



Career development supporting young Australians

A literature review

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Career development and young Australians: key messages

Youth transitions into employment are taking place in a complex social and economic environment. There is general agreement among researchers that the contemporary labour market is increasingly characterised by flexible, casual, precarious and insecure patterns of employment (Cuervo, Crofts & Wyn 2013; Patton 2001; Rogers & Creed 2000). A job for life is no longer the norm and individuals will most likely change jobs, even careers, several times over their lifetime. As new entrants to the labour market, young people are particularly vulnerable. Cuervo, Crofts and Wyn (2013) argue that 'difficult transitions' are now being experienced by a greater proportion of young people, even those with tertiary qualifications, and not just by those historically labelled as disadvantaged. Career development services are perceived to be one way of supporting transitions by facilitating well-informed and realistic decisions about career choices, educational pathways and employment options. This paper investigates how career development services can support transitions, particularly in terms of their impact for young people experiencing disadvantage, and explores the benefits of engaging parents as career supporters.

What does career development involve?

Career development should be:

- **an ongoing, lifelong process** beginning during childhood and requiring multiple supports at different points in time
- **supported by access to material and social forms of capital** that are available to most young people. However, career development opportunities are constrained for socially excluded young people who experience multiple barriers to accessing services
- **broader than a set of information tools** to guide young people to make the right choices. It involves a range of supporters, including parents, with varying capacity to guide young people
- **addressed through a suite of approaches.** However, not all approaches treat career development as an ongoing, lifelong process.

How do effective career development services work?

Effective career development services for young people:

- recognise and **respond to the needs of all the young people they serve** by contextualising and tailoring services to take account of the circumstances of particular groups and encouraging the development of goals that **recognise both labour market opportunities and personal interests and abilities**

- give young people the tools and support to **develop a 'line of sight'** from school to further training or education and employment
- firmly **connect career development with the workplace**, by involving employers to provide access to the work environment, and providing information about where jobs are likely to be when young people are ready to enter the labour market
- **embed career education in the school curriculum**, not just as an add-on but as a school-wide strategic direction, acknowledging that career development is a learning process and providing multiple opportunities for young people to engage in career exploration and decision making to broaden their horizons
- **adopt a tailored approach** that caters for the needs of all students and their families according to age and aspects of disadvantage. For example for primary aged children, this will include career education but not career guidance
- acknowledge and **equip parents and other caregivers** as key 'influencers' of young people's aspirations and often the preferred source of career information and guidance
- recognise that many parents and caregivers feel ill-equipped to provide career development support and **ensure that measures are in place at an early stage in their children's schooling** that will strengthen their knowledge and confidence in undertaking this role
- **make appropriate use of technology** to provide young people with appropriate information when and where they want it, while recognising varying levels of digital literacy.

1 Introduction

This review of the literature brings together evidence on the role of career development in supporting youth in their transition from school and further study into employment.

The paper addresses these specific issues:

- the role of career development for young people in a changing labour market
- the impact of disadvantage on young people's career development
- career development needs of young people, particularly disadvantaged young people
- career development strategies that may mitigate disadvantage in the transition process, in particular those that involve parents as key influences on young people.

Definitions

In this document the term 'career development' is used to describe the 'complex process of managing life, learning and work over the lifespan' (MCEECDYA 2010). Education Services Australia (2014) describes career development as enabling young people to acquire the knowledge and develop the skills and capabilities for managing their future training, further education and employment pathways. The goal of this process is often referred to as 'career management' capability (McMahon, Patton & Tatham 2003). Patton (2001) stresses though that developing a career is closely integrated to the contexts, including family, social and broader local and national, in which an individual is located and in which their process of career development unfolds. Career development will be influenced by a number of 'career supports' including family and other social networks, the education system, the career development sector, employers, the broader community, and government policy, programs and services.

The services and activities supporting the career development process have been variously described and categorised. The OECD (2004) provides an overarching definition of career development services as those 'intended to assist people, of any age and at any point throughout their lives to make educational, training and occupational choices and to manage their careers'. In the Australian context, Nous Consulting Group (2011) divides career development services into the three categories of career information, career advice or counselling, and career guidance. Career information usually encompasses the print, electronic and face-to-face services that help users understand occupations and associated employment, education and training opportunities. Career advice goes further to assist individuals or groups to access and interpret career information. Career guidance is described as the process through which individuals or groups are helped to understand their career development needs and potential, the process of career planning and decision making, and the application of career management skills to reach career goals (Nous Consulting Group 2011).

Career development services are delivered by a variety of informal and formal providers in a range of settings. Providers may include parents and other caregivers, specialist teachers in schools, career counsellors and practitioners in schools, and staff at other educational institutions, in services such as those for youth or the unemployed, or in private practice. Services can also be delivered via websites and other media such as printed materials, mobile phone apps or helplines.

Scope

The review focuses on Australia but draws on lessons from other contemporary western societies that have similar youth transition pathways, education systems and economies, in particular the United Kingdom and New Zealand.

For the purposes of this review, ‘young people’ refers to individuals ranging from the upper primary years through to late 20s—that is, when they are expected to make the important ‘transition’ from dependent children to independent adults. ‘Disadvantage’ includes any barrier that hinders equity of participation and success in education and labour markets and includes low socioeconomic background, Indigenous status, geographical isolation, disability (including mental illness), and culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) background. However, as it is beyond the scope of this literature review to investigate specific career development supports designed to meet the needs of each of these groups, disadvantage will mostly be treated as a collective, multidimensional concept.

Structure of the review

The first section provides an introductory snapshot of the economic, social and labour market context in which young Australians are making their transitions from school and further study into employment. This is followed by an overview of career development theory to set the context for a discussion of specific career development for young people and those who support them.

The review then examines current approaches to career development for young people, the impact of disadvantage on career development, and the role of career development services for young people and their supporters, with a focus on young people experiencing disadvantage. Evaluative literature is examined to identify aspects of effective practice and highlight areas where needs are not being met. This provides the basis for a discussion of active engagement of young people and their supporters in ‘career development’ activity.

The review concludes by summarising the elements of good practice. It draws out key messages for the approach and design of career development services, not only for young people and parents facing disadvantage, but also to meet the diverse needs of young people generally.

2 Background

Career development in the 21st century

There was a time when leaving school marked the beginning of adulthood. Young people's life circumstances have changed considerably in recent decades. In contemporary Australian society, transitions are getting longer and people in the 15–24 year age group are less likely to be married and have children than in the past, less likely to own their own home, and more likely to still be living in the parental home. Part of the explanation for this is the rise in emphasis on higher education and the desire for young people to gain a place in more 'prestigious pathways' (OECD 2000). Young people are also reluctant to commit themselves at an early age to specific occupational preparation. Further reasons for protracted transitions to full-time employment lie in difficult labour market conditions. The OECD (2000) also suggests that the transition of young people to adulthood consists of a series of transitions. These include transitioning to working life, gaining economic independence, establishing a household and family formation.

A vital aspect of the overall process is the transition from school and further study into employment. The changes to the world of work, due in part to globalisation, rapid technological change, the decline of manufacturing and the rise of service industries, are well established in the literature (Anderson 1999; Arulmani et al. 2014; Patton 2001; Rogers & Creed 2000; Wang 2012). Miles Morgan Australia argue that 'jobs for life' no longer exist and individuals can expect to change jobs numerous times throughout their working lives, highlighting the trend away from permanent employment to more varied working arrangements such as contract and project work (MCEECDYA 2010). A single qualification will no longer serve an individual all their working life, and generic skills such as communication, problem solving, and teamwork and personal attributes including adaptability and resilience are required more than ever along with occupation-specific skills.

Youth transitions are taking place within complex and ever-changing social and economic conditions (Cuervo & Wyn 2011). As a result, educational pathways have to become more flexible as policy makers respond to both the wishes of young people and their parents, and to the perceived changes in the nature of work. Research emphasises this dynamic and complex 'transition' environment which young people need to be prepared to navigate. A 'successful transition' looks different from past generations: no longer linear, but instead characterised by continual change, particularly in terms of the labour market and the requirements of the workplace, it demands certain skills and resources to undertake what research and policy rhetoric are conceptualising as 'career management'. This entails young people managing and planning their learning and employment pathways, not just during the transition phase but across the lifespan (McMahon, Patton & Tatham 2003). Building these skills and resources can facilitate overall participation in life, learning and work but the opportunity and capacity to access

these skills is not equally available to all young people. Instead, some are ill-equipped to navigate the education and labour markets. Career information, advice and guidance in the form of career development services offer one avenue of assistance in making education and career decisions.

Even for adults, careers that appear successful may be the result of a constant series of manoeuvres to secure and maintain employment, often involving compromise and personal sacrifice (Dyer 2006). Given that young people are still to gain a foothold in the labour market, such transitions are even more of a struggle, and more so again for those without adequate education, skills or social support. Karmel (2012) notes that although Australia has high levels of post-school education and a flexible education system offering multiple choices –both strong factors in favourable youth employment outcomes –these factors alone are not sufficient. This is particularly so in difficult economic conditions when a depressed labour market will struggle to accommodate young, first-time entrants. Furthermore, good career advice, guidance, planning and decision making cannot create job opportunities where there are none or prevent skills mismatch where opportunities are limited.

Youth transitions

The OECD (2000) has defined a set of key elements to support young people transition from study to employment:

- a healthy economy
- well-organised pathways that connect initial education with work and further study
- widespread opportunities to combine workplace experience with education
- a tightly knit safety net for those at risk
- good information and guidance in terms of career options
- effective institutions and processes.

However, not all young people have access to these supports.

Previous research shows that young people who complete senior secondary schooling go on to undertake further post-school study and have high aspirations have more successful labour market outcomes than those who leave school early (Sikora & Saha 2011; Homel & Ryan 2014; Nguyen & Blomberg 2014). Nguyen and Blomberg (2014) found that educational intentions are a strong predictor of Year 12 completion and further study at university and in vocational education and training (VET). Various factors drive these aspirations, including students' background, academic performance, immigration background, attitudes towards school and parental and peer expectations. Gemici et al. (2014) found that parental expectations are a particularly important driver. Specifically, students whose parents want them to go to university are four times more likely to complete Year 12 and 11 times more likely to plan to go to university than their counterparts whose parents do not have higher education aspirations for their children.

Further, Gemici, Lim and Karmel (2013) found that parental engagement with schools has an important effect on Tertiary Entrance Rank (TER) and university entrance.

Given the complex and ever-changing post-school environment it is important that young people are well informed and have occupational and educational plans (Sikora & Saha 2011). Having ambitious occupational plans is also important. There is a strong relationship between holding such plans and having a professional or managerial job by the age of 25 years. Conversely, not having a career plan can be detrimental to later occupational attainment, particularly for young women. Sikora and Saha (2011) further found that students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds were significantly more likely to lower their educational and occupational expectations between Years 10 and 12. Further, around 25 per cent of young people reported schooling objectives and career objectives that were inconsistent.

Thomson and Hillman (2010) found that for males with low numeracy proficiency at age 15¹, aspiring to do an apprenticeship was a good predictor of their later success in terms of working or studying, or a combination of these.

Having access to careers advisors while at school can help students transition from school to work or further study. However, a study of the 2003 LSAY cohort found that the usefulness of information received through careers advisors was highly variable. In particular, students who were studying at least two STEM (science, technology, engineering, maths) subjects while at school stated that careers advisors were more influential in directing them away from STEM careers and post-school study options (Anlezark, Lim & Semo 2008).

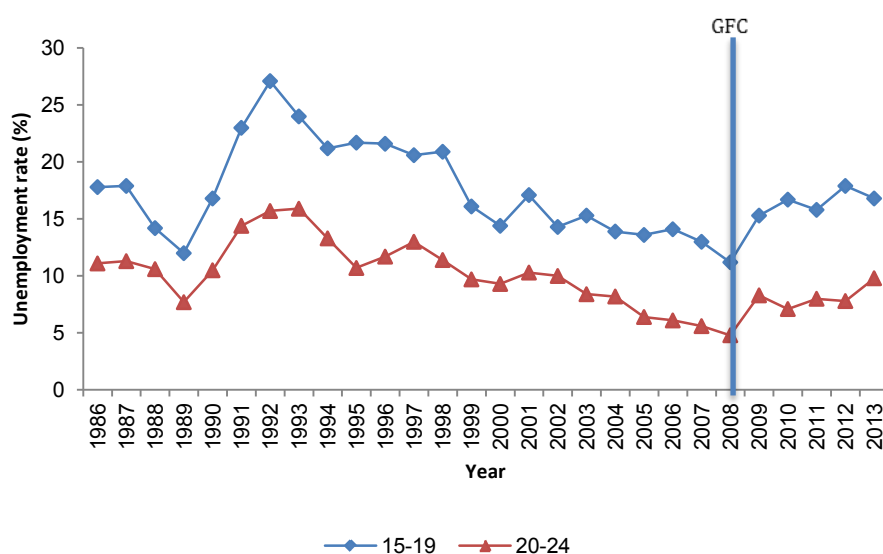
Education and employment trends among young Australians

Changes to the Australian labour market have been influenced by factors such as the global financial crisis (GFC) and by internal structural adjustments (for example, casualisation and employment of existing workers in occupations traditionally undertaken by younger workers). These collectively have had a noticeable impact on full-time employment rates, especially for young people.

Figure 1 shows that unemployment rates for young people who are not in full-time education have increased since the GFC, following declines in the early 1990s. However, part-time employment has been increasing, reaching its highest rate in 2013 (26.7% for 15–19 year olds and 18.3% for 20–24 year olds). Anlezark (2011) found that during the GFC, although Australia experienced a relatively mild downturn, young people bore almost the entire weight of the full-time job decline and a disproportionate share of the increase in unemployment.

¹ 15 year olds measured using the 2003 PISA assessment.

Figure 1: Unemployment rates for 15–24 year olds not in full-time education, 1986–2013



Source: Foundation for Young Australians (2014), using ABS *Labour force*, cat.no.6291.0.55.001, data cube LM2

There has been a persistent increase in participation in education by young people. For 15–19 year olds, participation rates increased by 5.3 percentage points to 76.5% over the period 2003–13, with most of the rise occurring after 2009. For 20–24 year olds, rates of participation in full-time education have increased by 5.4 percentage points to 30.8% over the same period with a sharp increase occurring from 2008 to 2009 (National Centre for Vocational Education Research 2014).

Rising educational participation appears to provide some protection for young people; however the remaining full-time work opportunities for 15–19 year olds have become more concentrated in industries sensitive to economic conditions and structural change, particularly construction (Circelli & Oliver 2012).

The rate of apprenticeship commencements (especially non-trades apprenticeships) has declined, particularly for the 15–19 year olds. At the same time participation in higher education has been increasing, albeit very slowly, and rates of participation are higher for females rather than males.

Circelli and Oliver (2012) showed that among the Y98 LSAY cohort, around 20 per cent of males and 13 per cent females left school without completing Year 12. However, most of these early school leavers undertook some form of VET study. Of those males who completed Year 12, around 33 per cent went on to university and 25 per cent undertook an apprenticeship or traineeship; the remainder either undertook other VET study or did not do any post-school study. A much higher proportion of females (46%) than males (34%) went on to complete a university qualification. Education pathways based on VET were less prominent for females than they were for males. The cohort showed that a large number of young people are pursuing post-school education, with only 14 per cent of school leavers indicating that they had not undertaken further study by the age of 25.

Beyond educational level and the state of the labour market, individual academic ability and socioeconomic status are large determinants in young people making successful transitions to a successful working life. Other factors include Indigenous status, gender, language background and location, as well as the type of school attended. The contribution of school factors to completing Year 12 and attending university is important but relatively small (Gemici, Lim & Karmel 2013; Lim, Gemici & Karmel 2013).

The changes in and complexity of the labour market constitute strong grounds for shifting assistance for young people in their transition away from an approach that tries to 'match' their abilities and interests to particular jobs or courses, and towards an approach that places more emphasis upon active career planning and personal and career development.

Young people's views on career development

Bryce et al. (2007) found that although social contexts have an influence on young people's decision making, their own views about the futures available to them are also a significant influence. Mission Australia's most recent national survey of young Australians aged 15–19 years included the importance and achievability of personal aspirations (Mission Australia 2014). The vast majority of respondents ranked career success and financial independence as their top two aspirations. However, only around 60 per cent of young people felt those goals were actually attainable.

Another significant finding from the survey is that the majority of young people look to friends and family for help. This points to the need to nurture and educate these networks and strengthen young people's social capital. In particular, for disadvantaged young people, equipping parents to build aspirations and provide support in career planning is a strategy to redress the unequal position the families begin from. A key policy recommendation from the survey is to increase investment in programs that enable families, schools and communities to support young people to develop aspirations, deal with stress, and stay connected to school or training. Such support includes mentoring and career counsellors, and early intervention programs that also involve and connect to families (Mission Australia 2014).

As part of the needs analysis underpinning the National Career Development Strategy, Urbis (2012b) conducted qualitative research with over 400 stakeholders across Australia, including young people aged 11–24 years in all sectors of education and not in education and in a mix of metropolitan, regional and rural locations. Young people start thinking about career at various ages and have different preferences about when and how they want career information and advice communicated to them. They want a choice of access methods including one-on-one discussions with people who have industry experience, university and TAFE representatives, family members, career practitioners, and classroom teachers; experiential learning opportunities; printed materials; and online resources. Career information online is generally not seen as the most useful source but rather as complementary to other services, with young people

favouring one-on-one discussions and opportunities for experiential learning (Urbis 2012b).

Hillman and Rothman (2008) analysed data from the LSAY Y03 cohort to identify secondary students' use of the career advice they were offered at school and their perceptions of its usefulness. Regardless of background, the students perceived career advice as useful, suggesting that career advice should be delivered to students equitably across schools and within schools and should meet individual needs. Urbis (2012b) noted however that young people in schools are currently receiving less of the activities they find most useful, such as work experiences and visits to workplaces, and more of the activities they find less useful, such as interviews with a career practitioner. A further finding from Hillman and Rothman (2008) was that career advice programs are valued by young people who are more vulnerable when making the transition from school, particularly those with lower achievement scores and uncertainty about completing Year 12. These findings highlight the importance of continued career support for these young people.

In the research conducted by Urbis (2012b) most tertiary and VET students reported that they had not accessed career development services offered by these institutions. These young people want personalised one-on-one career advice from someone with industry experience. They also want their institutions to facilitate contact with industry through more integrated learning and internships. Doyle (2011) suggests that one-to-one careers counselling is the most effective intervention for undergraduate students, with the benefit of tailored and specific outcomes for each person. Greenbank (2011) found that a student's personality was a key influence on whether and how they used their social networks to make career decisions. In general, students consulted their parents more than friends, extended family and careers advisors. Greenbank (2011) makes some suggestions to encourage students to make better use of university careers advisors: for example the advisors could work regularly in small groups with students and could work in conjunction with those lecturers who are liked and respected by students.

Understanding career development

The conceptualisation of career development currently informing policy makers, educators and practitioners is shaped by both traditional and new theories. Importantly, McMahan and Tatham (2008) argue that no single theory can adequately explain the complex process of career development. Career development is no longer considered to be a linear process; it can involve a series of transitions in and out of employment, periods of under- or over-employment, and potentially more than one career change and multiple returns to education (McMahan & Tatham 2008). This process is commonly conceptualised as a lifelong one in which paid employment is just one major dimension. It involves the continuous development of skills to support the process of managing life and work. McMahan and Tatham (2008) note that individuals are predicted to need

career development services several times across their lifetime. In summary, the 'current career development thinking emphasises the developmental nature of careers and cultivating the career efficacy and resilience of young people to manage a dynamic and elongated career and transition process' (Miles Morgan Australia, 2012b, p. 5).

A person's career development will be influenced by individual factors such as personality, family commitments, health or level of education; social factors such as class, gender, ethnicity or locality; and economic factors such as the labour market or government policy. Accordingly, Patton (2008) points to a move towards the use of multiple approaches to ensure that the career development needs of all individuals are addressed. Leong and Pearce (2014) posit the idea of 'indigenisation' of career practice to situate it within the cultural contexts of individuals. Further, the emphasis has moved away from 'point in time' advice to the lifelong development of skills and the provision of information at different points to assist individuals in managing their careers over their lifetime. In New Zealand, Wales and Scotland, young people have access to an 'all-age guidance' service. Strengths of such services include their avoidance of rigid cut-off points and, in the case of Careers Wales, embeddedness in local communities, working closely with other partners and tailoring services to local needs (Watts 2009).

Certain non-occupational skills, knowledge and personal attributes are considered to be necessary for a young people to 'manage' or navigate through their lives/careers. Furthermore, the individual is expected to play an active role in 'constructing' their career through ongoing learning and career decision making (McMahon, Patton & Tatham 2003; Van Esbroeck 2008). To guide career development interventions that support this process, attempts have been made to articulate these 'career management' skills. The skills are set out in the Australian Blueprint for Career Development (MCEECDYA 2010), the nationally agreed learning framework that specifies the competencies that young people and adults need to manage their careers. The Blueprint defines career management skills under the three interrelated areas of personal management, learning and work exploration, and career building. Personal management encompasses the development of positive ideas of self, interpersonal skills and the ability to grow and change throughout life. Learning and work exploration covers the ability to take part in lifelong learning that supports career goals, find and use career information and grasp the relationship between work, society and the economy. Career building includes creating/securing and maintaining work, making decisions to enhance career, and balancing life and work roles. The Canadian Career Development Foundation (2007) has introduced the term 'career resilience' to describe the competencies needed to navigate changeable labour market conditions but stresses that there is little robust research into the application of resilience to career development theory and practice.

The benefits of career development for both the individual and society have been the subject of research. At the macro level, it has been argued that a workforce with the skills to manage their own careers is good for the overall economy as having people in jobs that they have the right skills for encourages efficiency in labour markets and

increase productivity. In theory successful career management leads to more employment and thus greater income through tax revenues and higher consumption (Access Economics 2006). The Career Industry Council of Australia (2007) argues that career development can play a key role in workforce development, for example by preparing new entrants or supporting those in employment to adapt and sustain their capacity and productivity. An alternative perspective is that increased career management capacity will lead to better outcomes for the wider community (Gillie & Isenhour 2003), especially if it assists disadvantaged individuals in making successful transitions to the labour market. Further, solid career management capacity can lead to greater private benefits and increased personal self-worth and wellbeing, particularly when individuals are employed in roles which match to their skills and interests.

The impact of career development interventions on the longer-term education, social and economic outcomes is difficult to accurately quantify (Hughes & Gration 2009). However, evidence points to a positive impact on 'soft' outcomes such as increased self-confidence and better decision-making skills that in turn should benefit an individual's longer-term socioeconomic situation (Hughes & Gration 2009). Career development services have been shown to increase, in the short to medium term, educational engagement and attainment, self-awareness and self-confidence, and awareness of the labour market. Another positive outcome is the strengthened pathways for those at risk of disengagement, and improved employability and job fit (Miles Morgan Australia 2012b). Robertson (2013) argues that career development can promote wellbeing and contribute to the overall health of a society. Although there is evidence of the negative impact of unemployment on mental health, the potential of career development interventions to have a positive effect on mental wellbeing has not been a focus of research.

3 Supporting career development for young people

Policy approaches

Three major comparative studies of career development policies, covering 37 countries including Australia, show that governments generally perceive career development as both a private and a public good, benefiting the individual through expanded awareness of career options and opportunities, and society and the economy as well through links to 'policy goals related to learning, the labour market and social equity' (Watts & Sultana 2004). Watts and Sultana (2004) also reported that governments had begun to reformulate career development within lifelong learning and employment policies, requiring career development services to be accessible to people of all ages (not just as they leave school), as in the national 'all-age' guidance services of New Zealand, Scotland and Wales.

Youth transitions

Given the uncertain and prolonged youth transitions in contemporary Australia, the approach of the Australian Government is to try to minimise youth unemployment by equipping young people as well as possible before they move into the labour market. The overall youth policy approach involves an increased school leaving age to keep young people in education for longer and an emphasis on post-school education and training. The most recent policy, the National Partnership on Youth Attainment and Transitions² focused on 15–24 year olds, young people at risk, and the educational attainment and engagement of young Indigenous Australians, and aimed to encourage young people to 'gain the skills and qualifications needed to build a career'.

The National Partnership included the Compact with Young Australians³, and was intended among other things to encourage young people to gain the skills and qualifications needed to build a career. The Compact introduced national consistency in the minimum school leaving age; a requirement to participate full-time in education, training and/or employment until the age of 17; an entitlement to an education or training place for 15–24 year olds (devolved to the states after 2011); and stronger requirements for early school leavers to participate in education or training as a condition of receiving income support. In essence, the Compact was intended to encourage young people to 'learn or earn' (Jobs Australia 2014). The National

²http://www.federalfinancialrelations.gov.au/content/npa/skills/youth_attainment_transitions/national_partnership.pdf. The National Partnership comprised five elements: Maximising Engagement, Attainment and Successful Transitions (MEAST); School Business Community Partnership Brokers (funding ceased in 2014); Youth Connections (funding ceased in 2014); National Career Development; and the Compact with Young Australians. The Partnership has just run its course with new arrangements yet to be decided upon.

³<https://www.education.gov.au/compact-young-australians>

Partnership had a 2015 target of 90 per cent of 20–24 year olds having Year 12 or equivalent (Certificate II or above).

Te Riele (2011) suggested that the National Partnership's emphasis on school completion to reach this attainment goal would have the most impact on students who disengaged from mainstream schooling and those who would traditionally have left school early before completing Year 12. It overlooks the fact that staying in school can be counterproductive for some young people if, as Te Riele notes, 'it changes neutral feelings about learning into negative ones' (p. 102). Her research into 'second chance schools' demonstrates educational options other than a linear trajectory through school, into further or higher education and into employment, for meeting the National Partnership's attainment goal. The challenge will be to provide young people with the support and advice to enable them to navigate their way to the educational attainment goal in the way that best works for them.

In response to this challenge, Youth Connections and Partnership Brokers aimed to help those young people who were at risk of leaving school or had left school early to re-engage with education and attain Year 12 or a Certificate II level qualification. Youth Connections services included individualised support, outreach and re-engagement activities. Partnership Brokers complemented the individualised support of Youth Connections by helping schools, businesses and communities form partnerships that support young people to reach their potential, particularly in Indigenous and low socioeconomic status communities.

Career development

In relation to young people, the OECD noted in their 2002 review of career development policies that:

in recent years, career development services in Australian schools have become strongly influenced by two key policy issues. The first is ... to promote VET pathways in schools. The second is the increased concern for young people aged 15–19 who have dropped out of full-time education, training or employment, and are drifting in and out of unemployment, labour-market inactivity and marginal work, or are regarded as being at risk of doing so (OECD 2002).

The current National Career Development Strategy released in 2013 demonstrates the ongoing importance given to career development by the Australian Government. The Strategy represents an attempt to provide national leadership and support coordinated career development efforts by the states and territories. It is articulated as a means of raising educational attainment and skill levels, facilitating career transitions, increasing labour force participation and mobility, and redressing disadvantage. Its aim is that 'all Australians have the skills, knowledge and capabilities to manage their careers throughout life to support their individual wellbeing and participation in the workforce

and contribute to Australia's productivity⁴. Practical assistance is available under Making Career Connections, which comprises a number of initiatives ranging from programs which introduce young people to the world of work through to workshops to improve the capabilities of career advisors, teachers and parents to understand and apply labour market information.

The Australian Government has developed frameworks that can support the design and implementation of career development services. These are:

- the Australian Blueprint for Career Development
- the Core Skills for Work Developmental Framework (CSfW)⁵, which describes the core non-technical skills (often referred to as employability or generic skills) that have been identified by Australian employers as important for successful participation in work
- *Preparing secondary students for work: a framework for vocational learning and VET delivered to secondary students*⁶, which includes career education and work exploration as a key component of vocational learning
- the Careers Education Quality Framework⁷, designed as a way of improving career development services in schools or other settings for young people.

The Blueprint also guides career development practitioners assessing an individual's progress and designing developmentally appropriate programs and activities for young people from primary through to secondary years. Although the Blueprint has been in place since 2008, a review in 2012 revealed it is more widely used in the school and tertiary sectors but is yet to be adopted across the whole career development industry as was initially envisaged (Atelier Learning Solutions 2012).

The Career Industry Council of Australia (CICA), the national peak body for the career development industry, has developed resources that provide further support for practitioners. These include Guiding Principles for Career Development Services and Career Information Products⁸, a set of criteria that can be used to assess and continuously improve the quality of services or products; and the School Career Benchmarking Resource⁹, developed for school leadership teams as a quality improvement tool.

⁴<http://education.gov.au/national-career-development-strategy>

⁵<http://www.industry.gov.au/skills/ForTrainingProviders/AustralianCoreSkillsFramework/Pages/default.aspx>

⁶<http://www.scseec.edu.au/site/DefaultSite/filesystem/documents/Reports%20and%20publications/Publications/Preparing%20Secondary%20Students%20for%20Work.pdf>

⁷<http://cica.org.au/wp-content/uploads/Careers-Education-Quality-Framework.pdf>

⁸<http://cica.org.au/wp-content/uploads/Guiding-Principles-for-Career-Development-Services-Information-2007.pdf>

⁹<http://cica.org.au/wp-content/uploads/CICA-School-Career-Benchmarking-Resource.pdf>

CICA plays a central role in promoting professional practice in the career development industry in Australia. It has produced, with the support of the Australian Government, the Professional Standards for Australian Career Development Practitioners¹⁰. CICA provides professional development avenues such as the Australian Career Development Studies¹¹ learning materials and the Certificate IV in Career Development¹² and endorses higher education career development qualifications that meet the requirements of the Professional Standards.

The economic and social assumptions and goals of current career development policy have been questioned. Irving (2009) argues that career development activity should be located within a broader context that questions dominant economic rationalist models and cultural discourses that privilege particular social groups. In the prevailing model, career development is reduced to what Irving calls 'a process of occupational awareness, linear 'career planning' in relation to future participation in learning and work, the acquisition of employability skills, development of adaptive self-management strategies, and a belief in self-enterprise' (Irving 2010).

Irving (2010) advocates expanding the focus of career development beyond the 'employability' purpose and recommends a critical social justice perspective. He criticises the positioning of individuals as solely responsible for managing their careers and consequently for their success or failure in the labour market. Stanley and Mann (2014) argue that the resilience and adaptability required for a young person to navigate their career path may be nurtured by building their levels of social and cultural capital, that is, the quality of the social relationships that provide young people with the resources to achieve their education and career goals. The support mechanisms required for this include family and other social networks, the education system, the career education sector, employers, the broader community, and government policy, programs and services. However, young people with fewer supports are likely to have less access to quality services, fewer opportunities to experience the workplace and expand their knowledge of career options, and less chance of finishing school and going on to further study or employment.

A number of submissions to the National Career Development Strategy Green Paper, released in June 2012 to outline options, raised similar considerations for the future effectiveness of such a strategy (see, for example, Foundation for Young Australians; National VET Equity Advisory Council; The Smith Family¹³). The first is to prioritise the needs of disadvantaged groups most likely to experience information and skills deficits that restrict full participation in education, training and employment. Secondly, the strategy should be integrated with labour market policies. The Smith Family (2012) in

¹⁰<http://cica.org.au/professional-standards/>

¹¹<http://www.milesmorgan.com.au/australian-career-development-studies/>

¹²<https://training.gov.au/Training/Details/CHC42112>

¹³<https://submissions.deewr.gov.au/forms/archive/pages/national-career-development-strategy-green-paper-2012>

particular argued that labour demand needs to be taken into account as well as labour supply, and that labour market reform should be leveraged to generate a range of inclusive employment opportunities. Finally, the Foundation for Young Australians (2012) proposed that initiatives focusing on improving individual young people's career development and transitions should be delivered within career development structures that enable young people in general to build their understanding of, and ability to access, the worlds of work and the education and training pathways available to them. It also recommended ensuring at the same time that suitable education and training pathways exist for all groups of young people, and addressing the trend towards the increasing casualisation of the youth labour market.

Referring also to the Green Paper, Athanasou (2012) questions as a career practitioner the use of 'career development' as a policy and practice concept, as it conjures up visions of aspiration and achievement whereas many Australians may not connect with this view of work. He argues that there is 'inherent tension between the national good and the individual' within career development policy, noting that analysis of vocational interest and distribution of occupations in Australia from the myfuture website showed a discrepancy between individual career choices and labour demand (Athanasou 2012). Athanasou (2012) also argues that a national career development strategy alone cannot overcome serious social or economic disadvantage.

Service approaches

Urbis (2012c) describes the developmental stages across the lifespan and the corresponding career development service needs. During childhood and the primary education years, young people need to develop general life skills and competencies, discover their interests and aptitudes, and gain awareness and understanding of different occupations. As they move into adolescence and the secondary years of schooling, they need support to begin linking their abilities to career options and to investigate and apply these in different ways, including through contact with employers and the workplace. On moving into further education, the workplace or a combination of both, young people will benefit from advice and information about career options and the pathways to realise them.

Australia, along with many other western nations, has a range of career development services in place to address these needs. Brown et al. (2012) summarise the main formal career development services structure in Australia. There is a combination of Australian Government career resources, services and initiatives, such as myfuture¹⁴, the national online career information and exploration service, and state/territory government programs, particularly in schools. Also contributing to this formal structure are TAFE colleges and universities through their career services, and a number of private career practitioners. Informal careers advice can be provided by parents, peers, mentors, work

¹⁴<http://www.myfuture.edu.au/>

colleagues and community agencies, such as those offering youth development programs or volunteering opportunities.

Services for young people in schools

Schools play a key role at key stages in young people's lives through the delivery of **career education and advice**. Education Services Australia, a national, not-for-profit company owned by all Australian education ministers and established to support delivery of national priorities and initiatives in the schools, training and higher education sectors, provides the following definition of the scope of career education and advice in schools:

Career education describes the range of strategies or programs in schools that support career development through learning and development, and activities such as work experience and employer visits. Career advice involves the provision of information, advice and guidance by a qualified advisor in a one-on-one or small group setting. (Education Services Australia 2014, p. ii).

Miles Morgan Australia (2012b) note that:

State and territory-wide initiatives have been introduced to support young people's career development and transitions, such as the School to Work Program in NSW, ... a career development curriculum in Victoria, and Pathways Planning activities in most other States and Territories, alongside a range of typical information-based career activities that are predominantly determined at the local level. (p. 29)

The preference of young people for one-on-one counselling and the effectiveness of this approach have been highlighted earlier in this report. **Individual pathways planning initiatives** employ such a personalised approach and have been introduced in most states and territories to support young people's career development and transitions to further study and employment. Examples include the School to Work program implemented in New South Wales public secondary schools and Managed Individual Pathways (MIPs)¹⁵ in Victorian government schools.

In Victoria, MIPs aim to ensure that all students aged 15 years and over in government schools develop an individual career action plan (MIP/pathways plan) and the support to implement it. MIPs are intended to provide the platform for a successful transition through senior secondary schooling to further education, training or full-time employment. They are also a means of providing additional support to students at risk of disengaging or not making a successful transition. MIPs emphasise one-to-one management of each student's career and pathway planning. Support includes assisting them to identify their career aspirations, make informed and realistic choices, and participate in work experience. A review of the scheme found that many schools reported that MIPs had improved student engagement and staff–student relations,

¹⁵<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/support/Pages/mips.aspx>

increased the responsiveness of school staff to the needs of all students and raised Year 12 completion rates (Asquith Group 2005). In a study by Lamb and Rice (2008), some of the Victorian schools that were successful in promoting engagement and reducing early leaving organised their careers education around MIPs, but began pathways planning much earlier than at age 15, operating the program as early as Year 7, particularly for students at risk.

The Improved Career Development Services (ICDS) is a **multi-faceted initiative** established by the Victorian Government under the Maximising Engagement, Attainment and Successful Transitions (MEAST) stream of the National Partnership on Youth Attainment and Transitions. The ICDS includes four elements:

- the Victorian Careers Curriculum Framework (CCF), an online scaffold for a career development program and activities for all young people from Year 7 to Year 12 and in the ACE and VET sectors
- Regional Career Development Officers (RCDOs) to support individual practitioners and schools through regional careers networks and school clusters
- Study Grants for Careers Practitioners
- the Careers Mentoring Network Initiative (CMNI) to provide early support for those young people in the local area most likely to be marginalised or to drop out of school.

As part of their work, RCDOs aim to raise awareness of parents of the importance and benefits of career development through implementing careers resources for parents. The focus is on system improvement leading to sustainable pathways and effective transitions for all young people, particularly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people, those from non-English speaking backgrounds and low socioeconomic status communities, and young people with disabilities.

The CMNI established three mentoring programs to deliver services to similar groups; these programs will connect young people from Year 7 and Year 8 (and their families) with a volunteer mentor and provide additional activities, to explore their strengths, interests, values and goals, and develop their career awareness and aspirations.

The Victorian Careers Curriculum Framework is an example of **integration of career development in the curriculum**. The CCF includes Career Action Plan templates to record information regarding a young person's learning, wellbeing, career aspirations and pathway options. The CCF and the templates have been customised for young people from Indigenous backgrounds, English as a Second Language (ESL) backgrounds, low socioeconomic status (SES) communities, and young people with disabilities. Evaluation of the CCF identified best practice features including its flexible design, its applicability to the early years of secondary education, its focus on developmental stages and the corresponding activities, and the tools and guidelines for adapting career development activities to particular groups (KPMG 2012).

In Queensland, 'My Future My Plan' links the work in schools from Year 5 to Year 12 to the four phases of career development from the Australian Blueprint for Career Development.

Career education programs for schools may include **resources produced by third parties**, for example The Real Game career and life skills program for schools and the Foundation for Young Australians' Worlds of Work program. The distribution of the hard copy Job Guide to students in Year 10 is an example of information dissemination. Activities linking school, careers and the workplace include Year 10 work experience, structured workplace learning placements, programs partnering with employers such as Work Inspiration Pilots, community service – based learning activities in schools, and taster courses designed to give students some experience of vocational areas, for example the Try-A-Trade Program. Contact with providers of further education and training may be offered through university outreach programs and open days, visits, and tertiary information sessions.

Vocational education and training in schools (VETis) programs play a major role in the career development of young Australians. Helme and Hill (2003) provide some examples of this contribution, such as increasing retention into the post-compulsory years by motivating disengaged or reluctant students to re-engage in more useful and meaning learning that develops their skills and gives them the confidence to continue with education and training. The programs also have the effect of broadening students' career options, helping them to make career decisions informed by better knowledge of industry and business. Structured workplace learning is a key element of VET in Schools programs, enabling participants to learn relevant workplace skills, experience workplace culture and build relationships with employers.

Stokes, Wierenga and Wyn (2003) reported that young people participating in VET in Schools programs found the work placement provided the opportunity for them to practice what they had learned in the classroom as well as providing real work experiences that could help them make decisions about their future career directions. Urbis (2012c) report that the VET in Schools program is generally highly regarded by young people, their parents and teachers, and is seen as particularly valuable for students who know what they want to do because it provides an opportunity to complete part of their vocational study while still at school.

Employer involvement may include providing work experience for younger students or more formal work integrated learning arrangements for post-secondary students. School Business Community Partnership Brokers introduced young people to the world of work by bringing community stakeholders together. Another example of employer involvement in Australia is the piloting of Work Inspirations, introduced by the National Partnership Broker Network in 2011. Employer-led, Work Inspirations provides a career development framework for young people, combining hands-on experience, career discussions with adults in the workplace, and reflection and feedback. Employers design a program of career and work-related activities and conversations that suit both their

circumstances and the young person involved. An evaluation of the pilots found that young people were inspired by the range of career options presented to them and that employers saw mutual benefits for all involved (Turner 2013).

In the research underpinning the rationale for the National Career Development Strategy, Nous Consulting Group (2011) found that **career development in Australia is highly fragmented**, partly because of the federal structure of government, which gives state and territory governments autonomy in the distribution of education funds. Patton (2005) explains that as state and territory governments have responsibility for career education and counselling/advice in schools, different structures for both counselling services and career education have evolved. For example career counselling may be either incorporated into a broader role or provided by a dedicated careers advisor. To illustrate, Patton cites Queensland where guidance officers work across the areas of educational, career and personal counselling, and New South Wales and Victoria where schools have allocation for careers advisors.

Miles Morgan (2012b) found that the degree to which **career development is integrated into curriculum** also varies across Australia. For example Victoria has developed the CCF incorporating the elements of the Australian Blueprint for Career Development. In general, career development services in schools comprise formal career education programs, activities such as work experience and employer visits, and provision of career information, advice and guidance by a qualified advisor in either one-on-one or small group settings. **Programs that engage and inform parents** such as Parents as Career Transition Support (PACTS) are discussed later in the report.

Services for young people who have left school

Services for young people who have left school include those provided in institutions of further education such as TAFE colleges and universities, by government services, by career development practitioners, and by community organisations.

Miles Morgan Australia (2012b) describe **services in higher education institutions** as 'opt-in, multi-channel delivery service models for groups and individuals' but find evidence of partnership with teaching and learning staff to embed career management development into higher education courses in a variety of ways. Bridgstock (2009) argues that career management skill development needs to begin early in university programs and be a mandatory and assessable component of coursework. She proposes that relevant and effective career management programs in universities would involve academic staff, industry partners, careers service staff and students in both the curriculum design and implementation. Some level of continuing university-based career support to recent graduates could also be considered.

Miles Morgan Australia (2012b) also found a growing awareness in the **adult and community education sector** of the importance of making career development activities available to an increasingly youthful cohort of ACE users. A report from the Adult and Community Education Unit of the New South Wales Department of Education and

Training (2011) highlights the role of community colleges in providing alternative learning environments for young people at risk of disengaging from education and training, including individual guidance, support and pathways planning. A strength of the community college network in New South Wales is the strong partnerships with other local agencies, such as youth and employment services, and employers in order to provide structured workplace learning opportunities for young people.

There is also a range of career development service delivery models in TAFE colleges throughout Australia (Miles Morgan Australia 2012b). Guthrie and Nechvoglod (2011) note that the VET sector has played a less prominent role in career development services than schools and universities, due in part to its diverse and geographically dispersed student base. Furthermore, Halliday Wynes & Misko (2012) report that career development has often been a supplementary role for student counsellors whose main task is to assist students experiencing difficulties with learning or their personal lives. However, there is evidence of change, with VET providers being more proactive in promoting services and helping students to navigate career information, including online. For effective and inclusive career development services in the VET sector, Halliday Wynes and Misko (2012) recommend using knowledgeable, professionally qualified and well-connected staff with an understanding of client needs, the use of new and emerging technologies to access and provide information, and collaborative networks with employers and the local community.

Major career development services external to educational institutions are usually provided by government. Employment-related, but not dedicated career development, services open to young people outside the education system include Job Services Australia (JSA), Disability Employment Services (DES), Youth Connections (funding ceased in 2014), Skills for Education and Employment (SEE), and the Remote Jobs and Communities Program (RJCP).

An example of a targeted, individualised approach is the Indigenous Youth Careers Pathways Program¹⁶, which provides school-based traineeships with the aim of inspiring and supporting school completion and effective transition to further education or a job, and provides personal mentoring and case management to help manage barriers. Another example is the National Disability Coordination Officer (NDCO) Program¹⁷, which takes a collaborative approach to helping young people with a disability to increase their knowledge of post-school options and supporting them to participate in education and subsequent employment. The Australian Government also provides the myfuture career exploration service, the national career information service and Job Guide.

Career development practitioners provide services that help people to find career information, make occupational and study decisions, and undertake career changes.

¹⁶<https://employment.gov.au/indigenous-youth-careers-pathways-program>

¹⁷<http://education.gov.au/ndcoprogramme>

They work in various settings such as schools, universities and vocational training institutions, juvenile justice and employment support services, workplaces and private practice. The Career Education Association of Victoria (CEAV)¹⁸ lists services that may be provided to individuals or small groups, including career counselling, planning and education; help with job placement, resume preparation and job hunting strategies; and coordinating work experience or internships.

A typology of career development

Sweet et al. (2010) propose that career development services for young people and their supporters can be classified in three groups: services provided in schools, those that provide external support for the former and follow-up services for young people once they have left the education system. The typology (see Table 1) which follows, although not exhaustive, organises the responses and approaches to the career development needs of young people and their supporters already discussed, within these three dimensions. There may be some overlap where an activity or intervention plays more than one role.

¹⁸<http://www.ceav.vic.edu.au/career-development-practitioners>

Table 1: A typology of career development services for young people and their supporters

Delivery location	General approach and examples	Key supports/agents	Insights from the literature
1. Services for young people in schools	a. Face-to-face counselling e.g. interview with school careers advisor, school guidance counsellor, or case manager	Educators Career professionals employed by educational institutions Other agency professionals, e.g. case managers Parents	One-on-one counselling enables an individualised approach and allows trusted long-term relationships to develop. Guidance counselling may need to focus on higher priority issues such as learning or family difficulties, sidelining career discussions. Young people disengaged from school will miss out on in-school opportunities. Limits on resources in schools may prevent some students getting all the help they need at the right times.
	b. Individual pathways planning e.g. Managed Individual Pathways (Victoria), School to Work Program (NSW)	Educators Parents	Strong liaison between multiple agencies supports effective outcomes. One-on-one counselling can enable an individualised approach and enable trusted long-term relationships to develop. Young people disengaged from school will miss out on in-school opportunities.
	c. Curriculum integration e.g. Victorian Careers Curriculum Framework (Years 7–12)	Educators	Effective career curriculum frameworks can be integrated with the whole curriculum as an element of an education institution's strategic plan for career development. Educators involved in delivery have relevant qualifications or receive relevant professional development to support their designated role. Delivery can be tailored to different stages of young people's development. Learning materials can include a range of media and approaches to meet diverse needs.
	d. Career education packages for schools e.g. The Real Game ¹⁹ career and life skills program for schools Worlds of Work (WOW) (Foundation for Young Australians) ²⁰	Educators Parents Commercial publishers Third party providers	Large groups can be served by a small number of facilitators. Career exploration activities can be undertaken and decisions 'practised' in a simulated environment.

¹⁹<http://www.realgame.esa.edu.au/>

²⁰<http://www.fya.org.au/inside-fya/initiatives/worlds-of-work>

Delivery location	General approach and examples	Key supports/agents	Insights from the literature
	<p>e. Information dissemination e.g. 'Job Guide' to all? students in Year 10, Bullseye posters produced by the Australian Government Department of Education and Training</p>	<p>Educators Parents School career advisors or general counsellors Commercial publishers</p>	<p>Young people disengaged from school will miss out on in-school opportunities.</p>
	<p>f. Activities linking school, careers and the workplace:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year 10 work experience option • Structured workplace learning placements • Pre-apprenticeships • Work Inspiration pilots • Volunteering • Community service based learning activities in schools • Taster courses – short courses designed to give students some experience of vocational areas e.g. Try-A-Trade Program 	<p>Employers Schools Group training network</p>	<p>Young people disengaged from school will miss out on in-school opportunities. Practical work-related learning experiences are valued by young people. Applied learning curriculum and pedagogy may be a better fit to the strengths and interests of some students than academic curriculum. Connecting school curriculum with workplace learning opportunities can enable young people engage with local community and develop knowledge and networks that may help secure employment. Vocational education/qualifications can be undertaken as part of the senior school certificate, and young people finish schools with an entry-level employment qualification.</p>
	<p>g. Contact with providers of further education and training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University outreach programs, e.g. YuMi Deadly Maths (QUT), U@Uni Summer School Program, (UTS) • University open days • Internet career fairs • Visits and discussions with further education and training providers 	<p>Educational institutions School–university partnerships/consortiums Parents (taking student along to events)</p>	<p>Young people disengaged from school will miss out on in-school opportunities.</p>
2. External support for schools	<p>a. Pathways and employment services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth Connect (funding ceased 2014) • Disability Employment Services • Job Services Australia (JSA) 	<p>Schools Case managers, support workers and employment services staff Parents</p>	<p>Demand may outstrip available resources. Strong liaison between multiple agencies supports effective outcomes. Trusted, long-term relationships can be developed.</p>

Delivery location	General approach and examples	Key supports/agents	Insights from the literature
	<p>b. Professional career development services, Including career assessments and tests</p>	Professional career practitioners	<p>Career assessments and tests are one tool that can be used in a multi-faceted approach and to help discover career-related interests and abilities.</p> <p>Assessments can be delivered be face-to-face or online, and also self-administered via print or online media.</p> <p>Adult or professional assistance may be needed to interpret the assessment results and in link them with further career development activity.</p> <p>Difference such as culture or level of literacy may affect design and usefulness.</p>
	<p>c. Workplace experience See 1.f above</p>	Employers Schools	
	<p>d. Online information dissemination</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • myfuture (Australia's national career information service)²¹ • Job Guide (Australia)²² • CareerQuest (Careers New Zealand)²³ 		<p>Information is available anywhere, anytime.</p> <p>Online services can include automated interaction such as an assessment or game.</p> <p>Online services can provide a channel for communication.</p> <p>Some young people may not have access to internet.</p> <p>Some young people may not have the digital literacy skills to be able to benefit from online resources.</p> <p>Some young people lack skills or confidence to use remote services without direct support from an adult.</p> <p>Larger numbers can be reached using fewer resources</p> <p>Online services can reach young people who might not otherwise have sought career guidance, e.g. upon entry to university.</p>

²¹<http://www.myfuture.edu.au/>

²²<http://www.jobguide.thegoodguides.com.au/>

²³<http://www.careers.govt.nz/tools/careerquest/>

Delivery location	General approach and examples	Key supports/agents	Insights from the literature
	<p>e. Parent education and engagement via programs such as PACTS or online/print resources, e.g. Job Guide's 'Parents talking career choices'²⁴ Engaging Parents in Career Conversations (EPiCC) – online resource (Vic.) myfuture's 'Assist your Child'²⁵</p>	Third party providers	Advisors such as parents can benefit from support/advice in terms of having career conversations, and having access to knowledge about occupations, education and training pathways and employment opportunities.
	<p>f. Support networks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career Mentoring Network Initiative (Victoria) • Youth Mentoring Strategic Network (WA) • Koori Transitions Coordinators (Victoria) • Attendance and Retention Counsellors (Tasmania) 	Government providers Community groups	Mentoring can be formal or informal. Trusted, long-term relationships can be developed. Mentors can provide influential occupational role models.
	<p>g. Labour market information</p>	Labour Market Information Portal (Australia) ²⁶	Young people may need help to interpret and personalise information.
3. Services for young people who have left school	<p>a. Face-to-face counselling from public, private, or community providers</p>	Parents and caregivers Apprenticeship Support Officers (Vic.) Non-government organisations Faith-based organisations Community based mentors	Disadvantaged young people may not have access to structured mentoring networks through school or another employment service or the social capital network to be able to connect with a mentor. Formal counselling and mentoring can create bridges with employment and support success in the workplace.
	<p>b. Pathways and employment services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth Connect (funding ceased 2014) • Disability Employment Services • Job Services Australia (JSA) 	Case managers, support workers and employment services staff Parents	Demand may outstrip available resources. Strong liaison between multiple agencies supports effective outcomes. Trusted, long-term relationships can be developed.
	<p>c. Career development services in further education institutions</p>	TAFE, University career services	Young people disengaged from school will miss out on in-school opportunities.

²⁴ <http://www.jobguide.thegoodguides.com.au/Media/Files/PTCC-2015>

²⁵ <http://www.myfuture.edu.au/assist-your-child>

²⁶ <http://lmip.gov.au/>

Delivery location	General approach and examples	Key supports/agents	Insights from the literature
	d. Liaison with employers e.g. through apprenticeship brokers and transition services	Local Learning and Employment Networks (Vic.)	Employers provide knowledge of local labour markets. There can be opportunity to develop trusted, long-term relationships between the young person, the broker and the employer.
	e. One-stop-shop facilities	Job Services Australia	Provider may offer a single entry point to various services. Provider ideally works with local employers; community and health organisations; registered training organisations; federal, state, territory and local government departments; and other organisations to provide an integrated mix of support according to need.
	f. Online information See 2.d above	myfuture (Australia's national career information service)	
	g. Internships, traineeships, apprenticeships <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CareerTrackers Indigenous Internship Program²⁷ • ANZ Indigenous Traineeship Program²⁸ 	Employers Educational institutions Parents Mentors	Trusted, long-term relationships can be developed. Mentors can provide influential occupational role models. Young people can combine on the job experience and training with further study with ongoing employment as an outcome. Young people who are disengaged may not have access to these opportunities.
	h. Labour market information	Labour Market Information Portal (Australia) ²⁹	Young people may need help to interpret and personalise information.

²⁷<http://www.careertrackers.org.au/>

²⁸<http://www.anz.com.au/about-us/careers/indigenous-employment/indigenous-traineeships/>

²⁹<http://lmip.gov.au/>

4 Disadvantage and career development

Impact on career development

Earlier in the paper, disadvantage was defined as any barrier that hinders equity of participation and success in education and labour markets. More broadly, disadvantage acts to limit access to the resources that support full participation in society. Diemer and Ortega (2010) suggest that the idea of social exclusion is broader than material poverty, extending to processes of marginalisation and exclusion based on, for example, a young person's race/ethnicity, gender and ability status. Well-documented forms of disadvantage in Australia include low socioeconomic status (SES), Indigenous status, disability, including mental illness, and CALD background (McLachlan, Gilfillan & Gordon 2013).

Social exclusion may affect young people's career development and occupational attainment by constraining their academic preparation for further study and work, and limit their access to good quality career development, occupational role models, and social capital. Further, they may experience labour market discrimination and fewer opportunities to engage in work (Diemer & Ortega 2010).

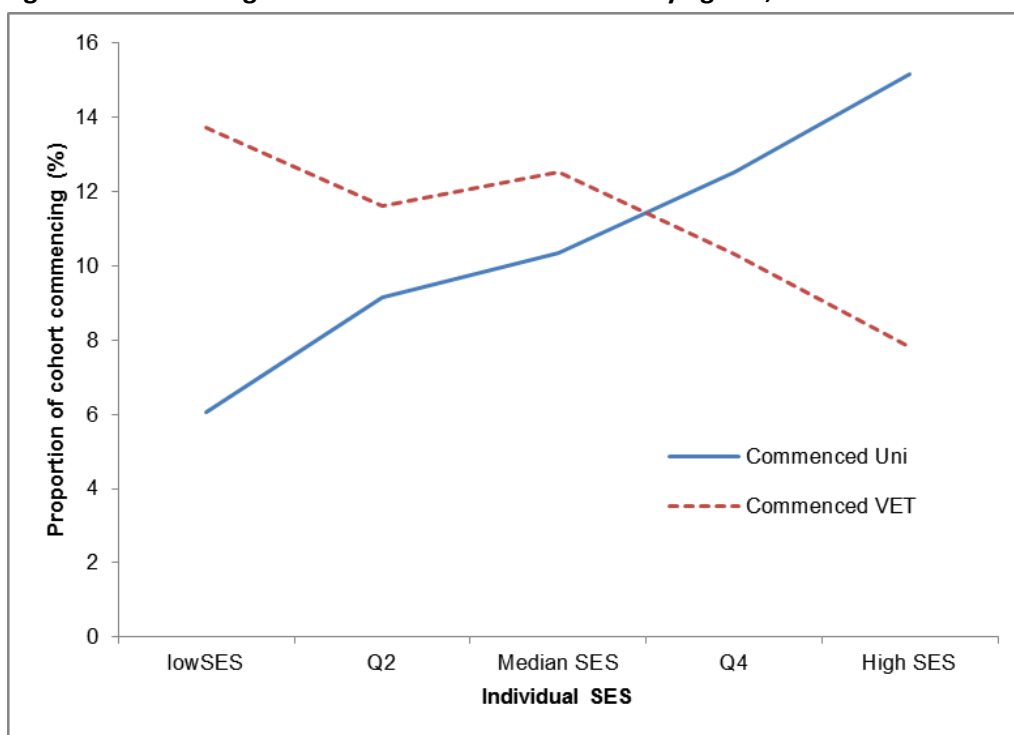
Conversely Semo and Karmel (2011) found that social capital plays an important role in influencing educational participation and has the potential to mitigate the effects of disadvantage. Social capital has been described as 'the attributes and qualities of family, social and community networks that facilitate cooperation between individuals and groups. It is underpinned by the interactions between family members, friends, neighbours, communities and institutions such as schools, clubs and workplaces' (Semo & Karmel 2011). The development of social capital is nurtured by access to educational, cultural and information resources and to emotional and financial support, from both formal and informal networks. Young people experiencing some form of disadvantage are less likely to have access to the networks and resources that foster social capital.

In addition, career development is closely linked to effective participation in education and training. Learning is fundamental to the career development process and those who are disadvantaged in terms of the conditions for successful learning are less able to participate and benefit. Barriers to successful learning include experiencing a learning disability, irregular school attendance and/or poor retention, a lack of parental/family support with learning, or having limited basic language, literacy and numeracy skill levels.

As Figure 2 shows, low SES individuals are more likely to commence educational pathways involving VET than higher education. There is some further evidence that the expansion of higher education in Australia (through initiatives implemented as part of the Bradley Review) is resulting in greater inequality in the sector as extra places are

being taken up by those who are most able to afford them rather than those from low SES backgrounds (Karmel & Lim 2013).

Figure 2: VET and higher education commencements by age 25, LSAY 2003 cohort



Since schools are a primary site of career education, young people who are disengaged from school are at risk of missing out on building ‘career management’ capacity. Consequently, they can face additional barriers to making a successful transition, experiencing ‘transition vulnerability’. British research has also highlighted the inequity within education systems where students from disadvantaged social backgrounds are more likely to go to schools with fewer resources, and their families are less likely to have the cultural, social and economic capital to make the most of the education system and gain access to more prestigious career pathways (Archer 2010). Doyle (2011) notes that socioeconomic differences are associated with differences in information about work, work experience and occupational stereotypes, which then affect occupational interests and career choices. Furthermore, higher education is more costly; and ‘fitting in’ may be more difficult for young people from a lower socioeconomic background. Social inequalities can then continue into employment, limiting participation in particular occupations (Archer 2010).

Cobb-Clark and Gorgens (2012) suggest that there is growing evidence that living with or receiving financial support from parents can play an important role in ensuring that young people make a successful transition into adulthood. Their research shows that young people who experience socioeconomic disadvantage while growing up receive less co-residential and financial support from their parents than do their more

advantaged peers. Further, there is a clear link between a young person's engagement in study and work and the parental support that he or she receives.

Digital literacy is another potential barrier faced by disadvantaged young people. The internet is now an integral part of society and provides an important channel for career development (Hooley 2012). It can be used to deliver information, provide an automated interaction such as an online self-assessment, or act as a platform for communication. To have equitable opportunities for career development via the online medium, young people will need access, and skill in using technology. Researchers talk of these factors as contributing to a young person's 'digital career literacy' (Bimrose, Hughes & Barnes 2011; Bowles 2013; Hooley 2012; Hooley, Hutchinson & Watts 2010). Young people who do not have access to the internet are excluded from any career development activity delivered online; for example only around 63 per cent of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population had access to the internet in 2011 compared to around 85 per cent of the non – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population (ABS 2011).

Barriers to career development

Young people at risk of social exclusion often have weaker connections with schools, universities and VET institutions, and families (Urbis 2012c). When young people leave school early, their opportunities for access to career development support activities are diminished. They look for career advice from a trusted and authoritative source that they know, preferably someone with whom they can build a long-term relationship (Evans & Rallings 2013; Urbis 2012c). They need equivalent opportunities through youth transition or employment services that can provide career education and planning, information, counselling and workplace learning experiences. These young people want service providers to take a holistic approach to their career development, accounting for their interests and abilities and not just focusing on helping them to find short term and casual work. Importantly, they do not want to have assumptions made about what they can and cannot achieve (Miles Morgan Australia 2012b; Urbis 2012c).

Disadvantaged young people need career development services that take account of their social context and their current situations. They need career development that includes exposure to the world of work, providing opportunities to experience the work environment, workplace culture and the kinds of skills needed to be effective at work, to see occupational role models and explore different occupations, and the chance to develop relationships that could help them to secure employment later (Nous Consulting Group 2011). Engaging and equipping key people in young people's lives with the tools to support their career development is another strategy to help redress disadvantage. This is especially important with regard to parents as the key 'influencers' of aspirations and often the preferred source of career information. Many parents feel ill-equipped to help, lacking the knowledge of available occupations, related education and training pathways, or possible job opportunities to confidently discuss careers with

their young people (Collins & Cash 2014; Levine & Sutherland 2013; Nous Consulting Group 2011).

Young people often face multiple barriers which have a cumulative effect. For example, young people in regional, rural and remote areas are disadvantaged by limited exposure to different careers and the limited number of universities and VET institutions in their home towns. Their career horizons are therefore constrained and they often have to move away from home to pursue tertiary study or to seek employment (McIlveen, Morgan & Bimrose 2012; Urbis 2012c). Other barriers to accessing career development information include quality of online services, finance and transport. Fleming and Grace (2014) suggest that for those young people who from both rural and low SES backgrounds, negative family attitudes towards further study and a tendency to overemphasise financial and distance barriers compared with higher SES families living in the same areas have a compounding discouraging effect.

Miles Morgan Australia (2012c) undertook research for CICA into effective career development services for young people with a disability. The research found that young people with a disability face the same issues as other young people entering the workforce. However, disability creates additional challenges that can influence career choices, such as availability of transport, high living costs and accessibility of buildings. They may also face negative views about their ability, and limited workplace experience.

Young carers face particular challenges to participation in education, training and employment resulting from their caring responsibilities. Young carers are defined as 'children and young people aged 25 or younger who provide substantial unpaid support to a family member with a chronic illness, disability, mental health issue and/or problems with alcohol or other drugs' (Hamilton & Adamson 2013). In the research undertaken by Urbis (2012c), young carers reported they needed flexible work and study options that took account of their personal circumstances. Finance was reported as a key barrier to post-school study, with many young carers living on low incomes.

Many young people who are refugees or from CALD backgrounds face barriers to career development, which include low levels of education and English language ability. Urbis (2012c) found that, for their career development, many young refugees wanted to develop their English language proficiency along with gaining knowledge of career pathways, the Australian labour market and cultural norms in Australian workplaces.

Gallegos and Tilbury (2006) distinguish two groups among young people from refugee backgrounds in terms of their career development service needs: those with academic ambitions who want to continue in mainstream education and those who may soon leave, or have already left school. The first group need help to broaden their awareness of possible careers and training options so their aspirations are realistic and they are able to make appropriate decisions. The second group need help to develop job search and work-based language, literacy and numeracy skills, and an understanding of workplace culture and regulation. Effective career development or employment services

need to include individual casework and referral to other services (for example, social workers, health and mental health care support), work experience placements, support with job search, applications and interview skills, assistance in liaising with employers, orientation to Australian work cultural norms and regulations, mentoring and post-employment support (Gallegos & Tilbury 2006; Olliff 2010). Urbis (2012c) found that teachers and career practitioners needed to better engage parents of these young people to help them build realistic and informed expectations of their children and understand the Australian education system and the opportunities provided by career development.

The Mission Australia Youth Survey 2013 (Mission Australia 2014) reveals that many young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people face several barriers to achieving their educational and occupational aspirations. Barriers may include a lack of career advice, lack of family support, geographic isolation resulting in a lack of job opportunities and further education facilities in their local area, and the absence of positive occupational role models. The survey results highlight the significance of place, family and community support and encouragement on both the formation and attainment of young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's career and employment aspirations. The study suggests that the goal for schools, programs and services is to engage further with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and communities, assisting parents to access the knowledge needed to help students to navigate pathways to employment.

There are a number of known features of effective career development support for young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. Helme and Lamb (2011) report that the most consistent approach is highly coordinated individual case management supported by counsellors who understand their clients and the issues they face. Urbis (2012c) found a general view among the Indigenous students and their parents surveyed that advice from an Indigenous career practitioner was not essential as long as advisors had Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural awareness training. Other important elements are an institutional culture that fosters good relationships with Indigenous families, timely information and support in gaining financial assistance for education and training costs, and workplace learning (Helme 2010). The Jobs Australia Indigenous Network³⁰ note that effective programs are those that build motivation and confidence, provide a 'line of sight' to a job, use a coordinated or 'wrap-around' service, and build foundation skills. Urbis (2012c) confirmed the finding of Helme (2010) about the need to link educational pathways with employment opportunities, that is to keep education 'in the line of sight' of a job.

A number of dedicated initiatives have been developed to address the needs of young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The RJCP aims to provide a more

³⁰<http://jaitn.com.au/news/2014/01/submission-indigenous-jobs-and-training-review-there-no-silver-bullet>

streamlined and flexible service for Indigenous people in remote areas. It provides employment and participation activities, including personalised support for job seekers and additional support for those with a disability. It also offers the Remote Youth Leadership and Development Corps (Youth Corps) to help young people move successfully from school to work. The Indigenous Youth Careers Pathways Program (IYCP) gives young Indigenous students the opportunity to start careers through school-based apprenticeships and traineeships. Services and activities to be delivered under the IYCP Program include school-based traineeships, school-based aspiration building events and activities, mentoring both in school (including in the workplace for school-based trainees) and post school, support for employers, and engaging with employment services and training providers (DEEWR 2012).

In Australia, Indigenous people are most severely under-represented in higher education (Watson 2013). Initiatives to redress the imbalance include university outreach programs, online learning programs and internship programs. For example, the CareerTrackers Indigenous Internship program³¹ aims to support the development of young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander professionals. This initiative recruits pre-professional Indigenous university students and places them with private sector employers in a multi-year internship, with the aim of converting from intern into full-time employee upon completion of their degree. YuMi Deadly Maths is a university outreach program that works with schools. A cooperative initiative of Queensland University of Technology and Griffith University, the program is focused on improving students' academic achievement in mathematics, as well as their educational engagement more broadly. It is underpinned by research and the use of:

decolonising methodologies that include negotiating interventions with community Elders before entering schools; working with students, teachers and community members to build connections between western and Indigenous epistemologies; and positioning researchers and teachers as learners in relation to Indigenous knowledge and culture (Sellar, Gale & Parker 2009).

The Dusseldorp Skills Forum (2009) emphasised the need to strengthen continued engagement in learning and work for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. It recommended that schools should be funded to expand workplace experience programs to include part-time and casual work, holiday cadetships and structured volunteering opportunities. A further recommendation was stronger engagement with local industry and employers to facilitate work-based training, work placement connected to study, and local work opportunities. One example is the ANZ Indigenous Traineeships³², which are offered either part-time while the young person is still at school or full-time. The traineeships provide paid time in the workplace, a qualification on completion, support from staff and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mentors, and career opportunities.

³¹<http://www.careertrackers.org.au/>

³²<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/aboriginal/pages/wannikanz.aspx>

The role of parents

The significant influence of parents on their children's educational and career aspirations and achievements in general is well documented (British Youth Council 2009; Gemici et al. 2014; Homel & Ryan 2014; Levine & Sutherland 2013; Miles Morgan Australia 2010; Perkins & Peterson 2005). Kintrea, St Clair and Houston (2011) also note the well-established alignment between what hopes parents have for their children and what children themselves aspire to. The more engaged parents are with their children's future educational aspirations and with their school, the better the educational outcomes for the young people.

Miles Morgan Australia (2012a) found that the aspect of parental engagement seen as most influential on student learning and achievement is the level of educational aspiration parents have for their children. Emerson et al. (2012) elaborate on this concept as a set of parental behaviours described as 'academic socialisation' where parents pass on to their children their views on the value of education, and discuss and plan educational and occupational strategies and goals. Hughes and Thomas (2003) propose that family processes, including socialisation and parent-child relations are a key dimension in which the family influences career development.

Apart from their influence on their young people's aspirations, parents and other caregivers are often the preferred source of career information and guidance for their young people (Bedson & Perkins 2006; Bryce et al. 2007; Patton 2001). Researchers in the United Kingdom and in New Zealand also found that students perceive their parents as their main source of career information and advice (British Youth Council 2009; Livingstone 2009). Two key insights for career development practice therefore emerge: the need to promote active involvement of parents in their children's career development and the importance of attending to family relationship factors—that is acknowledging the young person within the context of their family. Crane, Durham and Kaighin (2013) suggest that family expectations or negative experiences with educational systems may undermine young people's career and educational goals. They also note that developing aspirations which differ from family and community norms, particularly for marginalised young people, can be difficult as they may need to 'develop a different persona which ignores their cultural identify' (p. 38).

The significant role of parents and other caregivers in the education and career thinking and planning of their young people already noted warrants the acknowledgement and recruitment of parents as career development supporters.

Programs for parents

Given the crucial influence of parents, their effectiveness as career co-facilitators relies on awareness of this influence along with their capacity (skills, knowledge and attitudes) and confidence to play their role of 'career ally' successfully (Levine & Sutherland 2013; Soresi et al. 2014). Nous Consulting Group (2011) report that many parents perceive the world of work to have changed so much that they find it difficult to provide advice to

their children. Collins and Cash (2014) found that parents felt ‘underprepared and uninformed’ to support their children and adolescents with career advice. Parents in the Levine and Sutherland study (2013) reported that they did not want to influence their children in case they narrowed their choices. Levine and Sutherland (2013) recommend increasing the career exploration skills of parents, enhancing their awareness of the importance of their role early in their children’s schooling, and encouraging career exploration conversations between parents and children.

Bedson and Perkins (2006) describe well-designed careers and transition programs for parents as those which assist parents to understand careers and the labour market, to learn how to access and use career transition resources, to understand their own influence in the transition process, and to engage with and support their children in positive ways. The Parents as Career Transition Support (PACTS) program developed in Australia features group workshops run by a trained facilitator to equip parents with knowledge of education and training pathways to support their children’s career development. In addition to information, the program also offers tools to facilitate engagement between parents and their children. In their evaluation of the PACTS program, Bedson and Perkins (2006) highlight success factors such as using small groups in informal and friendly settings, encouraging active participation and interaction, employing skilled and knowledgeable staff, providing clear and focused information, and being inclusive of different abilities and literacy levels. Borlagdan and Peyton (2014) show that the PACTS program builds the confidence of parents by helping them to understand that careers follow many pathways over a longer period of time; and further, that young people will make many career decisions and the career support and advice that parents provide is ongoing.

A number of programs similar to PACTS have been developed in Canada, also using workshops and some designed specifically for parents with children in a particular age group. For example, the Parents as Career Coaches (PACC) workshop³³ is offered to parents of either junior or senior high school age students, teaching them how to help their children make informed education and career decisions. The Canadian Career Development Foundation (CCDF) offers a range of age-specific workshops³⁴ for parents of children ranging from kindergarten age through to young adulthood, and for young people in senior secondary and post-secondary education, or returning to school or work. Lasting Gifts³⁵, also developed by the CCDF, comprises a series of workshops for parents and guardians wanting to provide career development support to their teenagers. Lasting Gifts was adapted in 2010 by the CEAV but no evaluative literature was found for any of these Canadian programs or the CEAV initiative.

³³ <http://parentsascareercoaches.ca/>

³⁴ <http://www.ccdf.ca/ccdf/index.php/training/training-materials>

³⁵ <http://www.ceav.vic.edu.au/catalogue/140/1572>

Parents as Career Partners (PACP) workshops have been offered in Western Australia by the Department of Education. Run by trained staff, the workshops can be customised to meet audience needs, for example parents/caregivers of disabled children. In order to more fully engage parents in supporting their children's career transitions, Turner (2006) recommends a suite of support mechanisms including PACP workshops, home-based and interactive resources (for example CD-ROMs, a career hotline, parent-friendly websites), specialist support from career guidance and transition personnel, and parental involvement in the development of individual pathway plans and portfolios.

Some overseas programs have undergone evaluation. Explore your Horizons, part of the Future to Discover pilot, provided Grade 10–12 students in Canada with career education through a series of workshops including their parents, as well as a website and a magazine. One aim was to teach parents how to support their children in their career exploration process. An evaluation in which a cohort of Year 9 students were randomised to four experimental groups (including a control) found the program to have increased demand for post-secondary education, especially among key groups that normally have lower rates of enrolment (Ford et al. 2012). The Key Stage 2 Career-Related Learning Pathfinder was a pilot program for Years 3–6 students (aged 7–11) in disadvantaged areas of England. One aim was to engage parents/carers in the process. An evaluation by Wade et al. (2011) found that few schools were successful in engaging parents in the pilot although some examples of good practice were found. Although 'good practice' was not strictly defined, some improvements cited were increased awareness, knowledge and understanding of types of employment and pathways to get there, understanding of different sources of help and advice about making choices, and, for some students, attendance and attainment (Wade et al. 2011).

5 From information to engagement

Emerging good practice

The following features of effective career development services have emerged from the literature (see, for example, Sweet et al. 2010):

- integrating career education and guidance within the school curriculum as a whole
- providing relevant and appropriate activities and content for the developmental age of the audience
- involving many opportunities to experience the world of work
- fostering self-knowledge in relation to suitable careers
- beginning early on in the years of schooling
- delivery by qualified staff with current knowledge of the labour market
- focusing on the development of skills to manage a career over the lifespan
- providing access to appropriate help when it is needed, regardless of stage of life.

Watts and Sultana (2004) stress the importance of career development in schools both in helping young people to make initial career choices and in laying the foundations for lifelong learning and career development. Career development in schools is at its most effective when seen as an essential part of the curriculum. Research by the Office for Standards in Education (2013) found that schools providing effective career development had made it a strategic priority and had a clear vision for how information and advice on careers would support their students' overall development.

Some lessons from international experience support the importance of a strategic approach to career development in schools and good partnerships with external agencies providing career development services. Unlike in Australia, in New Zealand career education in schools is mandated for young people from Year 7, with an emphasis on those students identified as at risk of leaving school unprepared for the transition to work or further study. Such services can be purchased from external providers or developed internally. A 2012 review of provision in secondary schools found that high quality services require a school-wide focus that supports students to have regular, coordinated and ongoing opportunities to develop career management competencies. The review found that in the best programs the focus was on individual futures – that is helping students identify, plan and strive for their aspirations for the future, rather than just pathways or jobs, and all staff were well trained and actively supported students through effective relationships (New Zealand Education Review Office 2012).

English schools are also mandated to provide all students in Years 9–11 with career development services through partnerships between schools and external agencies. Based on the model provided by the Department for Education, schools are required to

direct students to timely career development activities. A review of this system by the Office for Standards in Education (England) found that in many cases school partnerships with local authorities were not working well to support more vulnerable students in making choices, including those who had special needs; and in some cases teachers were required to deliver careers guidance without sufficient training or knowledge of career options available. Schools demonstrating effective career development had made it a strategic priority (OFSTED 2013).

Enhancing engagement

As noted earlier in this report, Urbis (2012c) found that young people in schools are currently receiving less than they would like of the information and activities they find most useful such as work experiences and visits to workplaces. Young people wanted schools to provide them with more practical work experience, more direct contact with universities, TAFEs and employers, and more accurate information about potential employment and educational options. They also wanted schools to provide personalised one-on-one career information and advice that catered to their interests and strengths. Urbis (2012c) found evidence that some teachers and parents, particularly those in rural, regional and remote locations, rely on the internet to obtain career information and advice to help their children. These stakeholders suggest that a website providing a one-stop-shop for information on local labour market demand, skills shortages, awards and pay rates, and tertiary courses and their costs would be helpful.

Urbis (2012c) found the biggest gap was in services for young people who are no longer in education: most of these young people did not know where to go for career development advice, and where advice was received it was not satisfactory. Jobs Australia (2014) suggests that there are a number of gaps in current services that aim to facilitate participation of disengaged and at risk young people in education, training and employment. While the Better Schools plan is intended to reduce the impact of socioeconomic disadvantage upon outcomes, it is likely only to assist young people who are enrolled at a school. Individualised approaches such as Managed Individual Pathways, which have been shown to be more effective in addressing individual needs, are offered in schools. A range of transition to work or further study pathways and supports are provided within schools and young people disconnected from the education system no longer have access to these.

Among the services for young people out of schools, Youth Connections was a capped service and not able to meet the demand for services, even from those who met eligibility requirements. Job Services Australia providers (JSAs) are not resourced to provide the intensive support needed by highly disadvantaged and disengaged young people. Urbis (2012c) reported that many of these young people are forced to seek career information and advice from the internet and through their own personal networks, including employers. The recommendation for young people not in education was for a clear, central entry point where they can access a range of career development

services suited to their individual needs and preferences (Evans & Rallings 2013; Urbis 2012c).

Miles Morgan Australia (2012b) cite from Hughes and Gratton (2009) a number of keys to providing services for disengaged youth, including outreach and engagement; diagnosis of need; relevant services; partnerships to provide a comprehensive service; a central point of contact to negotiate on behalf of young people with providers of social services, education, training and employment; pre- and post-transition support, involvement of young people in developing services, and effective staffing supportive of long-term relationships. Effective delivery channels could include walk-in centres, face-to-face delivery, and telephone and online services (Guthrie & Nechvoglod 2011; Halliday Wynes & Misko 2012; Miles Morgan Australia 2012a).

In the United Kingdom, the National Careers Service³⁶ provides independent and impartial career development service via a website and a telephone service for all users from the age of 13 years. Funding is also provided for face-to-face interviews and support for adults aged 19 and over from specialist careers guidance advisors at community locations, including job centres. Young people aged 18 may use this service if they receive unemployment benefits. In New Zealand, Wales and Scotland, young people who are disengaged from or have left school are served by an 'all-age guidance' service. Such lifelong systems were also recommended by the OECD career development policy review undertaken in 2004. Watts (2010) describes the main benefits of such services as cost effectiveness, coherence and continuity of provision (with no age-related cut-off points in the transition from youth to adulthood), and the added value associated with a service that caters for both young people and adults. Examples of this added value are access to adult labour market intelligence, the opportunity for young people and their parents to access career development services jointly, and greater leverage for action on issues relating to disability and learning difficulty. Drawbacks include the distinctive needs of young people and adults and the preference of young people to go to different places for their services than those for adults.

Young people not in education appear to be more likely to use online resources to obtain career information, partly because of the lack of viable alternatives (Evans & Rallings 2013). Walsh et al. (2011) argue that information and communications technology represents an important opportunity but their research into ICT for young learners in the VET sector also identifies some conditions needed to realise its potential for disengaged young people. For example, it needs to be relevant to individual learner needs, available when the learner wants it, and use a blended learning delivery approach, harnessing the multimedia and interactive functions of web 2.0, smart phones and mobile technology. Again, equality of access and ICT competency cannot be assumed and input from the young people themselves on learning design is important to its effectiveness. From a review of a small-online learning pilot with disadvantaged

³⁶<https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/Pages/Home.aspx>

young people, Myconos (2014) noted that 'while there is no doubt that new communications media can enhance the educational experience, such technologies should play a complementary role to guided face-to-face engagement' (p.vii).

Parents

Miles Morgan Australia (2012a) suggest that the effective engagement of parents in the career development of their children and young people is still evolving, pointing to a lack of purpose-built parental engagement in career development approaches. The importance of this engagement is acknowledged by government, schools and parents themselves but a coordinated program of career development is not currently provided in Australia's educational system. Sweet et al. (2010) suggest that to meet national and international best practice, career development needs not only to be systematically incorporated into the regular school curriculum but also to include advice and support for key family members on a regular basis.

In developing parents' ability and confidence as career 'allies', two key challenges emerge: designing the kinds of services parents need to help them foster their children's career transitions at various points during their childhood and adolescence; and determining the best ways to engage the parents in these services, particularly 'hard-to-reach' parents. 'Hard-to-reach' is a two-way issue in that barriers to engagement may arise from personal circumstances of families and individuals but also from unsuitable or inadequate services. Livingstone (2009) suggests that parents, particularly those from low socioeconomic (SES) backgrounds, rely largely on schools to provide career information for themselves and their children. For those parents who find engagement with schools difficult, more effective and inclusive strategies from schools are needed to develop trust (Emerson et al. 2012).

A study by Auerbach (2007) provides insight into how marginalised parents construct their role in promoting their children's access to higher education and how schools and educators can appreciate and harness these alternative forms of positive parental involvement. Auerbach shows that, in contrast to the economic, cultural and social capital accessed by higher SES parents, the parents in this study drew on strategies such as talking to their children about the value of education and commitment to study and providing emotional support, to facilitate their children's paths to higher education. However some of these parents may lack knowledge about where to access information, for example about post-school study options and financial assistance, and confidence in their ability to provide this kind of career support. Other barriers include time, cost, language or cultural differences such as beliefs about parental engagement, and school approaches and attitudes (Levine & Sutherland 2013; Livingstone 2009).

Menzies (2013) suggests engagement is most effective when it is collaborative, and schools engage with parents through connections with their needs and interests in environments where they feel at ease. Saulwick Muller Social Research (2006) also suggested that effective partnerships require changes in communication from

‘occasional, one-way and socio-culturally homogenous communication to frequent, two-way and culturally sensitive interaction’ (p.22). The Australian Family–School Partnerships Framework³⁷ similarly contains examples such as using personal contact to encourage participation, ensuring an enjoyment factor in activities, and investing time in relationships. The framework indicates communication should be personal, culturally appropriate, and open to families’ needs and attitudes, acknowledging families as partners who have an important role in solving problems. Helme (2010) highlights the need for ‘hands-on’ assistance for some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families, so that those families with no history of employment or limited experience with the education system can gain knowledge and confidence in discussing careers with their children.

Auerbach (2007) argues that when schools have a better understanding of how families support their children’s education they can develop partnerships through informed parent participation and cultivation of respectful and culturally sensitive home–school relationships. Auerbach proposes removing barriers to access and communication, harnessing parental interest, and recognising the many ways in which families can support their children beyond practices such as helping with homework, attending school events, and communicating with teachers and other school staff. Strategies suggested include providing information in multiple languages and formats and culturally relevant parent outreach programs where participants feel comfortable to discuss issues and gather information.

Miles Morgan Australia (2012a) found that more mature strategies both in Australia and overseas employ multiple elements, thereby increasing their chances of reaching parents at different points in time. There are good examples to build on, including the PACTS program, using approaches that foster parental engagement and develop their career support confidence, knowledge and skills. The PACTS evaluation by (Bedson & Perkins 2006) while reporting positive responses from parent participants, raised questions about how accessible these workshops might be to more disadvantaged parents in the school community. This in turn raises the challenge of how to encourage participation by those who could most benefit from the program. Borlagdan and Peyton (2014) in their evaluation of PACTS also note integration with schools as an area for development.

³⁷http://www.familyschool.org.au/files/3013/8451/8364/Family-school_partnerships_framework.pdf

6 Conclusions

Career development services have an important role in ensuring social inclusion for all young Australians but many young people do not access quality career development. Reasons include disadvantage that limits engagement with available services, lack of appropriate services, and low aspirations. There are both policy and program approaches that could increase this access.

Educational institutions, particularly primary and secondary schools have a key coordinating role in integrating career development within the curriculum, and engaging parents, families and the community, including employers. Helme and Lamb (2011) describe school-wide strategies that work to maintain engagement and improve learning outcomes of students, particularly those at risk of low achievement or early leaving, including quality career education, mentoring, targeted skill development and intensive case management.

The qualitative research undertaken by Urbis (2012a) revealed general agreement among career practitioners, parents and teachers that career development services need to be available at an earlier stage of schooling than is currently common. The general view is that students can be introduced to a wide range of careers and have their horizons broadened from primary school. This is particularly important for primary students from low socioeconomic backgrounds and in regional, rural and remote locations who may have limited exposure to different careers. Teachers said career development in primary school should include career education but not career guidance. Engaging and informing parents/caregivers about their children's learning and career exploration early on in their schooling, can act to strengthen young people's support networks and help raise their education and career aspirations.

Other important aspects are ensuring access to dedicated, trained practitioners; providing teaching staff with professional development and support in their roles as providers of career information and advice; and partnerships with independent programs such as PACTS, and other government agencies, such as National Disability Coordination Officers. Drawing on research into young people's experiences of career education in senior secondary school, Stokes, Wierenga & Wyn (2003) highlighted the role of all teachers and parents in career education and the need for professional development to equip all teachers to integrate career, enterprise and transition education into other learning areas of the school curriculum.

Employers have an important role to play in the career development of young people. Turner (2013) quotes recent UK research that indicates a statistically significant positive relationship between the number of employer contacts (such as careers talks or work experience) that a young person experiences in school (at age 14–19) and their confidence (at age 19–24) in progressing towards their ultimate career goals, the likelihood of whether (at age 19–24) they are not in education, employment or training, and their earnings if salaried.

In summary, the research reviewed shows that increased access to the benefits of career services can be achieved through strategies including:

- early intervention to strengthen and inform social networks and raise aspirations, particularly through engagement and education of parents, beginning in the primary years of schooling
- the integration of career education, exploration and advice within the school curriculum
- interaction with occupational role models, mentors, employers and the workplace
- the tailoring of approaches to meet the specific needs of all young people, especially those experiencing disadvantage
- the engagement of parents, educators, social services, community and employers.

7 Appendix

The search focused mainly on literature published in the last five years, although some earlier literature has been included. Although the focus was Australian, literature from New Zealand, Canada, Great Britain, the United States and Europe was also consulted where comparison was useful or lessons for practice were drawn for the Australian context. References included both academic literature and 'grey' literature (not controlled by commercial publishers) and were sourced from JSTOR, EBSCO E-Journals Database, VOCEDplus, ERIC and Google Scholar. Further references were sourced by scanning bibliographies in references already selected for the review.

The following search phrases were used in various combinations:

- career development, career guidance, career advice, career transition/career transitions, career education
- program, best practice, policy
- youth, young people, childhood, adolescence, youth transitions
- youth unemployment, youth at risk, disengaged youth/young people
- disadvantaged/disadvantaged youth, low socioeconomic, culturally and linguistically diverse/CALD/refugees, disabled/disability, social inclusion/exclusion
- work experience, work-related learning

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