprising skills, knowledge, values and attitudes) that individuals need to effectively manage multiple learning and work transitions throughout their lives

For more information on the Blueprint visit <http://www.blueprint.edu.au>

A professional development kit for working with young people with the Blueprint is available to download from the Blueprint website at:

<http://www.blueprint.edu.au/TheToolkit/UsingtheBlueprintwithYoungPeople.aspx>

There are also a range of worksheets, case studies and tools that practitioners may find helpful in the Toolkit section of the Blueprint website.

Australian Career Development Studies

<http://www.career.edu.au>

Australian Career Development Studies is a suite of learning materials available to those wishing to gain qualifications in Career Development Studies. The learning materials can be downloaded from this website, however an appropriate training provider will need to be located course delivery and assessment.

Australian Employers Network on Disability

<http://www.employersnetworkondisability.com.au/>

This website contains a series of fact sheets concerning job searching, worker rights and employer-employee communications

Australian Disability Clearinghouse on Education and Training

<http://www.adcet.edu.au>

This website provides information to assist people with a disability move from school into training and higher education, and then into their chosen career.

Australian Government Career and Transition Programs

<http://www.deewr.gov.au/Schooling/CareersandTransitions/Pages/default.aspx>

There are a number of career and transition programs on the DEEWR website that service young people with special needs.

Australian Job Search

<http://www.jobsearch.gov.au/>

This is a government job database enabling people to find jobs, post resumes and receive daily emails regarding jobs they may be interested in. This site also provides free recruitment services for employers and agencies.

Australian Human Rights Commission

<http://www.humanrights.gov.au/>

The Commission's goal is to foster greater understanding and protection of human rights in Australia and address the human rights concerns of a broad range of individuals and groups.

Career Industry Council of Australia (CICA)

<http://www.cica.org.au/>

CICA is the national peak body for the career development industry in Australia. CICA promotes and supports the lifelong and life-wide career development of all Australians through its involvement in policy development and practice implementation.

Disclosure of Disability

<http://pubsites.uws.edu.au/ndco/disclosure/>

Choosing Your Path. Disclosure: It's A Personal Decision is a resource which provides substantial information about options and pathways that people with disabilities can use in disclosing their disability in post secondary education and employment environments.

Employability Skills Framework

<http://www.auckland.ac.nz/webdav/site/central/shared/for/current-students/career-planning/university-careers-service/career-planning-and-researching/steps-to-take-planning-your-career/documents/employability%20survey.pdf>

Outlines the attributes employers look for when hiring people, and the skills required to gain employment, progress one's career and achieve one's potential. Education and training providers, students and the community at large use this framework.

Guiding Principles for Career Development Services and Career Information Products

<http://www.cica.org.au/practitioners/guiding-principles>

The Guiding Principles provide a framework against which career development service providers and career information publishers can assess and evaluate the processes and products they use.

Indigenous Portal

<http://www.indigenous.gov.au/>

An Australian Government website with links to resources, contacts, information, and government programs and services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

JobAccess

<http://jobaccess.gov.au/>

JobAccess is an information and advice service funded by the Australian Government. It offers help and workplace solutions for people with disability and their employers.

Job Guide

<http://jobguide.deewr.gov.au>

The Job Guide provides information on a vast range of occupations and their education training pathways.

Professional Standards for Australian Career Development Practitioners

<http://www.cica.org.au/practitioners/standards>

This resource defines the career industry, its membership and services, providing a foundation for designing career practitioner training. The Professional Standards establish a benchmark against which career practitioners can be assessed and evaluated.

Job Services Australia

<http://www.deewr.gov.au/EMPLOYMENT/JSA/Pages/default.aspx>

This is a national network of private and community organisations dedicated to finding jobs for unemployed people, particularly the long-term unemployed. Whether you are a job seeker or employer, this site provides information about how Job Services Australia members can help you.

myfuture

<http://www.myfuture.edu.au>

Provides information about career planning and education, and training options for Australian jobs.

National Disability Coordination Officers (NDCO)

<http://www.deewr.gov.au/Skills/Programs/Support/NDCO/Pages/default.aspx>

A national network of NDCOs operates within 31 regions throughout Australia to improve the coordination and delivery of support services to help make it easier to enrol or participate in post-school education, training and employment. The NDCOs provide practical assistance and advice to assist people with disability gain access to and successfully complete post school education and training, and employment.

ReCaP – Resource for Career Practitioners

<http://www.deewr.gov.au/Schooling/CareersandTransitions/CareerDevelopment/Resources/Pages/ReCaP.aspx>

This resource is designed for people who provide information, guidance, support and advice to students and clients on career development.

APPENDIX B: ASSESSMENT TOOL

PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	HOW WELL DOES YOUR ORGANISATION MEET THIS PERFORMANCE INDICATOR? ⁵	EVIDENCE/ACTIONS BEING TAKEN
<i>1. Be responsive to the unique aspirations and developmental needs of each young person</i>		
<i>1.1. Deal with young people with disability fairly, equitably and without prejudice, respecting their culture, values, beliefs and life-experiences and those of their families and the communities to which they belong</i>		

⁵**Not at all** – your organisation does not meet the performance indicator, and there is currently no action being taken to address the issue; **Working towards** – your organisation is aware of the issue and is taking action to meet this performance indicator; **Adequately** – your organisation meets the performance indicator; **Exceeds** – your organisation meets the performance indicator and seeks continual improvement; **Not applicable** – please provide evidence for why you believe this performance indicator is not applicable to your organisation.



PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	HOW WELL DOES YOUR ORGANISATION MEET THIS PERFORMANCE INDICATOR? ⁵	EVIDENCE/ACTIONS BEING TAKEN
<p>1.2. <i>Ensure that the young person is at the centre of all career development activities</i></p>		
<p>1.3. <i>Assist the young person to identify for themselves the things which motivate and create satisfaction and well being in their lives, and those which create frustration and dissatisfaction</i></p>		
<p>1.4. <i>Discuss the nature and functional impacts of the young person's disability, and work with the young person to identify strategies and adjustments which may be implemented to overcome any potential education or workplace challenges</i></p>		



PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	HOW WELL DOES YOUR ORGANISATION MEET THIS PERFORMANCE INDICATOR? ⁵	EVIDENCE/ACTIONS BEING TAKEN
<p>1.5. <i>Encourage and assist the young person to develop the skills they need to be directly involved in their own exploration and decision-making processes</i></p>		
<p>1.6. <i>Explore and examine the full range of career and employment options with the young person, including further education and/or training, supported employment in a social enterprise (where this may be appropriate) and open employment, including self-employment</i></p>		
<p>1.7. <i>Avoid making decisions assumed to be best for the young person based on the personal values or beliefs of the practitioner or service provider</i></p>		



PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	HOW WELL DOES YOUR ORGANISATION MEET THIS PERFORMANCE INDICATOR? ⁵	EVIDENCE/ACTIONS BEING TAKEN
<p>1.8. <i>Accept the rights of the young person to make independent choices and to take responsibility for those choices and their consequences</i></p>		
<p>1.9. <i>In cases where a young person's preferred learning or work option is not possible, examine the underlying reasons for this choice and use this information to inform the development of a range of alternative options for exploration</i></p>		
<p>1.10. <i>Ensure that there is sufficient flexibility in the structure and delivery of programs to allow young people to progress at their own pace</i></p>		
<p>2. <i>Encourage and equip young people to be self-managing and self-determining individuals</i></p>		



PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	HOW WELL DOES YOUR ORGANISATION MEET THIS PERFORMANCE INDICATOR? ⁵	EVIDENCE/ACTIONS BEING TAKEN
<p><i>2.1. Challenge, encourage and support young people to realise their full potential</i></p>		
<p><i>2.2. Engage young people in activities that build their confidence and self esteem</i></p>		
<p><i>2.3. Encourage young people to ask appropriate questions in education, the workplace and related settings</i></p>		



PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	HOW WELL DOES YOUR ORGANISATION MEET THIS PERFORMANCE INDICATOR? ⁵	EVIDENCE/ACTIONS BEING TAKEN
<p><i>2.4. Examine the benefits and drawbacks of disclosure of disability in educational and workplace settings, allowing the young person to determine their preferred course of action</i></p>		
<p><i>2.5. Assist young people to develop the self-management skills needed to obtain and maintain employment, such as self-marketing, interacting with co-workers or asking for help when needed</i></p>		
<p><i>2.6. Assist young people to understand their rights and responsibilities in the workplace and how best to advocate for themselves</i></p>		



PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	HOW WELL DOES YOUR ORGANISATION MEET THIS PERFORMANCE INDICATOR? ⁵	EVIDENCE/ACTIONS BEING TAKEN
<p>2.7. <i>Where necessary, assist the young person to develop the life skills required for independent living, by accessing appropriate services and agencies. This might include learning how to access transport to get to and from work, or financial management skills</i></p>		
<p>2.8. <i>Assist young people with disability to develop the skills necessary to identify, discuss and request appropriate workplace and/or learning supports and adjustments with potential employers and education and training providers</i></p>		
<p>3. <i>Assist clients to locate and arrange suitable work experience activities</i></p>		
<p>3.1. <i>Assist young people with disability to locate and arrange suitable work experience activities</i></p>		



PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	HOW WELL DOES YOUR ORGANISATION MEET THIS PERFORMANCE INDICATOR? ⁵	EVIDENCE/ACTIONS BEING TAKEN
<p>3.2. <i>Proactively seek workplace experiences for young people with disability</i></p>		
<p>3.3. <i>Ensure young people with disability are well prepared and feel comfortable before entering a workplace</i></p>		
<p>3.4. <i>Engage potential employers early in career planning activities to ensure both the young person and the employer are aware of each other's needs and expectations</i></p>		



PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	HOW WELL DOES YOUR ORGANISATION MEET THIS PERFORMANCE INDICATOR? ⁵	EVIDENCE/ACTIONS BEING TAKEN
<p>3.5. <i>Assist young people to arrange any necessary training, certification or security checks which may be required before commencing work</i></p>		
<p>3.6. <i>Ensure employers are aware of the supports available to them when employing people with disability, including financial assistance to make necessary adjustments in the workplace</i></p>		
<p>3.7. <i>Monitor closely the workplace experiences of young people until you are confident that the young person is fully supported in their placement</i></p>		
<p>4. <i>Actively create, expand and engage the support networks of young people</i></p>		



PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	HOW WELL DOES YOUR ORGANISATION MEET THIS PERFORMANCE INDICATOR? ⁵	EVIDENCE/ACTIONS BEING TAKEN
<p>4.1. <i>Encourage young people to identify significant people in their life—such as parents, other family members, friends, teachers, social workers, community members, healthcare workers and other service providers— who can assist them to develop their careers</i></p>		
<p>4.2. <i>Assist young people and their parents to develop and then utilise their own personal support network</i></p>		
<p>4.3. <i>Assist support network members to understand the particular roles they might play in the career development of the young person</i></p>		



PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	HOW WELL DOES YOUR ORGANISATION MEET THIS PERFORMANCE INDICATOR? ⁵	EVIDENCE/ACTIONS BEING TAKEN
<p>4.4. <i>Encourage all members of the young person’s support network to hold high and realistic expectations for the young person</i></p>		
<p>4.5. <i>Where necessary, seek to align the aspirations of members of the support network with those of the young person</i></p>		
<p>5. <i>Make career information available in a format that is easily accessible to young people with disability</i></p>		
<p>5.1. <i>Make sure that the language used in publications and documents is clear and easily understandable for both young people and members of their support networks, particularly parents</i></p>		



PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	HOW WELL DOES YOUR ORGANISATION MEET THIS PERFORMANCE INDICATOR? ⁵	EVIDENCE/ACTIONS BEING TAKEN
<p>5.2. <i>Wherever possible, make sure that electronic information is made available in hardcopy format at the client's request</i></p>		
<p>5.3. <i>Make information available in a range of formats, according to the specific needs of clients</i></p>		
<p>5.4. <i>Discuss written information with young people and their immediate support network to ensure that it is understood</i></p>		



PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	HOW WELL DOES YOUR ORGANISATION MEET THIS PERFORMANCE INDICATOR? ⁵	EVIDENCE/ACTIONS BEING TAKEN
<p>5.5. <i>Explain the content, purposes, potential benefits and results of any planned activities in a manner easily understood by the person or persons for whom they are intended</i></p>		
<p>5.6. <i>Ensure that material contained in web-based programs, resource materials and career development programs is current and accurate</i></p>		
<p>6. <i>Develop strong working relationships with other relevant agencies and service providers</i></p>		
<p>6.1. <i>Identify other services young people are accessing (such as school, disability employment services, healthcare and/or community services) and the ways they may also facilitate the career development of the young person</i></p>		



PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	HOW WELL DOES YOUR ORGANISATION MEET THIS PERFORMANCE INDICATOR? ⁵	EVIDENCE/ACTIONS BEING TAKEN
<p>6.2. <i>Identify any gaps in service delivery and develop a local network of providers offering these services for appropriate referral</i></p>		
<p>6.3. <i>Involve agencies and individuals that can assist the client with achieving their career goals in planning activities (e.g. Employment Pathways Planning, Personal Pathway Planning)</i></p>		
<p>6.4. <i>Refer the young person to more suitable professionals when your own skills and experience do not meet the young person's needs, or when you are unable to continue service delivery</i></p>		



PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	HOW WELL DOES YOUR ORGANISATION MEET THIS PERFORMANCE INDICATOR? ⁵	EVIDENCE/ACTIONS BEING TAKEN
<p>6.5. <i>Ensure appropriate levels of support are available at times of transition and referral between agencies</i></p>		
<p>6.6. <i>Cooperate with other professionals and/or colleagues according to your organisation's code of conduct and any other ethical practices and procedures relevant to the situation</i></p>		
<p>6.7. <i>Respect the privacy of the young person and adhere to any applicable privacy laws</i></p>		



PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	HOW WELL DOES YOUR ORGANISATION MEET THIS PERFORMANCE INDICATOR? ⁵	EVIDENCE/ACTIONS BEING TAKEN
<p>6.8. <i>Seek the young person's express consent before disclosing their information to any third party</i></p>		
<p>7. <i>Provide organisational support for the delivery of effective career development programs and services</i></p>		
<p>7.1. <i>Advocate to policy-makers and administrative personnel for the development of career development programs and services that are relevant to the needs of young people with disability</i></p>		
<p>7.2. <i>Ensure that staff are adequately trained and have access to ongoing professional development</i></p>		



PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	HOW WELL DOES YOUR ORGANISATION MEET THIS PERFORMANCE INDICATOR? ⁵	EVIDENCE/ACTIONS BEING TAKEN
<p><i>7.3. Ensure that staff have access to appropriately modified career information and career development resources that promote effective practices for young people with disability</i></p>		
<p><i>7.4. Seek the feedback of young people with disability and their networks and use it to continuously improve programs and services</i></p>		





APPENDIX C: EDGE EMPLOYMENT SOLUTIONS CASE STUDY

TRIAL SITE CONTEXT

EDGE Employment Solutions is a large Disability Employment Service provider operating in Perth, Western Australia. Edge employs approximately 75 staff, assists around 600 job seekers per year, and also houses the WA National Disability Coordination Officers.

One of the programs run by EDGE is the Supported Work Experience and Training program, commonly known as the SWEAT program. This program provides support to approximately 120 school students with disability per year. Program Coordinators support students to locate work experience in the open labour market, ideally with a view to this becoming an apprenticeship or traineeship. Support and advice is also provided to employers about the range of initiatives available to support the placement of workers with disability.

HOW THE GUIDELINES WERE USED

EDGE set out to review their services, in particular the SWEAT program, against the guidelines to discover the areas in which they are currently performing well and those where there may be room for improvement.

HOW THE WORK WAS CARRIED OUT

The SWEAT program was reviewed by members of the SWEAT team against the CICA guidelines to identify whether the program met the performance indicators of the Guidelines, by providing appropriate evidence where they did.

This review was spearheaded by the SWEAT Coordinator who attended the initial workshop, through consultations with the program manager and members of the SWEAT team.

WHAT WAS DISCOVERED

During the review it was discovered that the CICA guidelines closely reflect the Disability Service Standards that EDGE, and indeed all Disability Employment Service providers, are required to follow.

However, while similar, the guidelines' focus on career development, as opposed to employment placement, helps service providers to see how their services and programs contribute to career development and where they can be improved in this regard. Currently the policy context for Disability Employment Services does not encourage the career development of individuals. It is placement into employment - as quickly as possible - that is encouraged by current contractual arrangements.

Ultimately, EDGE and the SWEAT program in particular, were found to follow all of the guidelines to some extent. Two areas for potential improvement were also

identified through this process, both of which relate to Guideline 7, which stresses the importance of:

Provid(ing) organisational support for the delivery of effective career development programs and services.

Performance indicator 7.2 states: *Ensure that staff are adequately trained and have access to ongoing professional development.* While all staff at EDGE had completed the necessary Disability Services training, and have access to ongoing professional development in that field, there were currently no staff members with qualifications in career development.

As a result of their review of the SWEAT program against the CICA Guidelines, the possibility of SWEAT coordinators completing a Certificate IV in Career Development is being considered by EDGE management, as a way of improving their ability to assist job seekers and add value to their program.

Performance indicator 7.4 states: *Seek the feedback of young people with disability and their networks and use it to continuously improve programs and services.* This was the only indicator that the service did not already meet. However, at the time of review EDGE were already addressing this and were in the process of reinstating the use of formalised feedback sheets and meetings with job seekers when they completed their work placement.

“Overall the guidelines have enabled us as an organisation to examine our services and programs and ask our selves ‘do we do this?’ Happily we have found that we can answer yes on most counts!”

APPENDIX D: KENSINGTON SECONDARY SCHOOL CASE STUDY

TRIAL SITE CONTEXT

Kensington Secondary School is the only secondary education support school in Western Australia. The school employs 35 staff, both full-time and in part-time positions, with 40 students from Year 8 to Year 12 enrolled in 2012.

Students attending Kensington have a range of education support needs, and come from a wide range of cultural and linguistic backgrounds, which are catered for on an individual basis.

The school aims to provide a learning environment that will develop student potential to the maximum level focussing on effective communication; technical and employability skills training; and independence.

HOW THE GUIDELINES WERE USED

Staff at the school were keen to participate, however they had very little time available to carry out an in-depth trial of the guidelines. Therefore, an intensive workshop with Miles Morgan and Kensington Secondary staff in attendance was arranged to collaboratively review the guidelines. The workshop aimed to assess Kensington's career development practice against the guidelines, identify any areas, either of Kensington's activities or of the guidelines themselves, which are particularly effective, or where there might be room for improvement.

The main aim of this activity was to provide feedback on the useability of the guidelines and their applicability in the secondary school context.

HOW THE WORK WAS CARRIED OUT

Rather than attempt to formally trial the guidelines Miles Morgan and the school's Deputy-Principal and VET Coordinator worked together to review the services and activities the school currently offers using the guidelines as a benchmark for effective practice.

This provided an opportunity for staff to reflect on each of the guidelines and how they applied in the school context and to provide comprehensive feedback on each of the guidelines in terms of their suitability for the school context.

The review meeting was held on site, and Kensington staff reviewed each of the guidelines and associated performance indicators, providing examples to demonstrate how their career preparation activities met the guidelines.

WHAT WAS DISCOVERED

Reviewing the guidelines provided an opportunity for Kensington staff to discuss how the programs and activities they offer facilitate the career development of their students and reinforced for them the quality of the programs they offer.

THE SUITABILITY OF THE GUIDELINES

Kensington staff did not identify any obvious gaps in their service provision. However, they did find that some guidelines needed to be adapted slightly to be applicable in their particular context. For example, given the severe, profound and multiple learning disabilities of many students at Kensington, advocacy rather than self-management and self-determination, as suggested by Guideline 2: *Encourage and equip young people to be self-managing and self-determining individuals*, was seen as more critical to the well-being of students in some situations, particularly for those with reduced executive functions.

More specifically, feedback from school staff on performance indicator 2.3 *Encourage young people to ask appropriate questions in education, the workplace and related settings* pointed out that for some students this would not be possible and in these instances staff advocate for the student in the workplace and ensure appropriate supports are in place, although they also work toward the student becoming increasingly independent and / or comfortable with the supports offered by their employer.

While each of the guidelines was considered to be important, the critical importance of Guideline 3: *Assist clients to locate and arrange suitable work experience activities*, was reinforced by staff at Kensington.

The importance of a work experience program that is flexible and adaptable to individual student needs was considered critical for the 15-25 year age group, and in particular for the students attending Kensington, as they need time to acquire the skills required to enter a workplace. The curriculum at Kensington Secondary School has a strong focus on equipping young people for work, through a series of preparatory experiences.

Many students at Kensington learn best by doing, and so they are offered the (ASDAN) *Workright*⁶ program from year 8 at the school, where they experience first-hand the requirements of a workplace, including needing to be on time, formal work hours, organisational skills and so on. The school also has a simulated work environment on campus. Students learning in this environment gain an idea of what work is like before going to real worksites, easing the transition for both the student and their new employer.

Starting early in year 8 allows the students to learn basic work skills, such as time management (such as setting an alarm and getting to work on time), how to position themselves appropriately for the work activity, personal hygiene, etc. Some students pick these skills up immediately, while others can take three to four years. Progression to real workplaces depends on the individual student's abilities, though ideally this starts in early year 11.

Once they are ready to experience a real workplace they are offered opportunities to experience several workplaces so they can explore their likes and dislikes before making a final decision on what they want to do post year 12. For some students, year

⁶ http://www.asdan.org.uk/Award_Programmes/Workright

13 provides further opportunities to explore options and further develop their workplace skills if they aren't yet ready for the workplace.

The system that Kensington uses has been proven to work. When organising new work experience placements, the VET Coordinator will often see former Kensington students at the workplace. For example, Activ is their biggest employer and approximately 20% of Activ's employees are ex-Kensington students.

“Sometimes the lowest expectations are with the parents. Because they don't see what the students are learning and doing at school and in work placements, they may not realise what their child is capable of. As students near graduation it is not unheard for parents to come to the school worried about what their child will do now that school is finishing. In many cases their child is completely capable of working, and may even have a job lined up after work experience placements.”

APPENDIX E: CENTRAL INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY CASE STUDY

TRIAL SITE CONTEXT

Central Institute of Technology is one of ten state training providers in Western Australia. They have approximately 400 VET courses on offer, with over 29,000 students and 1,300 staff across five campuses in the hub of Perth's cultural and business districts.

Two Career Counsellors from Central's career service, *JobsCentral*, and the Disability Services Coordinator from their *Access and Equity* support service reviewed and trialled CICA's *Guidelines for Facilitating the Career Development of Young People with Disability*.

JobsCentral offers a range of free career services to all current, future and recently graduated students at Central, including face-to-face counselling sessions, the use of career exploration tools and online career programs.

The *Access and Equity* support services include:

- alternate methods of assessment and examination
- consultation about realistic vocational choices
- audio and large print resources
- interpreting and note-taking
- organising adaptive technology
- individual problem solving
- adaptive technology
- furniture adjustments
- assistance with access to buildings and classrooms.

HOW THE GUIDELINES WERE USED

The Central team set out to review their services against Guideline 1: *Be responsive to the unique aspirations and developmental needs of each young person*. By limiting the focus to one guideline, the team hoped to be able to produce a more focused and detailed review.

Each of the performance indicators were reviewed by the Career Counsellors in collaboration with the Disability Services Coordinator. As each indicator was examined and confirmed as being met by their services, evidence was provided, in the form of specific policies and practices in place at Central. The resulting product is the beginning of a document which could be used as an induction aid for new staff.

The team also developed a case study, illustrating some of the ways the guidelines are addressed at Central when working with students with disability in a counselling scenario.

CASE STUDY: THE GUIDELINES IN ACTION

Student X is a 17-year old male student, who enrolled in a Certificate IV in Residential Drafting after completing year 12, as he enjoyed computer drafting at

school. He met all of the entry requirements, was a competitive applicant for his course of choice and received a full time offer to study. The student was referred to a Career Counsellor by the academic area after week 6 as it was noted that he had become disengaged and seemed overwhelmed by the requirements of full-time study.

In the initial screening process over the phone, discussions with the student's advocate (parent) highlighted that the student had been diagnosed at the age of 15 with Asperger's Syndrome (High Functioning Autism), but that he had not self-identified this to Central prior to this discussion.

With the consent of the student and his parent (*Performance Indicator 6.8*) Central's Disability Services Coordinator was invited to attend the student's initial face-to-face counselling session (*Performance Indicator 6.3*). During the counselling session, Student X appeared withdrawn, was at times non-responsive and lacked clarity regarding career direction. The student also had a lack of maturation not unusual in a young person who has recently left school. He displayed characteristics associated with Asperger's Syndrome, such as social difficulty, lack of social-emotional reciprocity and poor nonverbal communication. The functional impacts of these characteristics were discussed, and the student's inability to communicate his needs or difficulties to lecturers and his limited capacity for building relationships and socially engaging with peers and academic staff were identified (*Performance Indicator 1.4*).

Given the student's overall lack of maturity, along with some of the functional impacts of his disability, it was decided that a Certificate IV entry point for this student was not appropriate. Taking into account the student's enjoyment of computer drafting and strengths in practical, "hands on" element of the Certificate IV, a Certificate III in the same qualification and a Certificate III in Technical Drafting were explored as possible alternatives (*Performance Indicator 1.9*). These Certificate III courses also had the additional benefit of being designed to ensure theory units are supported with equal time in the workshop, where theoretical concepts and underpinning knowledge is built on and re-enforced. Student X and his parent were referred to the principal lecturer of the area to discuss the suitability of this option.

Central staff offered information to the student and his advocate on the range of supports available to students who have identified they have a disability and may require additional support (*Performance Indicator 2.4*). The Disability Service Coordinator also recommended a range of reasonable adjustments and supports (*Performance Indicator 2.8*), such as load reduction, flexible delivery and assessment, advocacy and liaison and study support, which could be tailored to suit the student's strengths, weaknesses and learning style (*Performance Indicator 1.10*). In particular, a load reduction was suggested that focused on the course subjects Student X enjoyed and in which he had demonstrated ability.

Ultimately, Student X withdrew from the Certificate IV in Residential Drafting and on exit was provided with information regarding mid-year entry to further studies in the same field and provided with an offer of referral to agencies which assist people with disability and medical conditions with seeking employment, apprenticeships and traineeships (*Performance Indicator 6.4*).

WHAT WAS DISCOVERED

The activities undertaken in relation to trialling these guidelines by staff from Central Institute of Technology demonstrate the breadth of scope of the guidelines. Staff from both *the career services and access and equity areas of the college* found them to be useful tool for reflecting on the effectiveness of their current practices when working with young people with disability.

The trial of these guidelines was conducted over a short timeframe, which necessitated the case study covering only the student's first contact and initial counselling session with the *JobsCentral* and *Access and Equity* services. As such, not all aspects of the guidelines were applicable to the scenario described in the case study above. However, it is likely that over a longer period, with multiple counselling sessions, there would be increased opportunities to incorporate activities addressing more of the guidelines.

Further, using the guidelines has resulted in an unexpected output, with the creation of an internal document at Central which, when finalised, will serve as a useful induction tool for staff.

Significantly, the partnership that has been established between these two areas of the college has the potential to grow and strengthen over time.

“Young people and their carers need to be assisted to understand the functional impacts their disability has on learning and work, once these are understood we can assist the young person to overcome them through the introduction of reasonable adjustments”