

Response to the Youth Jobs Strategy

Discussion Paper Questions

Principles of the Youth Jobs Strategy

For detail on the Principles refer to page 9 of the Discussion Paper.

Are these principles right or are there other best-practice principles that we should consider in our approach to this Strategy?

The CDAA TAS Division agree that these principles are sound and emphasise agency and voice from the young people that seek to benefit from the strategy. All of these principles would be enhanced through intervention from qualified career professionals. We would recommend consulting the Australian Blueprint for Career Development (ABCD) as a guide for the design of initiatives related to the Strategy. [Australian Blueprint for Career Development \(the Blueprint\) - Department of Education, Australian Government](#)

The transition from school to employment, if not managed well, can have long-term detrimental effects on future career prospects and overall productivity. If 30% of young people are unemployed, under-employed or in unsatisfactory employment, they are unlikely to achieve their potential. This could potentially mean that, as each cohort of young people enters and eventually progresses through the workforce, up to 30% of the total workforce could be underachieving, a severe drain on the economy.

Committee member, Rupert French (job search specialist and author) has provided some further comment:

1. Youth-centred and informed design is essential.

Young people make their own decisions anyway and will therefore more readily perform actions in which they have had a say. However, it is important that they make these decisions based on thorough knowledge of all the options open to them. For example, they would need to have a good understanding of the benefits of proactive search before deciding on the strategies to use for their campaign.

2. Young people can be at the centre of meeting the economy's productivity challenges if they are supported in the right way.

Not only would a job-ready young workforce boost the economy's productivity, reducing youth unemployment, under-employment, insecure and unsatisfactory employment would also improve mental health outcomes. While the official unemployment rate is low, young people are more likely to be unemployed than older Australians. Additionally, a high proportion are under-employed or working in areas outside the field of their education or training. And much of their employment is insecure.

This can result in poor mental health (<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/24567295/> and <https://bmcpublichealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12889-015-2313-1>), further unemployment and the likelihood of never achieving their potential.

(<https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/europpblog/2017/02/18/youth-unemployment-scarring-effects/>)

'There is convincing evidence that the effects of unemployment when young impose costs on

individuals and society well into the future.' (<https://academic.oup.com/oxrep/article-abstract/27/2/241/429358>)

3. **Leverage our place-based initiatives by encouraging young people to explore the opportunities available in their local community** as well as in the wider community. Those living in rural and regional areas may have exposure to a limited range of occupations. For example, through working on a school-community newspaper, a number of students at the Sheffield School went on to careers in journalism and printing, occupations which they would have been unlikely to have found had they not had exposure to the possibilities.
4. **Vocational Education and Training is valued as a great first option for many young people.** It is essential that VET is valued – and seen to be highly valued – by all teaching staff, parents and the wider community so that young people come to see it as a valid option.
5. **Success judged on outcomes for young people, not just on activity.** Success in an initiative of this sort is not going to happen overnight. It may take two or three years before significant results are seen but the long-term results will be outstanding.

Effective Youth Pathways Practice

Refer to Discussion Paper pages 14 and 15 for more detail

Do the common elements and phases in the table make sense? Are any one or two more important than others?

The common elements and phases make sense, but there is an absence of access to qualified career advice. The CDAA Tas Division suggests that, ideally, the person providing formal advice should be a qualified career practitioner. This provision of advice can then be supported with diverse stories, which might resonate with the young person and their lived experience. People give advice with good intentions but poor understanding of the current realities of the labour market and requirements for further education and training. Quality career guidance and support should come from qualified and experience practitioners. As such, Career Practitioners should be accessible during and post-school via employment service providers and other community-based services focused on young people. This service should be funded and/or subsidised so that young people who are not eligible for employment service provision can also access this expert guidance. Government funded initiatives should involve Career Practitioners in their design and implementation and/or ensure that staff are being informed through professional development from qualified career practitioners.

With the LMEE predictions demonstrating more workforce exits than entrants over the next 25 years, Tasmania will need to reap maximum productivity from young people entering the labour market. For this to occur, they must be fully prepared for the transition from education into employment and this transition should be structured in such a way that provides the greatest likelihood of young people achieving their full potential. Full preparation means making career education a core part of the curriculum, requiring increasing time and resource allocation as students progress through the school system, plus serious work-based learning and effective training in proactive job search methodology.

How can government, community, business, schools and industry support better connection and continuity of support across these elements?

The CDAA Tas Division would recommend brokering opportunities through the use of Career Practitioners, who can understand the perspectives of all stakeholders and support the appropriate matching, placement and post-placements of young people in work-related opportunities. Agreeing on unified measures of success here would remove barriers and conflict between these stakeholders. For example, schools are racing to meet curriculum expectations and don't always have capacity to host employers. Host employers want to gain access to students/potential candidates but aren't sure how to navigate the education system and/or access schools at appropriate times in the year.

The pathway from school to 'whatever comes next' looks different for everyone – we need a system that recognises and supports diverse experience and need.

What is the one thing that you believe could have the most positive impact on a young person's transition pathway from school to further study, training or employment?

Their attitude. If they know what sort of employment they are looking for, if they are confident that they could do it and do it well and if they are motivated by their choice, they will be highly attractive to prospective employers. This attitude is best generated through students 'developing an occupational identity' through effective career education from early years. (<https://www.yourcareer.gov.au/resources/articles/creating-an-effective-career-education-plan>)

Over several years of exposure to career education, students start to see themselves as successfully employed. As they get older, they refine their career path choices as they learn more about their chosen occupations. The more they find out about their prospective occupation, the easier it is for them to envisage themselves performing in the role. This boosts confidence and the motivation to develop the knowledge and skills required. A keen attitude!

Young people in our regions don't always have access to the same support, services and options as their metropolitan peers.

How can we improve access to services and support for young people in our regions?

The CDAA Tas Division suggests that students in regional and rural schools are unlikely to meet or experience the range of occupations available to students in city schools. It is therefore important that effort is made to ensure that country students are exposed to diverse occupations not available in their region. Some of this could be through online research but direct communication with people working in a selected occupation is more likely to make an impact. For example, excursions to industries and workplaces in urban environments, hospitals, hotels, ports, mines, engineering projects, creative enterprises including theatre, cinema, dance and music. Visits to ADF units – anything to make young people in regional and rural areas aware of the wide range of occupations open to them, because "You can't be what you can't see". Work-experience away from home can be very effective but requires a lot of organisation. There are serious safety issues which would need to be carefully considered, but opening the eyes of students in rural and regional schools is very important if they are going to have the greatest likelihood of achieving the career which would allow them to be most productive.

What type of support do our young people outside larger metro areas need to succeed?

The CDAA Tas Division would suggest better funding to engage qualified career practitioners, with a placed-based approach. Young people need support to develop their digital literacy skills so that they can access remote and flexible working opportunities, assuming they have reliable internet and a device(s). Employers might also be supported through a job redesign process where they can increase the flexibility and remote potential of their roles, so that young people in outside larger metro areas, who do have digital access and capability, can engage in employment in ways that meet their needs. This also addresses barriers such as travel and transport.

The barriers for young people are complex and can't be resolved in isolation.

How can the service systems better connect and respond to the complex needs of young people?

- Support from people that 'get it' but can also drive aspiration and connect young people to the wider work outside their immediate locality.
- Post-school destinations need to be better recorded and mapped and observed – to inform measures of success.
- Alumni programs, so that graduate students can still access support and guidance from their school-based career practitioners who know them best and/or warm handovers to appropriate community-based career guidance services.
- Seamless transitions – integrated and connected services. Young people may wonder – “How many times do I have to tell my story, before I get started on playing it out?”
- Supporting young people in career development does include housing, mental health etc. so it should be interconnected and case-managed by experts and professionals.
- An 'alignment of effort' sounds positive, and collaborative does not necessarily impact the individual and their particular needs, on the ground, on a daily basis, in the shortest term.

Some young people, such as those with disability or with caring responsibilities, need additional, targeted support to participate in the workforce.

What would unlock the ability for young Tasmanians with different needs to participate in work, education and training?

The CDAA Tas Division advocates culturally aligned ways of working with and supporting young people and recommends the provision of career guidance from people with lived experience of the barriers young people face. We also suggest working with employers to better support and create inclusive environments for young employees with additional barriers. Further suggestions include:

- Transition support in the workplace
- Induction support in the workplace
- Ongoing support in the workplace
- Mentoring
- Ongoing, supported career planning

In general, employers need to be supported to do better at creating inclusive environments for diverse young people. Sharing examples of better practice would be beneficial, and young people would be able to advise on what they find beneficial in terms of supports in the workplace. A willingness to adjust to generational differences and ways of working should be cultivated among all stakeholders to facilitate smoother transitions for young people from school to work.

How do young people get into work or training if they can't get to work or training?

What are some innovative approaches to address transport issues for young people that keep safety as the highest priority?

- Community and workplace car-pools.
- Mentors who are subsidised to transport young employees to and from work.
- Support to access remote and flexible work where they are digitally enabled.
- Free bus travel for young workers in their first 3-6 months of a new job.
- Youth helping youth – young people who can drive/have transport are subsidised to pick up other young people - “Work Uber”
- Flexible working arrangements that can accommodate changing access to transport – *what days can you get a lift? What can you do from home on other days?*
- Ensure the licensing requirements are not prohibitive (cost, access) for young people to become independent and to get on the road.

Young people don't know what they don't know or what they should know.

Where do young people currently get information from to support them to make decisions or connect to employment and training opportunities?

No response provided.

What does it take to be ‘job-ready’?

The CDAA Tas Division notes that being ‘job ready’ puts the full onus on the employee, but not the employer. Young people might wonder - *How can I be ‘job-ready’ if I have never engaged in work? Is this a reasonable expectation? Am I ‘marathon ready’ if I have never run that distance before?*

What this really describes is ‘potential’ which is subjective and intangible. There needs to be more onus on employers and industry peak bodies to take responsibility for developing job readiness in young people and to demonstrate this explicitly throughout career education interventions and work exposure and experience.

What can employers do to help build those work-readiness skills? Can you share any examples of best practice?

No response provided.

Try before you buy

What do (or should) quality work exposure activities look like for young people? What are some examples of this being done well?

A good example of this is Hamlet Inc. which is a Hobart-based social enterprise. Here, employer expectations are well-managed, and pathways as personalised.

Other ideas are:

- Young people employing young people.
- Business attached and supported by RTOs and educational institutions – not unlike the wrap-around support offered to young people in ASbAs/ApTSLs.
- Work exposure that supports diversity – not all students are ready for face-to-face work experience for a week. Some students need highly scaffolded approach to work exposure and experience to build their confidence over time.

Schools do work exposure well because they broker the placement, they provide a safe place to land, they have trusted networks of employers, they learn to (subconsciously) match students to workplace based on their interests and needs. Host employers need to be proactive, genuinely interested, and willing to slow down and demonstrate/educate when hosting a young person. Host employers should be working hard to market themselves to the students and inspire them to want to work there. What 'moments of truth' are being built into the experience to build trust and aspiration with young people?

A first job might only be the first step – young people need ongoing support and opportunities for continuous learning and development to maintain decent, meaningful work.

How do we balance and support work and learning for young people?

The CDAA Tas Division suggest:

- Programs and support services to build confidence in young people
- Access to ongoing career planning
- The proposition of work has to trump living off welfare.
- Industry should be informed by career practitioners, to do better with their career awareness programs. Foster potential, track talent, build trust over time and create a destination for suitable candidates post-school.
- (Example: The Schools Recommendation Program did wonders for the University of Tasmania brand among young people, and for increasing access and decreasing anxiety.

Industry and employers want young people to be part of their workforce – but they need help to make the connection.

How could your business or industry be better supported to provide opportunities for young people?

The CDAA Tas Division wonder; how are business using their social media marketing to effectively attract young people? How are they aligning themselves to the issues and causes that matter to young people? Businesses should be supported to gain access to students in schools more easily, but they need to have a strong product to sell in those moments. (No death-by-PowerPoint!) Businesses should think carefully about the spokespeople they put in front of young people and how they are representing their workplace and their industry. A scaffolded, graduated approach works well. Career Practitioners can help to navigate and address any intergenerational differences that may be causing additional barriers for employers or employees.

What information or resources are needed to make Tasmania's training system more accessible and streamlined?

No response provided.

Is there anything else that you would like to share with us?

Feel free to share anything else

No response provided.