Western Australian Guidelines for Career Development and Transitions

For use by career practitioners working in, or with, schools
The Western Australian Guidelines for Career Development and Transitions were developed in response to the National Framework for Career and Transition Services between the Department of Education Western Australia, the Association of Independent Schools of Western Australia and the Catholic Education Office of Western Australia. This version of the guidelines has been updated to reflect the current climate, and outlines an approach by schools to assist students in managing the various stages of transition.

To make effective transitions through school and on to further education, training and employment, students require access to information and suitably qualified people to assist them in this process. Before making and implementing decisions about careers, students also need to develop a knowledge and understanding of themselves in relation to the workforce and need to be aware of current labour market trends. This includes consolidating the skills required to learn further, as well as recognising and developing employability skills through the course of their everyday learning at school, in employment and training pathways, at home and in the community.

The objective is to provide students with access to career development services and information that will assist them to make informed choices about learning, work and life opportunities. These guidelines present a range of options which could be implemented to support young people in making effective transitions and can be used as a tool to assist schools in planning for, and providing, services and information to support this process.

School leadership support, strategic plan inclusion and the dedication of all school staff significantly improve the quality of career development provided so should be encouraged wherever possible. As part of this ongoing commitment, career development and transition programs and services should be reviewed and evaluated on a regular basis, as the changing circumstances of individuals, schools and the labour market may require program revision to meet specific needs.

Sharyn O’Neill
Director General
Department of Education
Western Australia

Valerie Gould
Executive Director
Association of Independent Schools of Western Australia

Ron Dullard
Director
Catholic Education Office of Western Australia
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This updated version of the guidelines has been developed by the Association of Independent Schools of Western Australia (AISWA), the Catholic Education Office of Western Australia (CEOWA) and the Department of Education Western Australia (DoE) with funding provided under the National Partnerships on Youth Attainment and Transitions (NP YAT). The NP YAT, administered by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, aims to assist young people to make a successful transition from school to a variety of post-school options including further education, training and employment.

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DISCLAIMER

The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent the views of the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations.
The purpose of career development and transition programs and services is to ensure that all students are equipped and supported to:

- make informed choices about learning, work and life opportunities and take personal responsibility for those choices;
- develop, implement, review and adapt action strategies to optimise learning, work and life choices; and
- access relevant and timely information and networks.
There is a growing recognition that, in the light of global competition and ever more rapid technological change, one of the main keys to a country’s success lies in the ability of its people to build and manage their skills. Included in these are career planning, job search and other career management skills. From this perspective, career development programs and services have the potential to contribute significantly to the ongoing growth and development of our nation.

Career development is about actively creating the life one wants to live and the work one wants to do. It is a continuous process which acknowledges the notion of lifelong learning. An integral component of this process is self management through the ever changing contexts and circumstances of an individual’s life and work journeys.

School students require access to information and suitably qualified people to assist them in making effective transitions through school and from school to further education, training and/or employment. The key decisions which students make about jobs, courses and career paths require career information which is informed by current labour market trends.

Students need to develop knowledge and understanding of themselves in relation to the changing world of work before making and implementing decisions about careers. Suitably qualified career practitioners can assist students to develop such knowledge and understanding through the use of a wide range of tools and techniques.

All students need to consolidate the skills required for lifelong learning. They need to develop employability skills and enterprising attributes through the course of their everyday learning at school, in employment and training pathways, at home and in the community.

Satisfying the needs of students is the driving force behind the design and operation of any school program. All students need to be empowered and supported to develop skills in managing their own careers.

Career development and transition programs and services aim to meet the needs of students by:

- encouraging students to value and actively engage in their learning and develop individual pathway plans;
- providing students with opportunities to develop appropriate skills to effectively manage their own career development;
- presenting general career guidance and support at key transition points during secondary schooling;
- providing comprehensive information regarding learning and work opportunities (including local opportunities);
- tracking students as they move through school and from school into post-school destinations;
- supporting students through youth mentoring, brokering or other appropriate assistance;
- facilitating support for those at risk of not effectively participating in education and training; and
- facilitating integrated specialist support for those facing substantial and multiple disadvantages that prevent them from engaging in education and training, and provide them with access to a range of specialist services to overcome barriers.

As all students engage with educational institutions, schools and/or other education and training providers should take a leading role by providing systematic and comprehensive approaches to assist students in managing their transition processes.

Schools and agencies should work closely together to ensure that students and their families are aware of the full range of support and information services available to them.
THREE – PRINCIPLES

OVERARCHING PRINCIPLES OF THE GUIDELINES

- Provide comprehensive career development and transition programs and services covering employment outcomes, social participation and active citizenship to students.
- Career development practitioners are encouraged to achieve at least minimum qualifications. Currency is maintained through continuing professional development. Membership of a professional association is recommended.
- A career development focus will assist schools to have a shared vision and sense of ownership with local partners at various levels.
- Existing career development frameworks including the Australian Blueprint for Career Development, the Professional Standards for Career Development Practitioners and the Guiding Principles for Career Development Services and Information Products underpin these guidelines.

ELEMENTS OF THE OVERARCHING PRINCIPLES

- Career development and transition programs and services in schools can play a key role in encouraging individuals to engage in ongoing career development and in ensuring that an individual’s decisions are based on current, accurate and comprehensive information.
- An effective career education program incorporates career awareness, career exploration and the development of career management skills.
- Students are responsible for the design, management and direction of career pathways as they are at the centre of transition arrangements.
- Individual career development and transition programs and services should:
  - consider prior learning and experiences;
  - recognise and reinforce the importance of self development and self management;
  - identify and address the learning styles of individuals;
  - respect the personal needs and circumstances of the individual; and
  - include a variety of transition arrangements tailored to the capacities and needs of students from all cultures and equity groups.
- Career development and transition programs and services are enriched by the active involvement of employers, parents and other stakeholders.
- Students should have opportunities to engage in experiential learning including course tasters and active experiences of the world of work through visits, workplace simulations, work shadowing or structured work placements.
- Recognising that while quality career information is essential for career decision making, many students may also need the support of skilled people to understand the information to relate it to their personal needs and to convert it into personal action.
- To inform future programs and services schools are encouraged to monitor and track the outcomes of career development and transition programs and services.
While career development must have a multidisciplinary approach in terms of delivery, best results are achieved when it is coordinated by a dedicated practitioner.

Career development and transition delivery include the following elements.

**ACCESS AND EQUITY**

Youth mentoring and case management are available for students who would benefit from a more intensive one on one approach.

This will ensure that:

- early recognition of issues for students at risk are addressed;
- disadvantaged students can be reflectively responded to and dealt with; and
- additional practical support packages for students with high support needs are available.

**CAREER EDUCATION**

Career education has an important role to play.

- Within the compulsory years of education: developing self awareness, knowledge and competencies regarding the world of work, and making decisions about transitions.
- Within the senior schooling years of education: being provided with effective advice and guidance on educational options (including links between these options and later occupational destinations) which will better match individuals’ learning choices to their interests, talents and intended destinations.
- Within learning: developing career management skills.

**CAREER INFORMATION, GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING**

This refers to services that assist all students to make educational, training and occupational choices and to manage their careers. It will incorporate a wide range of activities including:

- activities within schools to help students clarify career goals, understand the world of work and develop career management skills;
- personal advice, guidance or counselling to assist with decisions about initial courses, vocational training, further education and training and/or initial job choice;
- the organised and systematic use of community members such as employers, parents and peers to provide occupational and educational advice and information; and
- production and dissemination of a diverse range of information about jobs, careers, courses and vocational training to help individuals make career choices.

Career information, guidance and counselling services may:

- include the use of current industry based information;
- be provided in a variety of settings – educational institutions, employment organisations and providers, workplaces and community settings;
- be provided in a variety of sectors – public, private and community sectors;
- allocate an important role to informal and non-professional sources of information and guidance such as local employers, community members, parents and peers; and
- play a proactive role helping individuals to create new options as well as skills matching into existing jobs and courses.
FOUR – DELIVERY ELEMENTS

This implies:

- advocacy on an individual’s behalf, and support for their self advocacy;
- feedback to learning providers on learners’ unmet needs;
- encouraging and supporting career management skills; and
- facilitating initial educational and occupational choices.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT

- Career development will require a coordinated approach whereby all teachers support the career development practitioner to implement career education.
- The career development practitioner will liaise with school personnel to deliver career development and transition programs and services.
- A career development practitioner, with the support of individuals, agencies or organisations, will be available to assist students and teachers.

INDIVIDUAL PATHWAY AND EXIT PLANS

Students provide evidence of well considered decision making in presenting and reviewing their plans about work, learning and life goals and action planning strategies to achieve those goals.

MENTORING

Through youth mentoring relationships that align with the Australian Youth Mentoring Benchmarks, students are given opportunities to develop the tools, knowledge and networks necessary to achieve their career goals. This can be either informally or within a more structured program in school, training and/or workplace environments. Practical career guidance, support and encouragement are offered and, where feasible, interactions are initiated, monitored, supported and evaluated to ensure maximum benefit for all involved.

MONITORING AND TRACKING

Appropriate arrangements across service and institution boundaries are used to follow students as they move through school into post-school destinations. A monitoring and tracking system will:

- help identify students who become vulnerable or potentially at risk of not making a successful transition from school;
- assist schools to assess achievements in supporting student transitions; and
- provide a basis for evidence based planning to assist schools and community groups to refine programs and services.

This will include planning and developing in a systematic way to provide a monitoring system that allows schools to assess the success of their students’ transition achievements.
PLACEMENT OR REFERRAL

Students’ individual needs are addressed through the use of a range of services and organisations, both within, and external to, school.

This will help students access:

- a placement in education, training, employment or enterprise;
- accommodation or other required services;
- alternative education and/or training options; and
- counselling and advocacy.

POST-SCHOOL SUPPORT

Students will be assisted to identify and link with external support services able to provide ongoing career development support after the student transitions from the school environment.

TRANSITION PORTFOLIO

Students collect, organise and appropriately present evidence of their developing skills, personal qualities, interests, achievements and support strategies to optimise their learning, work and life goal outcomes.

This transition portfolio:

- promotes and facilitates career preparedness;
- details achievements and aspirations for their life, learning and work goals; and
- provides opportunities for reflection and re-assessment.

TRANSITION SUPPORT

- As far as possible, all transition programs and services should be designed to be available to students and parents on a self-help basis.
- Early intervention support strategies for students and school leavers who may require additional transition support should be identified and developed.
- Development of family, community, business and industry partnerships to optimise students’ and school leavers’ work, learning and life transitions.

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (VET), WORKPLACE LEARNING AND VOCATIONAL LEARNING

Students will have opportunities to participate in a range of experiences within each of these areas, dependent on interest and availability. This may include:

- completion of full qualifications, skills sets and/or single units of competency;
- work experience, work shadowing and/or workplace learning;
- on the job learning and/or skill development; and
- formal employment based training including school based traineeships/apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeships in schools programs.
CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Career development is the process of managing life, learning and work over a person’s lifespan. Researchers suggest that ‘career development involves one’s whole life, not just an occupation. It concerns the individual in the ever changing contexts of his and her life…self and circumstances – evolving, changing, unfolding in mutual interaction’ (Wolf and Kolb in McMahon, Patton and Tatham: 2003). Career development acknowledges and promotes the notion of lifelong learning.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND TRANSITION PLANNING

Career development programs aim to equip individuals with strategies and tools to manage transitions. In Western Australian schools career development and transition planning has three main elements:

- Individual Pathway Plan;
- Transition Portfolio; and
- Exit Plan.

CAREER INDUSTRY COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA (CICA)

The Career Industry Council of Australia (CICA) is the peak national body for career development in Australia. It represents national, state and territory non-profit career practitioner organisations. CICA promotes and supports lifelong and life wide career development of all Australians through its involvement in policy development and practice implementation.

EMPLOYMENT ORGANISATIONS AND PROVIDERS

This includes the Career Centre, Workforce Development Centres and Aboriginal Workforce Development Centres.

EXIT PLAN

An exit plan outlines the strategies for a student’s transition to post-school destinations including further education, training and employment. It is usually developed by young people with assistance from school and family, and may include strategies for attaining and maintaining work/life balance and personal fulfilment.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR CAREER DEVELOPMENT SERVICES AND INFORMATION PRODUCTS

The Guiding Principles provide a framework that can be used to assess and evaluate career development products and services.

INDIVIDUAL PATHWAY PLAN (IPP)

An individual pathway plan outlines how a student intends to explore, evaluate and identify the learning and work pathways available and can be used to highlight opportunities, record any career competencies developed and plan an individual’s transitions. It is a valuable tool for managing transitions.
PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS FOR CAREER DEVELOPMENT PRACTITIONERS

The Professional Standards were developed by CICA and represent the minimum standards required by Australian career development practitioners. More information is available from the CICA website (cica.org.au/practitioners/standards).

THE AUSTRALIAN BLUEPRINT FOR CAREER DEVELOPMENT (BLUEPRINT)

The Blueprint is a nationally developed framework for use in implementing career development. This framework:

• identifies life/learning/work competencies that assist individuals to proactively manage the career building process;
• provides a common language for career development initiatives and activities in any setting;
• provides administrators and practitioners with a systematic process to use to develop, implement, evaluate and market career development programs or redesign and enhance existing programs;
• enables individuals to determine the extent to which they have acquired competencies; and
• encourages career resource developers to design products, programs and services to address specific competencies, and users to identify and code resources.

TRANSITION PORTFOLIO

A transition portfolio is a student owned document used to record the development of skills and competencies and to inform the student’s transition planning process. It can assist education providers to develop the school/community (including business and industry) partnerships required to underpin successful transition strategies.

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (VET)

Vocational education and training refers to training that reflects industry competency standards and is delivered by a Registered Training Organisation (RTO). Achievement of competencies leads to a nationally recognised qualification under the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF).

VOCATIONAL LEARNING

Skills or knowledge related to a specific job or workplace role, whether paid or voluntary.

WORKPLACE LEARNING

Programs that enable students to be placed in a work environment to develop work based skills. This can be as part of work experience, accredited workplace learning, school-based traineeships or apprenticeships.

YOUTH MENTORING

Youth mentoring refers to ‘a structured and trusting relationship that brings young people together with caring individuals who offer guidance, support and encouragement’ (Australian Youth Mentoring Network, 2011). The definition emphasises the ‘structured’ nature of the relationship, but also recognises the important elements of ‘trust’, ‘guidance’, ‘support’ and ‘encouragement’.

YOUTH MENTORING BENCHMARKS

These refer to a set of standards that all youth mentoring programs are encouraged to follow. The Australian Youth Mentoring Benchmarks have recently been updated and are available on the Australian Youth Mentoring Network website (www.youthmentoring.org.au/benchmarks.html).