

National Youth Employment Body

*Strengthening pathways to skilled entry
level work for young people*

System design workshop discussion paper – Agriculture & Horticulture

Tuesday September 7th 2021

We acknowledge the Wurrundjeri people of the Kulin nation, the traditional owners of the land on which this document was produced. We respect and honour Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders past, present and future. We acknowledge the stories, traditions and living cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples on this land and commit to building a brighter future together.



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This discussion paper has been prepared by:

- Youth Opportunity team (Research and Policy Centre); and
- Youth Transitions team (Community Programs)

If you have any questions please contact:

Kira Clarke, Senior Research Fellow | kira.clarke@bsl.org.au
Elle McLachlan, Manager NYEB | elle.mclachlan@bsl.org.au
Lisa Audsley, Senior Policy Advisor | lisa.audsley@bsl.org.au

The mission

To enable young people to build their capabilities for achieving a sustainable livelihood and to meet local workforce needs

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Introduction

The **National Youth Employment Body (NYEB) system design workshops** are a unique opportunity for stakeholders within the youth employment ecosystem of employers, industry, community, government, training and career systems to work together on a shared ambition to address youth unemployment.

Our approach to developing the workshops is grounded in BSL's "**systemic change**" model for progressing reform. The model aims to design and implement better systems over time through coordinated streams of effort. The methodology draws on over a decade of continuous learning from BSL's practice and research efforts across a range of policy areas and continues to be refined and tested.

Our starting principle is an '**Advantaged Thinking**' approach to working with young people. It is focused on identifying, developing and, most importantly, investing in the skills, capabilities and assets of young people so they can establish sustainable livelihoods beyond the service system, and it is a shift away from deficit, disadvantaged or problem-saturated thinking.

We aim to facilitate a **solutions and opportunities focused** conversation that looks beyond the structural barriers and limitations of the existing systems.

We look forward to hearing your insights and continuing the conversations from our consultations with you on the day.

"To change the system you need to show that something else works" (Industry)

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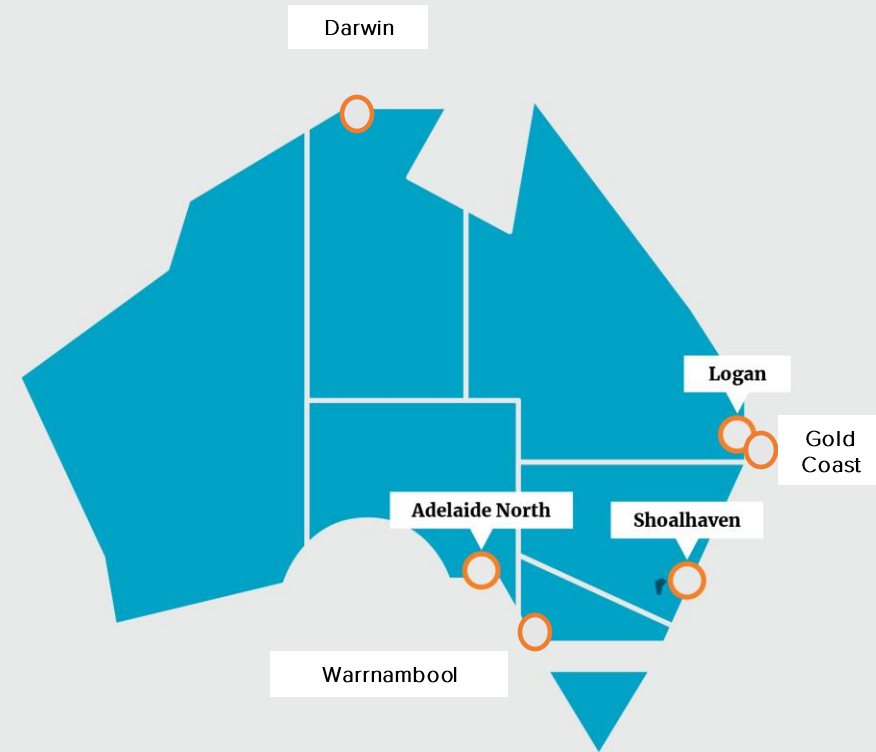
The National Youth Employment Body (NYEB) is a coalition of people and organisations invested in addressing youth unemployment through the development of local to national responses that meet the needs of young people and industry alike, and ultimately drive systems change.

Community Investment Committees

The NYEB has established local Community Investment Committees that mobilise key representatives from industry, VET, community, all levels of government and employment services.

Community Investment Committees develop and implement initiatives and training pathways that enable young people into meaningful work and build a skilled workforce for employers.

Community Investment Committees harness knowledge and resources; sustain and strengthen effective strategies and collaborative efforts in youth employment; and endure and adapt to new disruptions and opportunities through increased capacity to implement, monitor and advocate solutions.



“Youth need to know what the career opportunities are, where they can focus their wants and needs in career choices going forward” (Industry)

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Systemic Change and the National Youth Employment Body

What is the National Youth Employment Body (NYEB)?

An enabling organisation providing facilitative leadership with a coalition of people and organisations invested in driving solutions for youth employment. It advances local to national practice and policy responses that build the capabilities of young people and meet the needs of industry/employers in local communities.

What is the ambition of the NYEB?

- Aligning supply and demand side issues to youth unemployment.
- Policy reform of labour market, skills and vocational education tailored to local community needs and aspirations.
- Driving a coordinated and coherent national approach to youth employment.
- Harnessing community effort and resources to drive local employment solutions.
- Developing evidence and measures to demonstrate effective local to national solutions to youth unemployment.

What systemic problem is the NYEB seeking to address?

Persistently high youth unemployment and underemployment and systems that are unable or unfit to shift the dial due to:

- Changing labour market and a skills system that is not equipped to prepare young people or employers for current or future employment.
- Marketised, competitive employment service systems focused on fixed, short term outcomes and jobseeker compliance, over a person's interests and capabilities.
- Fragmented investment and expertise across sectors and levels of government.
- Disconnect between evidence on what works in youth employment and policies and programs.
- Misalignment between skills, employment and young people's aspirations.

What systemic change tools and levers does the NYEB use?

- Multi-stakeholder youth employment governance structures that drive and enable young people equitable access to decent work
- Community capacity building activities designed to facilitate co-production of youth employment solutions in local communities
- Advancing research field in systemic change methodology to address youth unemployment, through building data and evidence base
- An accessible national youth employment knowledge platform

“Good solutions are out there, but the risk is the investment and finding people who are willing to run with the concept” (Training)

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What are the National Youth Employment Body (NYEB) system design workshops: The journey

Entry to Care Skills Trial

Nov 2020-April 2021
Phase 1 piloting of the NYEB
Skilled Entry to Work Model

System design workshops

Aug-Sept 2021
Three workshops with thought leaders across the careers, training & employment service systems across the agriculture & horticulture, transport & logistics, and care sectors.

Long term - System change policy agenda

October 2021-onwards
To be informed from the outcomes of the system design process, and pursued through avenues including the NYEB Cross Government Community of Interest

Short/medium term - Phase 2 pilots

October 2021-onwards
Implementation in NYEB regions of next phase of *Skilled Entry to Work Model* pilots in the three industry sectors



BSL Youth pathways agenda

2009 >>>>

BSL practice, research & policy work foundational education, training and pathway to work.

NYEB phase 1

July 2019-Mar 2021

NYEB Phase 2

April 2021-Mar 2023

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Drawing on the thought leadership expertise across the sectors

Pre workshop questions for participants to consider

1. What does the ideal **career** support system for young people look like?
2. How do we ensure that all young people have equitable access to high quality and fit for purpose **training products and pathways**, that lead to entry level pathways?
3. What is the best way to ensure all young people have access to **workplace exploration** as part of their training?
4. How do we ensure that all young people are able to develop **transferrable skills** that are crucial to converting technical skills into jobs?

“Coordination of this is not simple, in a system that encourages competition; (there is) misalignment between work and training; misalignment between expectations of work; and misalignment between supply and demand.” (Government)

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Consultation outcomes - System level themes

Themes	Challenges and trends identified	Your voice
Careers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsibility for careers support to young people is unclear, particularly for young people who have disengaged from mainstream schooling and education systems Quality of careers counselling can be uneven Understanding about careers and their importance is not well understood throughout the system 	<i>"Careers will never be fixed until the federal government mandates careers education..." (Careers)</i>
Digital, automation and technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Broadly held assumptions that young people have a high level of digital literacy for work related applications Growing inequity in digital accessibility Advances in technology and automation are changing workforces, business models and the skills in demand 	<i>"...(we need to) ensure young people and people generally in the workforce are not held back due to digital literacy" (Training)</i>
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distortion and adverse incentives in the qualifications and employment services market due to funding Funding from governments flows programmatically without joining up across systems, departments or levels of government 	<i>"...(we need to be) funding employers, the support base and the learning institute; so they (young people) aren't being set up to fail" (Training)</i>
Perceptions and reputation of industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employers and businesses are not promoting the benefits and career opportunities effectively in general, not just to young people Understanding and interest in the sector tends to be from people who are already employed in the sector, or who have had exposure to the industry through circumstance (family members or employment services) Working condition compared to other traditional entry level roles for young people are unfavourable (hospitality, retail, call centres) e.g. can be relatively low pay, shift work, long or challenging hours, 'dirty' work 	<i>"Your industry is not special. Every industry is chasing young people, so you need to demonstrate why your industry is one that young people want to come to. If you pay them poorly, casualise hours, treat them like s**t...young people of today have no fear about walking out the door" (Industry)</i>
Perceptions of young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High needs learners and young people experiencing disadvantage and from vulnerable backgrounds are overrepresented in VET The challenges young people face are multifaceted and not experienced uniformly 'Deficit' thinking about young people can be prevalent The role of mentors can be critical, particularly in supporting young people from disadvantaged or vulnerable backgrounds 	<i>"...it's the personal transformations that have the biggest impact on the students stuck in the system." (Training)</i>
Role of employers and workplace learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employers experience challenges with accessibility to incentives, resourcing constraints, capability and/or capacity to invest time in young people entering the workforce Employers have a crucial role in all intersections of the systems in employing young people Workplace learning and exposure needs to be built into all stages of training from beginning to end Employers need to be willing to come to the table to co-design how this works Supports and mechanisms for access to workplace learning for all young people needed 	<i>"Fundamental basis for industry is they recognise the issues, they know the barriers, its about the solutions...What can your business do to solve your own issue? Its not the young person's problem" (Industry)</i>
Skills – transferability, mobility and 'stackability'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mismatch between expectations of employers and young people in entry level roles Current curriculum frameworks or modes of training reinforce siloes between technical and transferrable (work readiness/soft) skills The presence of an 'invisible' curriculum in training environments that is informal and unfunded, but plays a key role in delivering work ready young people 	<i>"There is no safety net in VET for students who train and then do not get a job." (Training)</i>
Training offer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trends towards minimum units of competency required to get into a job e.g. Skillsets, rather than full qualifications (both employer and young people) Flexible, short and stackable units of training that enable young people to start working faster, however long term mobility and sustainable pathways into lifelong learning is still to be tested 	<i>"...we are bound by the training package structure, enrolling into full qualifications before experience, current advocacy is about avenues that engage young people in multi sector experiences before they commit to a longer journey - unfortunately funding models don't support that – we need a model with enough flexibility to get that experience"</i>
*Non-vocational barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transport, accommodation, income support, mental health and wellbeing 	<i>*Separate streams of work are currently under development at the BSL for these themes</i>

Consultation outcomes – Agriculture & Horticulture

Themes	Challenges and trends identified	Your voice
Careers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pathways and career mobility are not clear for entry level jobs in agriculture and horticulture, or how that can translate across the industry • Where and how do young people find out about jobs? Where and how do employers attract young people? • Lack of clarity on what the entry points are into the industry and how they could lead to a longer term and meaningful career in the sector 	<p><i>“the key challenge...is about the lack of visibility and clarity of pathways beyond the entry level...it is important to construct pipelines and pathways for people into the (agriculture and horticulture) industry”</i></p>
Perceptions of industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of opportunities within and across the agriculture and horticulture sector are not well understood outside industry • Does not promote itself as an industry well, lack of exposure to the industry for young people • Working conditions – perceptions and also reality of the lack of ongoing, secure jobs that offer a living wage, attractive hours and supportive working conditions for young people • The geographical challenges of certain jobs that may not be attractive to young people (e.g., location, social life and accommodation) • Automation and technological advances are having a significant impact across the industry (e.g. productivity) and are changing the skills in demand, which might make the industry more attractive to young people, but this is not well publicised. 	<p><i>“Your industry is not special. Every industry is chasing young people, so you need to demonstrate why your industry is one that young people want to come to. If you pay them poorly, casualise hours, treat them like s**t...young people of today have no fear about walking out the door”</i></p>
Role of employers and workplace learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employers experience challenges with accessibility to incentives, resourcing constraints, capability and/or capacity to invest time in young people entering the workforce • Some employers also require skill building around working with and engaging young people • Expectations of industry are not necessarily aligned with the profile of young people starting entry level work in the sector • The industry is fragmented, with a mix of large corporates and lots of SME sized family businesses with varying levels of processes, resources and capabilities to support young people • Exposure to workplaces needs to be co-designed and supported by employers, with an integrated training and workplace experience • There could be opportunities for employers to pool resources at scale to overcome some structural barriers to support young people into workplace learning 	<p><i>“...industry also needs to know a softer pathway, not just throwing them (young people) into the deep end and expecting them to learn to swim, they need to be brought along on the journey”</i></p> <p><i>“If you don't give workers safety and job satisfaction it does more damage when they inevitably leave because they badmouth ... and it gets harder to get new workers”</i></p>
Training offer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disconnect from the industry specific qualifications that young training graduates obtain, compared to the non-technical skills they need in the workplace for entry level roles • Stackable skills sets that have a clear pathway to further study or qualifications and mobility across the sector are important to young people 	<p><i>“...(the) focus should be on skill sets that build into a qualification, not signing them up straight away to complete a (full) qualification”</i></p>
Non-vocational barriers – Transport and housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jobs and employers often located in areas that are not easily accessible by public transport • Roles can be located in geographically isolated locations with limited accommodation and transportation options • Other geographical challenges include seasonality of work and limited pool of broader opportunities in regional areas • Requirement for licenses in many roles (cars, trucks, forklifts etc) are a barrier to engaging young people early in their career exploration 	<p><i>“...what's the incentive for the unemployed or underemployed to move to an agricultural area if they are only getting marginally more reward for it for a short time”</i></p>

“One of our main issues with attracting workers into the sector is visibility amongst young people in careers in agriculture, where they can take you and how you can progress, it's not well understood at all (Training)”



System design workshop objectives

Who: The system design workshops bring together thought leaders nationally from the employment, industry, training and career systems, as well as different levels of government, who are invested in youth unemployment solutions. The workshops also include experts from the Care, Transport & Logistics and Agriculture & Horticulture sectors.

	<i>What we heard from you</i> Common challenges and trends in AGRICULTURE AND HORTICULTURE	<i>We begin with</i> 4 key problems	<i>We will explore</i> 4 key elements for potential system solutions	<i>We will produce</i> Principles and pilot models to inform practice and policy change
	Grouping similar ideas to understand common themes behind the issues you told us about	Discussing 4 key problems for unemployed young people's pathways to skilled work	Explore solutions informed by consultations with you as thought leaders, grounded in evidence from place-based experience in the NYEB	Developing principles for shaping policy reform and models for testing solutions in place
Careers	Lack of visibility and understanding outside the sector of breadth of roles and opportunities across the industry	Lack of access to meaningful career exploration opportunities for young unemployed people	Establishing a meaningful career exploration offer for all unemployed young people	Through these workshops we aim to produce: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Principles for systems and policy reform to drive policy reform and system change in national and state/territory responses to youth unemployment Prototype models of skilled employment pathways to test in the next phase of the NYEB's skills trials in the Care, Transport & Logistics and Agriculture & Horticulture sectors
Training pathways	Inconsistency or lack of clarity on entry level job requirements and qualifications, career mobility and progression for young people, as well as a rapidly changing market disrupted by advances in technology	Misalignment between entry level qualifications and labour market opportunities	Endorsing a youth specialist, career start entry pathway for vocational pathways that aligns training with local needs	
Workplace exploration	Employers in the industry have varying levels of resources, capabilities and processes to support young people in an entry level role	Training for disadvantaged young people is isolated from real work opportunities	Building place-based industry and employer investment in enabling work-based training and exploration	
Transferable skills	Mismatch between expectations of employers and young people presenting in entry level roles	Training products not inclusive of complementary technical and transferable skills needed for the changing nature of work	Formalising and funding opportunities for young people to develop transferable skills for work	

"There's no magic bullet - What's required is a lot of different strategies and awareness of industry" (Training)

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Careers

A lack of access to meaningful career exploration opportunities for young people who are unemployed

Meaningful careers education is core

A meaningful careers education offer is core for supporting pathways to decent and secure work for young people who are unemployed.

In their 2019 joint statement on careers guidance, the **OECD, ILO, UNESCO, European Commission** and **Cedefop** provided evidence that:

- careers guidance is associated with economic and educational gains
- individuals with lower levels of qualifications are much less likely to use career guidance – but are more likely to need it because their jobs are at greater risk of automation.

Learnings from NYEB place-based trials of the Skilled Employment Model

Case loads for employment service providers exploded during the COVID-19 pandemic, and while demand has dropped closer to pre-pandemic levels in 2021, demand from young people remains strong. The formality and regulation of adult focused employment, training and careers service environments can act as an access barrier to young people.

- “[our] case-load increased by 20,000 jobseekers last year because of COVID...organisational capacity across employment and community services was smashed” (*lead agency worker, SA*)
- “for me it was just a bunch of ongoing appointments...and at the end they’d just send me links...that was the only help I got” (*young person, man, Qld*)

System level observations

Pre-workshop consultations with thought leaders across the training, careers and employment services systems have highlighted:

- Responsibility for careers support to young people is unclear, particularly for young people who have disengaged from mainstream schooling and education systems
- Quality of careers counselling is uneven

The change we are working towards

A meaningful careers exploration offer for all unemployed young people that enables exposure to and exploration of broad industry opportunities

Training pathways

Mismatch between pathways offered to young people as they transition to work, and the typical training pathways of employers and industry

Not just any training will do

The COVID-19 pandemic and rising unemployment and underemployment rates for young people are driving a need for adapting the mode and length of training, including a trend towards a stackable, modularised training offer for young people.

In their G20 Training Strategy, the ILO (2010) emphasised a key challenge facing developed countries to ensure “**the skills of both job entrants and existing workers remain relevant throughout their careers**”. The ILO also called for “**broader access to training at the point of entering the jobs market**” and “**improvements in the relevance and quality of that training**” (ILO 2010, 16)

The OECD has similarly emphasised the need for “**joined up approaches to skills development at the local level**” that involve a broad cross-section of partnerships from different local, state and national actors that enable training strategies that are “**balanced across supply and demand for skills**” (OECD 2012)

Learnings from NYEB place-based trials of the Skilled Employment Model

While JobTrainer and other priority funding initiatives for training are driving some further uptake of training by unemployed young people, more work is needed to align training curriculum and modes of delivery with opportunities in local community. Evaluation findings from the NYEB Entry to Care Roles trial revealed a mismatch between skills developed in training and expectations in the workplace. It also identified strong enthusiasm from young people and employers for tailored pathways using skill sets.

“what we were taught didn’t really match up to what we were seeing.” (*young person, woman, NT*)

“[these] short courses are a really good idea for those people who don’t really know where they want to go” (*NYEB skills trial participant, woman, Qld*)

“I had no idea [a skill set] was a ‘thing’; it was definitely worth my time to see what it’s like in this kind of environment” (*NYEB skills trial participant, man, Qld*)

System level observations

Pre-workshop consultations with thought leaders across the training, careers and employment services systems have highlighted:

- Trends towards minimum units of competency required to get into a job e.g. Skillsets/micro-credentials rather than full qualifications
- COVID-19 has accelerated acceptance of flexible, short and stackable units of training that enable young people to start working faster, but still have mobility and pathways into lifelong learning

The change we are working towards

Youth specialist, entry level vocational pathways that are flexible, aligned to local needs and with clear lines of sight to decent work and further training

Workplace exploration

Training for disadvantaged young people is isolated from real work opportunities and pathways to employment

Strong links between training and work are needed

Young people often lack experiences of workplace environments and the professional networks and contacts needed to enable career exploration and to convert training to a job outcome.

Young employees often require higher costs of initial investment by business through work experience, on-the-job training and supervision.

The OECD (2016) in cross sectoral work aimed at addressing the scarring effect of broken youth transitions, identified that “**work-based learning can provide a bridge into careers and its potential benefits are particularly noticeable for youth at risk – those most likely to face difficulties in accessing jobs and learning opportunities**”. (OECD 2016)

Learnings from NYEB place-based trials of the Skilled Employment Model

Findings from the evaluation of the NYEB Entry to Care Roles trial highlighted the importance of support for young people in connecting their training with work placement opportunities. Insufficient and under-developed approaches to placements can reinforce the siloes between training and work opportunities.

“they [job services] were stuck in this ‘you gotta do this...or we’re gonna do this’. Just mixed in with older people. They didn’t understand that maybe I didn’t like ‘that’ job, or want to do ‘that’ job. I needed help getting what I wanted” (*young person, man, Qld*)

“this isn’t a ‘regular’ work placement...[we] had to devote 4 already overworked staff to it...it’s more demanding” [the learners younger and less settled] (*employer, NT*)

“we were told we were going to be thrown in the deep end [but] we didn’t even get a chance to experience the wading pool” (*young person, man, Qld*)

“maybe a mentor...so we know what’s supposed to be going on [in the work placement]...I feel if we had someone that was in contact with both them [employer] and us, it would have been a lot better” (*young person, woman, Qld*)

System level observations

Pre-workshop consultations with thought leaders across the training, careers and employment services systems have highlighted:

- Workplace learning and exposure needs to be built into all stages of training from beginning to end
- Employers need to be willing to come to the table to co-design how this works
- Supports and mechanisms for access to workplace learning for all young people needed

The change we are working towards

Widened access to employment-based training and work placement in all entry level training

Transferable skills

Training products do not reflect the breadth of technical and transferable skills needed for the changing nature of work

Technical skills are not enough

Technical skills for occupations on their own are not enough to smooth the pathway to work for young people. Pathways to work need to include an opportunity for young people to develop transversal and foundational employability skills that both underpin the development of technical skills and enable the translation of formal occupational training into a job outcome.

In their 2019 Global Framework on Transferable Skills, UNICEF described transferable skills as “the central ‘magic glue,’ connecting, reinforcing, and developing other skills (foundational skills of literacy and numeracy, digital skills and job-specific skills).” (UNICEF 2019, ix)

Similarly, in 2021 the ILO argued that Both transferable skills and technical skills are required by individuals “if they are to become employable, manage their careers in a fast-changing world of work, use digital technology at work and in everyday life, achieve life goals and contribute to their own well-being and that of their community”. (ILO 2021, 27)

Learnings from NYEB place-based trials of the Skilled Employment Model

A lack of formalisation of transversal skills within training packages leads to inconsistent delivery between and within providers

“Socialisation skills are absolutely essential nowadays because there’s more and more personalised and in-home care” (*lead agency manager, Qld*)

System level observations

Pre-workshop consultations with thought leaders across the training, careers and employment services systems have highlighted:

- Mismatch between expectations of employers and young people in entry level roles
- Current curriculum frameworks or modes of training reinforce siloes between types of skills (rather than an integrated offering for technical and ‘soft’ or transferrable skills)
- The presence of an ‘invisible’ curriculum that is informal and unfunded, but plays a key role in delivering work ready young people

The change we are working towards

A system of training products that adapts to labour market expectations for technical and transferable skills

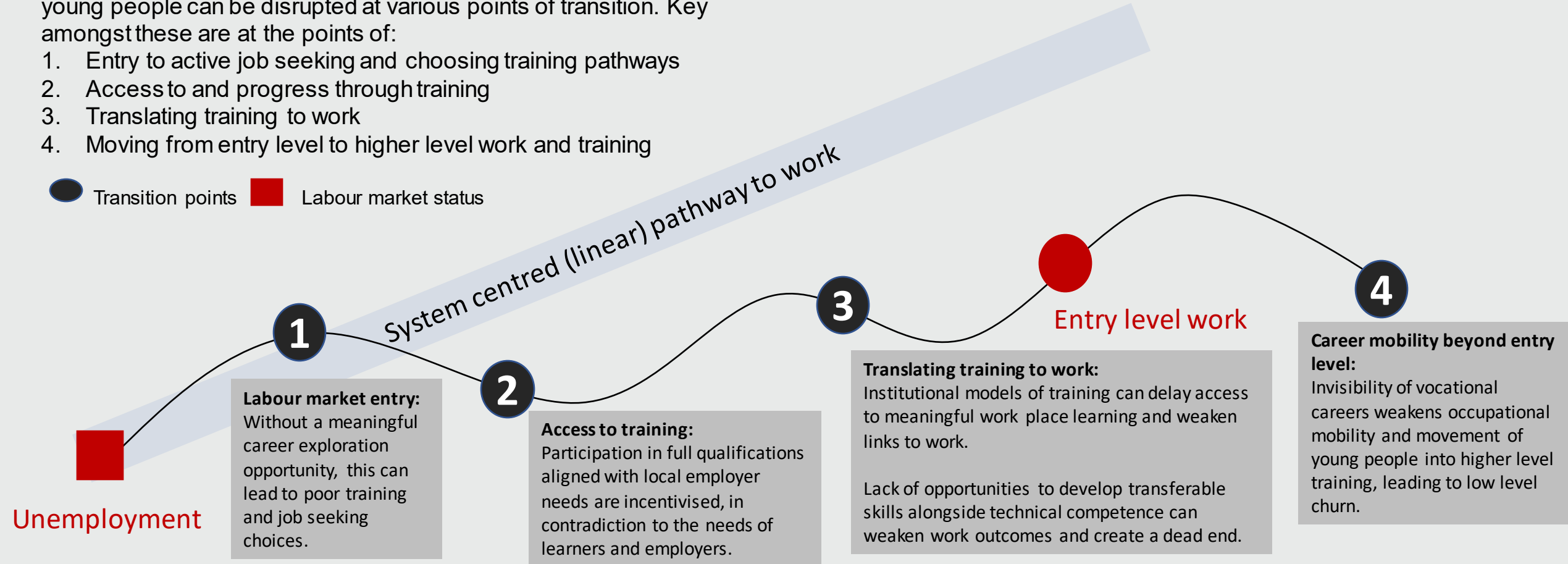
What do these problems look like for young people?

Problems of system centred approach to pathways to work

Pathways from unemployment to entry level work for disadvantaged young people can be disrupted at various points of transition. Key amongst these are at the points of:

1. Entry to active job seeking and choosing training pathways
2. Access to and progress through training
3. Translating training to work
4. Moving from entry level to higher level work and training

● Transition points ■ Labour market status



“There’s a fear; young people are so worried about making the wrong decision that they make no decision” (Government)

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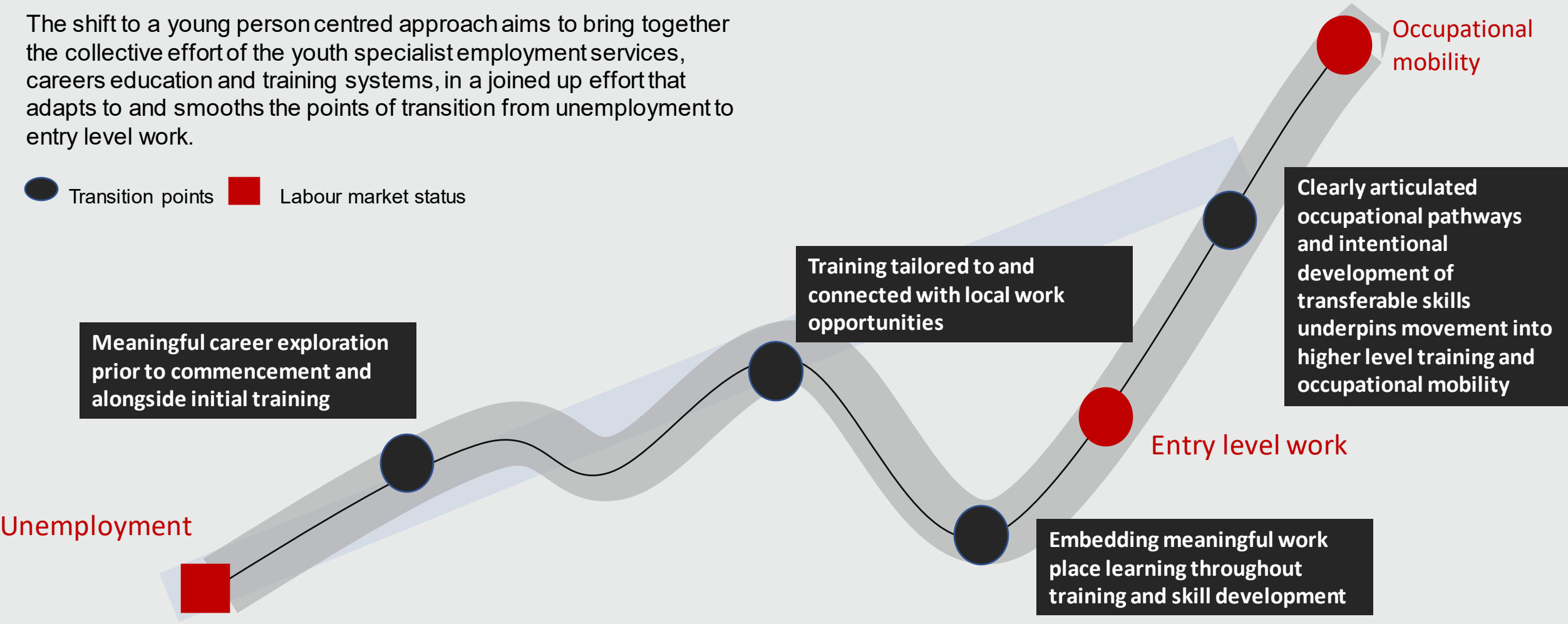


What is the ambition for strengthening pathways to work for young people?

The shift to a young person centred approach that sets the foundational for mobility

The shift to a young person centred approach aims to bring together the collective effort of the youth specialist employment services, careers education and training systems, in a joined up effort that adapts to and smooths the points of transition from unemployment to entry level work.

● Transition points ■ Labour market status



“We are just one stage of the process, they will be learning through life; the concept that life changes, work changes, and you have to be adaptable...” (Careers)

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Context: Why young people?

- Behind the public narrative of youth unemployment rates returning to pre-COVID levels, underemployment and rates of insecure employment remain high.
- Pathways to secure and skilled work for disadvantaged young people are broken and a significant minority of young Australians are excluded from decent work.
 - **Part-time** work now accounts for more than half (59.8%) of all employment for 15-24 year olds (and almost 2/3 of employment of young women)
 - Almost one in five (18.2%) young people were **underemployed** and wanted to work more hours.
 - A decade of **wage stagnation** and career immobility post GFC shows us that getting 'a job' or 'any job' is not enough to guarantee YP security.
 - What is hidden in the latest youth unemployment data is that not only have we returned to pre-COVID youth unemployment rates, we have also returned to pre-COVID **insecurity, precarity and career stagnation** for another generation of young people.
- Despite sustained government and community sector efforts to address different dimensions of the problem of youth transitions, patterns of attainment, engagement in post-school education and training, and access to secure work, remain tied to socioeconomic background.

“Some students (through the system) don’t develop the skills or don’t have the personal breakthrough that allows them to have the confidence to progress to work” (Training)

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Context: Why now - the opportunity window

The economic disruption of the COVID-19 pandemic has amplified several long-term trends shaping the way young people move through education and work. These long term trends include:

- **The changing world of work:** Global transformations in the nature of work that mark an opportunity for reconfiguring responses to disadvantage
- **Shifting pathways to work:** Disruptions to historical processes for how young people gain entry to occupational and professional careers
- **Misalignment between labour market opportunities and training pathways:** The link between labour market demand and training supply is weakening, with only 27.5% of all VET graduates employed in the occupation associated with their qualification. Rates of young people training in the economy's highest growth sectors such as aged and disability care, transport and logistics, education, and agriculture, remain low and in many cases are declining.
- **Stagnated career mobility and wage growth:** A generation of young people in the decade post-GFC have been pushed off a broken career ladder that has seen increased investment in education and training fail to support labour market security and mobility, and real wage growth amongst young people has flatlined.
- **Growing rates of social isolation and mental illness:** The psychological disruption of the pandemic has intensified existing patterns of mental illness and social isolation, with one third of Australian young people in 2020 (34%) reporting high or very high levels of psychological distress, with rates already high (32% in 2018) prior to the pandemic.

“...COVID-19 has intensified challenges but also created opportunities” (Industry)

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Policy reform trajectories

- Trajectory of skills, careers and employment system reviews and reforms highlight the need for cross sectoral, stackable and youth specialist approaches.
- Policy reviews on careers, training and employment services are driving policy reforms that are focused on within system remedies but are not addressing gaps between the systems.

Reform trajectories	Example trends emerging from reviews and reforms of the careers, training and employment services systems	What more needs to happen to align the effort across systems
Anchored in local need and opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core role of industry in driving qualifications development (e.g. 2016 Introduction of SSOs to replace IRCs, DESE Skills Service Organisation pilots) • Alignment of training funding with labour market demand and opportunities through priority subsidised training (e.g. TAFE priority training programs in various states) • Local employer needs driving local workforce solutions (e.g. 2020 establishment of the Local Jobs Taskforces) 	Place-based initiatives can be transactional in nature and not sufficiently aligning youth specialist effort between and across community, training, careers and employment service systems
Responsive to the changing world of work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emerging systemic endorsement and funding of sub-qualification level products as a mechanism for lining up supply and demand (e.g. micro-credentialing pilot programs in various states) • The importance of forecasting labour demand to inform training delivery (e.g. establishment in 2020 of the National Skills Commission). 	Consistent policy nationally around funding models for sub-qualifications, informed by industry, trainers and employers Tracking and availability of emerging data to understand the impact of sub-qualifications on access to sustainable, decent work, and supporting lifelong learning
Flexible to young people's stage of employment and career development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The launch of the National Careers Strategy (2017), the Future Ready: A student focused National Career Education Strategy (2019), the launch of the National Careers Institute and a range of other state/territory based careers reforms have all acknowledged the need for a stronger careers offer for young Australians. • The importance of timely, relevant and meaningful information to shape career decisions and training choices. (e.g. the Establishment in 2019 of the National Skills Commission, the 2017 <i>Real skills for real careers: the VET information strategy</i>, the 2019 <i>Future Ready: A student focused National Career Education Strategy</i>, the 2018 <i>Victorian Transforming career education in Victorian government schools: connecting today's learning with tomorrow's jobs</i>) • Emerging recognition of the tailored youth specialist supports required to enable young people from disadvantaged backgrounds to transition to work (e.g. establishing Transition to Work in 2016, with expansion of the program announced in 2021) 	<p>The establishment by the National Careers Institute of the online and phone based School Leavers Information Kit and the School Leavers Information Service provides access to careers advice and information, but is insufficient for addressing the barriers facing disadvantaged young people, who often face multiple barriers and benefit from a more experiential, face to face opportunity to explore career opportunities.</p> <p>Universal access to dedicated youth employment services for all young people, that are also aligned to a system wide, place based approach, focused on long term quality outcomes</p>

“there needs to be some consistency in the policy levers that government use”

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Consultation participants

In preparation for these workshops we have consulted with a wide range of stakeholders to understand the impact of key structural barriers in their work to enabling entry level work and their views on potential programmatic and policy solutions.

BSL would like to extend their thanks to all the individuals and organisations who have generously provided contributions and time to undertake pre-workshop consultations which have been invaluable in the development of the System Design workshops and our ongoing work in youth employment including:

- Anglicare
- Australian Centre for Career Education
- Australian Industry Standards
- Boosting the Local Care Workforce
- Brophy
- Campbell Page
- Careers Advisors Association of NSW & ACT (CAA)
- Careers NSW
- Career Industry Council of Australia (CICA)
- Community Services Industry Alliance (CSIA)
- Charles Darwin University
- Dairy Australia
- Department of Education, Skills and Employment (DESE)
- EduCare
- Endeavour Group
- Federation TAFE and Federation University
- Food and Fibre Board
- Gen Z
- Holmesglen TAFE
- Human Services Skills Organisation (HSSO)
- Indigenous Allied Health Association
- Local Jobs and Skills Taskforce
- Lyndoch
- MAS National
- NT Government
- NuTrans
- O'Brien Transport
- Regional Industry Education Partnerships (RIEP)
- Saputo Dairy Australia
- Scalzo Foods
- SCT Logistics
- Skills Impact
- SouthWest TAFE
- TAFE Directors Australia
- TAFE NSW
- TAFE QLD
- Tocal
- Training services NSW
- TransitCare
- Transport Logistics Solutions
- Transport Women Australia
- University of Melbourne
- WestVic Dairy
- Wodonga TAFE
- Workskil Australia
- yourtown
- YouthWorx

“...we have a responsibility to come up with solutions for people” (Training)

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