



Consultation Paper – Transition to Work (TtW) 2022–2027

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Consultation Paper Response Form

Guidance: You are invited to provide feedback to any or all of the questions in the Consultation Paper in the relevant sections below.

Provide your organisation's name and other details as applicable, to assist the department consider your feedback.

Please use the "Consultation Paper Other Feedback" section for any additional comments.

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Important

Please note that your submission will be published on the Department of Education, Skills and Employment (the department) website unless you do not agree to its publication and indicate your preference below.

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We value your privacy, and will adhere to the selection you make to one of the options below:

- I agree to the department publishing this submission including personal details (Organisation Name and Contact Name only).
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Question for feedback – Eligibility

3.1 What primary risk factors that contribute to young people disengaging from work or education should be used to determine eligibility for Transition to Work services?

Feedback to Question 3.1

The factors referred to in the consultation paper including disability, aboriginality, ex-offender/ criminal history, mental health, homelessness, substance abuse are all factors that can impact on a person's likelihood of disengaging from work or education and should all be considered in determining eligibility.

The time since leaving school and work history (recency of employment) are also relevant.

Young people are often at a higher risk if they are experiencing two or more primary risk factors, for example homelessness and mental health, mental health and substance abuse or disability and leaving school early. Mental health on its own may be well managed, early school leavers may find work and sustain a job, many people with disability successfully make the transition from school to work or further study.

Questions for feedback – Maximum duration of service

4.1 What characteristics should be used to determine whether a young person has complex, non-vocational barriers and requires the maximum of 24 months of servicing?

Feedback to Question 4.1

The same factors mentioned in 3.1 could be considered in extending service provision for 24 months - complex non-vocational barriers generally involve the customer experiencing two or more risk factors that are vocational and/or non-vocational.

The provider and young person should also have to demonstrate progression toward education and employment goals that would be assisted by extra time in the service. If more, or additional risk factors were identified or became evident this could also qualify the customer for the maximum duration in service.

Questions for feedback – Maximum duration of service (Continued)

4.2 In addition to extending the maximum duration of service, are there any other changes to service settings that are needed to support Transition to Work effectively service an increased number of young people with complex, non-vocational barriers?

Feedback to Question 4.2

Flexibility in how customers are serviced will continue to allow for tailored assistance from providers.

Questions for feedback – Maximum duration of service (Continued)

4.3 What circumstances should determine whether a young person is transferred to online services or to an Enhanced Services Provider at the end of their service period in Transition to Work?

Feedback to Question 4.3

Transfer to online or enhanced services should be determined based on progression and the customer's likelihood of getting a job or education outcome - as discussed in 4.1.

If the customer is job ready then it may be appropriate for them to be referred to digital services. However, if they require some ongoing support it would be more appropriate that they move into enhanced services.

Questions for feedback – Improving attendance at the Initial Appointment

5.1 Would a mechanism that helps facilitate commencement of young people in the service be desirable?

Feedback to Question 5.1

The proposal that income support payment do not commence until the customer attends an initial appointment is supported. The provider has an opportunity to speak to customers about what they can offer and the benefits of participation. One of the concerns highlighted in the evaluation was that young people do not know what supports are on offer - this helps facilitate initial engagement but also can encourage young people to come back and actively participate.

Questions for feedback – Improving attendance at the Initial Appointment (Continued)

5.2 What is your preferred approach to achieving commencement and why?

Feedback to Question 5.2

Please see response to 5.1

Questions for feedback – Improving attendance at the Initial Appointment (Continued)

5.3 What issues, if any, do you see with making attendance at the first appointment subject to the income support payment suspension mechanism?

Feedback to Question 5.3

Customers need to be informed that they will not receive payment until they engage and they are given an immediate opportunity to do so.

Questions for feedback – Performance Management Framework

6.1 What elements should the department use to measure achievement of Education Outcomes?

Feedback to Question 6.1

MAX Solutions suggest that education outcomes should encompass a wide range of offerings including accredited and non accredited and skills based training.

Questions for feedback – Performance Management Framework (Continued)

6.2 How should the department seek to ensure job seekers and employers are receiving quality of service from Transition to Work Providers?

Feedback to Question 6.2

Providers should have to demonstrate progression in addressing vocational and non-vocational barriers to participation in education, training or employment.

Quality services can be measured as proposed in the consultation paper and should include surveys of employers and customers. Departmental surveys of participants and employers should be done as soon as possible as customers and employers often cannot recall details about the services delivered by the TTW provider and if they are no longer a participant in the program there is little incentive to give feedback.

Questions for feedback – Performance Management Framework (Continued)

6.3 What improvements could be made to the current review and allocation of the Funded Places process?

Feedback to Question 6.3

Please see response to 6.4

Questions for feedback – Performance Management Framework (Continued)

6.4 What factors should the department account for when determining Funded Places?

Feedback to Question 6.4

Utilisation and demand should be key criteria in determining funded places. Allocations and changes to allocations need to be fair and equitable and allow time for business planning.

Questions for feedback – Performance Management Framework (Continued)

6.5 How should performance be benchmarked in the new model?

Feedback to Question 6.5

Previous TTW performance in the region and similar regions as well as jobactive performance could be considered in determining performance benchmarks. Regional information such as unemployment and participation rates, average duration of unemployment and socio-economic status are all relevant in considering a performance benchmark, as is the level of disadvantage experienced by the TTW cohort in each region. There will be regions that have higher levels of disadvantage than others and this can impact on employment and education outcomes.

Question for feedback – Youth Advisory Sessions

7.1 Is there anything that the department should change or improve in the way that Youth Advisory Sessions are currently running?

Feedback to Question 7.1

We have no additional comments on this question.

Questions for feedback – Other Policies

8.1 Do you think the Transition to Work program settings have the right balance to ensure national service standards, while also allowing Providers the flexibility needed to enable local collaboration and engagement in their communities?

Feedback to Question 8.1

Collaboration with community groups, schools and local service providers should always be encouraged. MAX Solutions works with local organisations and services in all regions it operates in, reflecting the need for joined up service delivery and the broad nature of supports our customers need in order to find and sustain education and employment opportunities. We have also actively participated in Local Jobs projects where they are focused on sustainable employment outcomes.

Each provider should develop their own governance arrangements in working with community groups, other providers and local authorities. Providers should be encouraged to participate in local initiatives but there should be no requirement to do so where they are not supporting the TTW goals of greater youth participation.

Questions for feedback – Other Policies (Continued)

8.2 What role can the Transition to Work service play in ensuring that young people are engaged in the design and delivery of policy and services?

Feedback to Question 8.2

TTW providers have ongoing opportunities to consult with individuals as they plan activities, set goals and as they review progress. They can discuss their needs and aspirations as well as check in with the young person and ensure they are getting what they need. In group settings there are also opportunities for continuous improvement discussions about the way training or health sessions are delivered and the usefulness of content.

More formally MAX Solutions runs focus groups or consultative forums with customers in our services (and where appropriate their families) providing an opportunity to give frank feedback and to discuss possible improvements or solutions.

Questions for feedback – Other Policies (Continued)

8.3 Is there anything in the current service settings that might be seen as limiting youth engagement?

Feedback to Question 8.3

Please see response to 8.2

Questions for feedback – Other Policies (Continued)

8.4 What do you think constitutes best practice with regard to supporting the mental health of Participants in an employment service and how do we improve the ability of the service to deliver to this standard?

Feedback to Question 8.4

Mental health supports are incredibly important, but the kind and intensity of support required by customers varies, as does the availability of services.

MAX Solutions integrates allied health supports into all our service provision. We believe that mental and physical health is key to a customer finding and keeping a job or being able to undertake training or study. All of our allied health support is delivered by psychologists, exercise physiologists, social workers and OTs in a vocational setting - meaning it is focused on giving customers the support and strategies required to successfully participate in work or study.

Many of our customers, particularly in regional and more remote areas would not be able to access timely support if we did not make allied health staff available when needed. Some customers find it less threatening to access our allied health support in an environment they are comfortable in (encouraging disclosure and reducing stigma) rather than avoid accessing the mental health assistance they need.

Our health services are not designed to replace supports available within the community or primary health network. Some of our customers will require ongoing support with a range of issues or conditions or are already linked with other service providers. MAX health staff play a role in connecting people with services and assist them identify the supports they might need moving forward.

It is also important that staff working in employment services are provided with training such as mental health first aid in order to be able to identify issues impacting on young people achieving their goals and put in place strategies to help them manage their condition and seek professional help if required.

Questions for feedback – Other Policies (Continued)

8.5 What are appropriate servicing strategies or principles in situations where there are longer waitlists for Specialist services, in contrast to locations where there are readily available Specialist mental health services?

Feedback to Question 8.5

Please see response to 8.4

Questions for feedback – Other Policies (Continued)

8.6 What are the features of a service that acknowledges the significant mental health challenge across the youth caseload and embeds appropriate responses into the default service offer, including by addressing particular issues such as disclosure and stigma?

Feedback to Question 8.6

Please see response to 8.4

Consultation Paper Other Feedback

If there are any comments you wish to provide that are not already captured, please provide them below.

Feedback to Consultation Paper - Other

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback via the Consultation Paper.