

Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment
Education and Employment Legislation Committee
Jobs and Skills Australia Bill 2022

Submission from:

Career Development Association Australia
PO Box 378 Brighton
SA 5048 Australia
[CDAA website](#)



About CDAA

The Career Development Association Australia (CDAA) welcomes the introduction of the Jobs and Skills Australia Bill 2022 and thanks the Committee for the opportunity to provide feedback.

The CDAA is Australia's national, multi-sectoral professional association for career development practitioners, with more than 1300 members working across Australia in all sectors of the profession. This broad membership servicing Australians at all career stages means CDAA grasps the interconnections within the careers ecosystem, speaks for career-related issues that impact Australians across their lifespan, and explains the connections between multiple policies and diverse programs. Please refer to the [CDAA website](#) for further information.

Career Development is a specific discipline underpinned by accredited qualifications, proven theory, and recognised practice. CDAA members are recognised Career Development Practitioners who conform to a Professional Standards Framework and a Code of Practice. Members are governed by ethical standards, require substantiated, industry-related qualifications, and are obliged to complete a minimum number of professional development hours every year.

Read our latest report [Navigating Life's Career Transitions](#)

Summary of this CDAA Submission

The proposed functions of Jobs and Skills Australia as detailed in Part 2; 9 Functions of Jobs and Skills Australia, Jobs and Skills Australia Bill 2022 (refer Appendix 1), does not include any reference to the critical activity of providing quality careers advice to Australians.

This function is currently the domain and responsibility of the [National Careers Institute](#) (NCI). The National Careers Institute is established by Ministerial Charter 2020-2022 (refer Appendix 2).

To maximise value to Australian society, workforce and economy from significant investment in and work of, Jobs and Skills Australia, the Committee is encouraged to consider how the critical work of providing quality careers advice to Australians can continue and expand. This could be through additional functions being added to Jobs and Skills Australia, or extending the Charter of the National Careers Institute beyond 2022, or a combination of both.

CDAA is not in a position to understand which is the most appropriate model, however it is imperative that the critical careers advisory function for Australians throughout their working lives is not lost. Specific outcomes, accountabilities and a budget for career advisory activities must be maintained.

Detailed Comment

1. Critical Activity – provision of quality careers advice

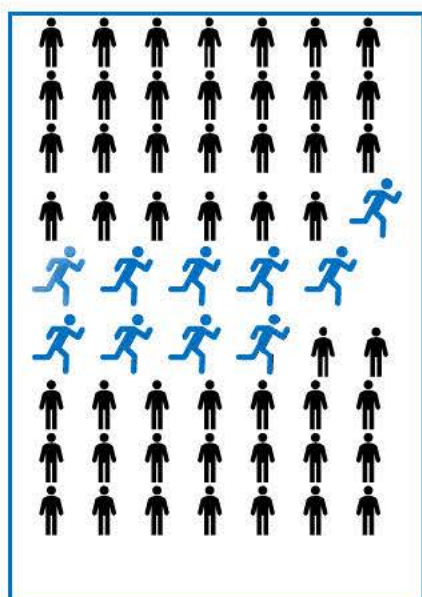
The proposed functions of Jobs and Skills Australia as detailed in Part 2; 9 Functions of Jobs and Skills Australia, Jobs and Skills Australia Bill 2022 (refer Appendix 1), does not include any reference to the critical activity of providing quality careers advice to Australians.

Job seekers participating in qualified career development interventions are 2.67 times more likely to obtain employment.

Whiston, S. C., Li, Y., Goodrich Mitts, N., & Wright, L. (2017). Effectiveness of career choice interventions: A meta-analytic replication and extension. Journal of Vocational Behaviour, 100, 175–184.

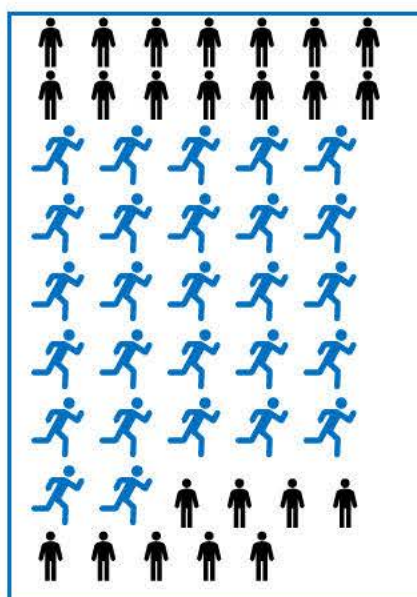
Meta-analysis of the effectiveness of career development interventions demonstrates that:

- The odds of obtaining employment are 2.67 times higher for job seekers participating in qualified career development interventions compared to jobseekers in a control group
- The most valuable ingredient is one on one counsellor support
- The least valuable ingredient (on its own) is computer guided or passive online support
- These outcomes only occurred when motivation enhancement and skills development were both included
- The outcomes are consistent for:
 - Young jobseekers
 - Older jobseekers
 - Jobseekers with special needs and conditions, and
 - Jobseekers unemployed for less than six months.



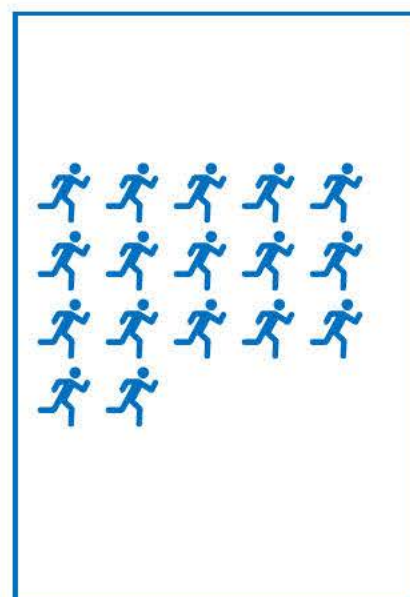
If as an example:

With no intervention, 10 of 50 jobseekers find work....



Based on the research:

Then with support from qualified career practitioners, 27 of 50 will find work.



That's great news for 17 in 50 people, their families, the community, and the economy!

Everyone deserves to find fulfilling, satisfying work. Having a sound understanding of the local and wider employment markets, regularly thinking about skills and achievements, and being prepared for the right opportunity when it arises are all vital aspects of sound career management; but the sheer volume of available information is daunting. Deciding what information is relevant, accurate and credible in regard to training, qualification and upskilling options, takes insight and discernment; career development practitioners support individuals to make productive career decisions based upon reliable and evidence-backed data.

Much is said about ‘future-proofing’ careers, making school-leavers and graduates ‘job-ready’, and ensuring workers have employability skills. While no one can literally protect their lives from any future disruption, what people can do is take steps to manage any changes so they will continue to be successful through maintaining a valued skill set. This may mean taking concrete steps to research, prepare, enhance knowledge of employment trends, strengthen skills and networks, and embrace lifelong learning. People may have misconceptions about occupations, hold inaccurate beliefs about employment details, be reluctant to make a decision today for fear it won’t match tomorrow’s employment reality, and remain uncertain about how to tackle career transitions. It can be tempting to simply focus on lists of ‘hot jobs’ or most ‘in-demand’ skills. Some may explore the mountain of career information and advice online, but much of it is generic, and some of it is inaccurate, out-of-date, and unsuited to people’s circumstances. Gaining career management skills is a long-lasting investment and a valuable asset when confronting employment transitions.

The careers ecosystem – the collective, interdependent components (individuals and organisations at the local, national, and global levels) that contribute to and influence people’s careers – is complex, multi-layered, and impacts Australians’ social, mental, and economic wellbeing. The work of Career Development Practitioners is far more complex than people imagine. These professionals know how the careers ecosystem works, where to find credible information, and most importantly, have the specialised skills to adapt information to a person’s interests, skills, ambitions, age, and circumstances.

2. National Careers Institute (NCI) – purpose and uncertain future

The critical activity of providing quality careers advice to Australians throughout their working lives is currently the domain and responsibility of the [National Careers Institute](#) (NCI). The National Careers Institute is established by Ministerial Charter 2020-2022 (refer Appendix 2).

[The NCI update 1 July 2020-31 December 2021](#) provides a summary of the valuable work undertaken by the NCI, including engagement with significant numbers of Australians.

The recent OECD report *Strengthening Career Guidance for Mid-Career Adults in Australia* includes recommendations for ongoing work of the NCI.¹

- Raise awareness about available career guidance services, and the benefits of such services for adults at any stage in their career. The National Careers Institute (NCI) could take the lead in these activities.
- Promote the use of high-performance work practices by employers, including flexible and transparent career and learning pathways, job rotation and mentorship programmes. The NCI could take the lead in these activities.
- Expand public provision of career guidance to employed mid-career adults, possibly by extending the current telephone-based career guidance service (School Leavers Information Service) to adults.

The recent CDA report *Navigating Life’s Career Transitions: Essential support and services* also includes recommendations for the ongoing work of the NCI²:

The National Careers Institute (NCI) needs to promote career development services by:

- conducting targeted public awareness campaigns about available career services, the importance of developing career management skills, and the value of consulting qualified Career Development Practitioners during any career transition process.
- building industry stakeholders’ understanding of the economic and social benefits of designing quality transition processes that include career services delivered by qualified Career Development Practitioners.

¹ Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development. (2022). *Strengthening Career Guidance for Mid-Career Adults in Australia*. <https://www.oecd.org/publications/strengthening-career-guidance-for-mid-career-adults-in-australia-e08803ce-en.htm>

² <https://cdaa.org.au/CDAASite/Web/About-Us/Navigating-Life-s-Career-Transitions.aspx?hkey=5fd868cd-60b9-43ee-9120-28ad09b7e57e>

The NCI was established on 1 July 2019 and operates as a non-statutory, independently identified entity within the (previous) Department of Education, Skills and Employment; the NCI has made significant progress, but there is much yet to do. With the Ministerial Charter due to expire at the end of 2022, the future of the NCI and the valuable functions it performs, is uncertain.

3. Committee encouraged to consider how the careers advisory function can continue

To maximise value to Australian society, workforce and economy from significant investment in and work of, Jobs and Skills Australia, the Committee is encouraged to consider how the critical work of providing quality careers advice to Australians can continue and expand. This could be through additional functions being added to Jobs and Skills Australia, or extending the Charter of the National Careers Institute beyond 2022, or a combination of both.

If the Committee considers it not appropriate for a careers advisory function to be included in the Jobs and Skills Australia Bill, then a recommendation for an alternative is encouraged.

4. Careers advisory function requires specific outcomes, accountabilities and budget

CDAAs are not in a position to understand which is the most appropriate model, however, as illustrated in the above infographic, it is imperative that the critical careers advisory function is not lost.

If it is deemed the most appropriate model is to include a careers advisory function within Jobs and Skills Australia, then to ensure adequate focus; specific outcomes, accountabilities and a budget for career advisory activities must be maintained.

Contact details

For further information or clarification, please contact CDAAs National Manager Peter Mansfield,

Appendix

Appendix 1:

Proposed Functions of Jobs and Skills Australia

Jobs and Skills Australia Bill 2022 Part 2; 9 Functions of Jobs and Skills Australia

Jobs and Skills Australia has the following functions:

(a) to provide advice to the Minister or the Secretary in relation to the following:

(i) Australia's current and emerging labour market, 10 including advice on workforce needs and priorities;

(ii) Australia's current, emerging and future skills and training needs and priorities (including in relation to apprenticeships);

(iii) the adequacy of the Australian system for providing VET, including training outcomes;

(b) to prepare capacity studies, including for emerging and growing industries and occupations;

(c) to undertake workforce forecasting, assess workforce skills requirements and undertake cross-industry workforce 20 analysis;

(d) to undertake research and analysis on the resourcing and funding requirements for registered training organisations (within the meaning of the *National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011*) to deliver accessible quality VET courses;

(e) to inform the public about the matters mentioned in paragraphs (a) to (d);

(f) to collect, analyse, share and publish data and other information about the matters mentioned in paragraphs (a) to (d) to inform policy development and program delivery; and

(g) any other function that

(i) is conferred on Jobs and Skills Australia by the rules, by this Act or by any other law of the Commonwealth; or

(ii) is incidental or conducive to the performance of the above functions.

Appendix 2:

National Careers Institute (NCI) Ministerial Charter 2020-2022

This Charter sets out the role, functions and governance and accountability arrangements of the National Careers Institute for the period 2020–2022. The Charter will be supported by a Strategic Plan setting out how the National Careers Institute will deliver on the role and functions sets out here and how its performance will be measured. This Charter takes effect from 31 July 2020.

1. Establishment:

- The National Careers Institute (NCI) was established on 1 July 2019 and operates as a non-statutory, independently identified entity within the Department of Education, Skills and Employment (the Department).

2. Vision:

- The NCI will be Australia’s recognised, central careers body, simplifying and strengthening Australia’s career development system, to address a fragmented and difficult to use career information and services landscape.
- The NCI will support Australia’s education, training and employment systems by serving as the authoritative and trusted source for careers information.

3. Mission:

- The NCI’s mission is to drive up the quality and coverage of career guidance, including improved accessibility of information about education pathways and employment outcomes, to ensure that people are maximising their workforce potential, including directing people towards jobs in demand.
- The NCI will work closely with the National Skills Commission to provide individuals and organisations with accurate and up to date information on the labour market through the Digital Platform to inform their choices on learning, training and employment.
- The NCI will provide individuals with industry-informed and contemporary career information that will assist them in developing and managing their own careers.

4. Objectives:

- Strengthen careers data, information and support to enable individuals to more effectively manage and develop their career.
- Foster partnerships between individuals, industry, employers, schools, career advisors and career influencers to encourage information sharing, collaboration and best practice across the careers sector.
- Promote careers and skills development by driving awareness of career information and services, learning and working pathways so that individuals are informed to better navigate their career options.