



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

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Question for feedback – Assessment, referral and eligibility

4.1 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 4.1

WSA supports the service's continued focus on early school leavers and Indigenous Australians.

Risk factors that should be considered are homelessness, mental health, drug and alcohol, disability, poverty, engagement in juvenile detention and/or prison, offending behaviour (ex-offender status), and engagement in the foster system or children that are or were under guardianship orders in relevant locations. WSA also advocates that refugee and migrant young people benefit from the service's more intensive support.

Questions for feedback – Maximum duration of service for participants

5.1 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 5.1

Not fully addressed or continued relapsing of drug and alcohol use and mental health issues. Housing instability, unable to maintain stable employment or achieve educational outcome (continued fall overs).

Questions for feedback – Maximum duration of service for participants (Continued)

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

Feedback to Question 5.2

Potential consideration and recognition of part time education participation. Currently providers can achieve an education outcome (for participation) if a customer completes full-time study for a minimum of 6 months. It would be appropriate to also consider part time study achievement over a 9-12 month period. This can be a significant achievement for some young people who are experiencing significant non-vocational barriers.

Access to Block 1 EST training would be highly beneficial for this cohort.

Questions for feedback – Maximum duration of service for participants (Continued)

5.3 What circumstances in a young persons' life should determine whether they are transferred to online services or to an Enhanced Services provider at the end of their service period in Transition to Work?

Feedback to Question 5.3

Along with feedback from the young person, their digital access and digital literacy skills should be fundamentally assessed. There is often a long-held view or perception that all young people are digitally and tech savvy. This is not always the case.

Questions for feedback – Improving attendance at the initial appointment

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

Feedback to Question 6.1

The possible introduction of an income support payment suspension, when a young person fails to attend their initial appointment, and until they attend, is welcomed. This will both encourage young people to attend and also enable providers to highlight the benefits of the program and set expectations of participation, from the outset.

A stronger program knowledge held by Services Australia's staff would also assist with this.

Questions for feedback – Improving attendance at the initial appointment (Continued)

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

Feedback to Question 6.2

Initiating telephone contact (provided the details are available) and agreeing to a mutually beneficial time with the young person. Having the opportunity to explain the benefits of the program. As explained above, having some light compliance arrangements around the initial appointment will also assist.

Questions for feedback – Performance Framework

7.1 What elements should the Department use to measure achievement of Education Outcomes?

Feedback to Question 7.1

As current, both active participation and achievement, As previously mentioned, the introduction of

a part time education outcome would be welcomed.

Questions for feedback – Performance Framework (Continued)

7.2 How should the Department seek to ensure job seekers and employers are receiving quality of service from Transition to Work providers?

Feedback to Question 7.2

Satisfaction surveys facilitated by both DESE and the relevant providers, as part of their Quality Management Systems and Customer Service Policies.

Questions for feedback – Performance Framework (Continued)

7.3 Are there any other meaningful measures that could be included in the Provider Performance Framework?

Feedback to Question 7.3

Activities and performance of collaborative mechanisms with key stakeholders in the local

community supporting the growth of employment pathways for young people.

Questions for feedback – Performance Framework (Continued)

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

Feedback to Question 7.4

Greater transparency in relation to the methodology and calculation and more advanced notice.

Funding and provider revenue directly attribute to a provider's staffing and resourcing arrangements. Budgets are set for the complete financial year so constant changes to funding arrangements create some difficulty.

WSA acknowledges the volatile nature caseload numbers at different points in time so we acknowledge this makes the above difficult as well.

Questions for feedback – Performance Framework (Continued)

7.5 What factors should the Department account for when determining Funded Places?

Feedback to Question 7.5

In addition to a 10-month average of utilisation, the regional youth UE rate should be considered

(along with any other expected impacts) and also pending and suspended caseload numbers at the point in time of review. A review of the enhanced and online services caseload numbers for the relevant and eligible caseload should also be considered. It is our view that there are still many young people being referred to jobactive that would more greatly benefit in TtW.

Questions for feedback – Performance Framework (Continued)

7.6 How might performance be benchmarked in the new model?

Feedback to Question 7.6

WSA would welcome a system where benchmarks were set factoring in labour market performance

in the relevant region, demographics and characteristics of the cohort using comparisons to regional and national averages. Whilst we agree it's necessary to move away reflecting KPIs against the relevant performance of a jobactive provider, there should still be the clear expectation in the benchmarks that TtW is expected to perform above, as an intensive specialist support service

Question for feedback – Youth Advisory Sessions

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

Feedback to Question 8.1

WSA currently deliver this initiative and there has been low utilisation thus far. Clearly the

additional investment shows this is a long-term measure. Any additional marketing would be welcomed as well as the ability for YAS providers to book the subsequent 2nd and 3rd session in consultation with the young person. Currently, a young person must go back via their MyGov account and book their additional sessions.

Questions for feedback – Other Service Settings to improve outcomes

9.1 Is there anything in the Transition to Work program that should change in order to have the right balance between ensuring national service standards are maintained, while also allowing providers the flexibility needed to enable local collaboration and engagement in their communities?

Feedback to Question 9.1

Enabling local collaboration and engagement in communities should be part of the core work of TtW and is key part of achieving improved outcomes for young people.

The place-based mechanism of Community Investment Committees should be a core part of the TtW model, and TtW providers should be mandated to develop and coordinate CICs, enabled by the National Youth Employment Body.

Local CICs bring together representatives from industry, VET, community, all levels of government and employment services to develop place-based solutions to meet the needs of young people and local business.

Running parallel to the Local Jobs and Skills Taskforce in each region, the NYEB would enable CICs to provide a community led, youth specialist response that aligns existing investments in a region and facilitates coordinated and collaborative supply and demand side responses to youth employment

Findings from the National Youth Employment Body, led by the Brotherhood of St Laurence, show that the coordination of a local CIC by the TtW provider leads to:

- ñ Increased collaboration with employment and support services, employers, government and training providers to co-design local training and employment pathways
- ñ Improved understanding of and engagement with local growth industry sectors
- ñ Improved capacity to adapt and innovate strategies to support young people, through increased access to and mobilisation of labour market data, multi sector expertise, local investments and networks
- ñ Increased connection and exchange of local and national knowledge, including participation in the Local Jobs and Skills Taskforce
- ñ Increased local and national understanding of the barriers and enablers to quality youth employment and the implications of this for local economic development
- ñ Increased community willingness to build relationships with providers and invest in the capabilities of young people.

Since 2018, WSA has co-led and facilitated a Community Investment Committee in Adelaide North. This work has trialled micro credential and skill set pre-employment programs for TtW young people (leading to jobs in skills shortage sectors), strengthened arrangements and collaboration with local and State government representatives, scoped opportunities to strengthen work experience pathways for disadvantaged young people in public secondary education and much more.

9.2 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?

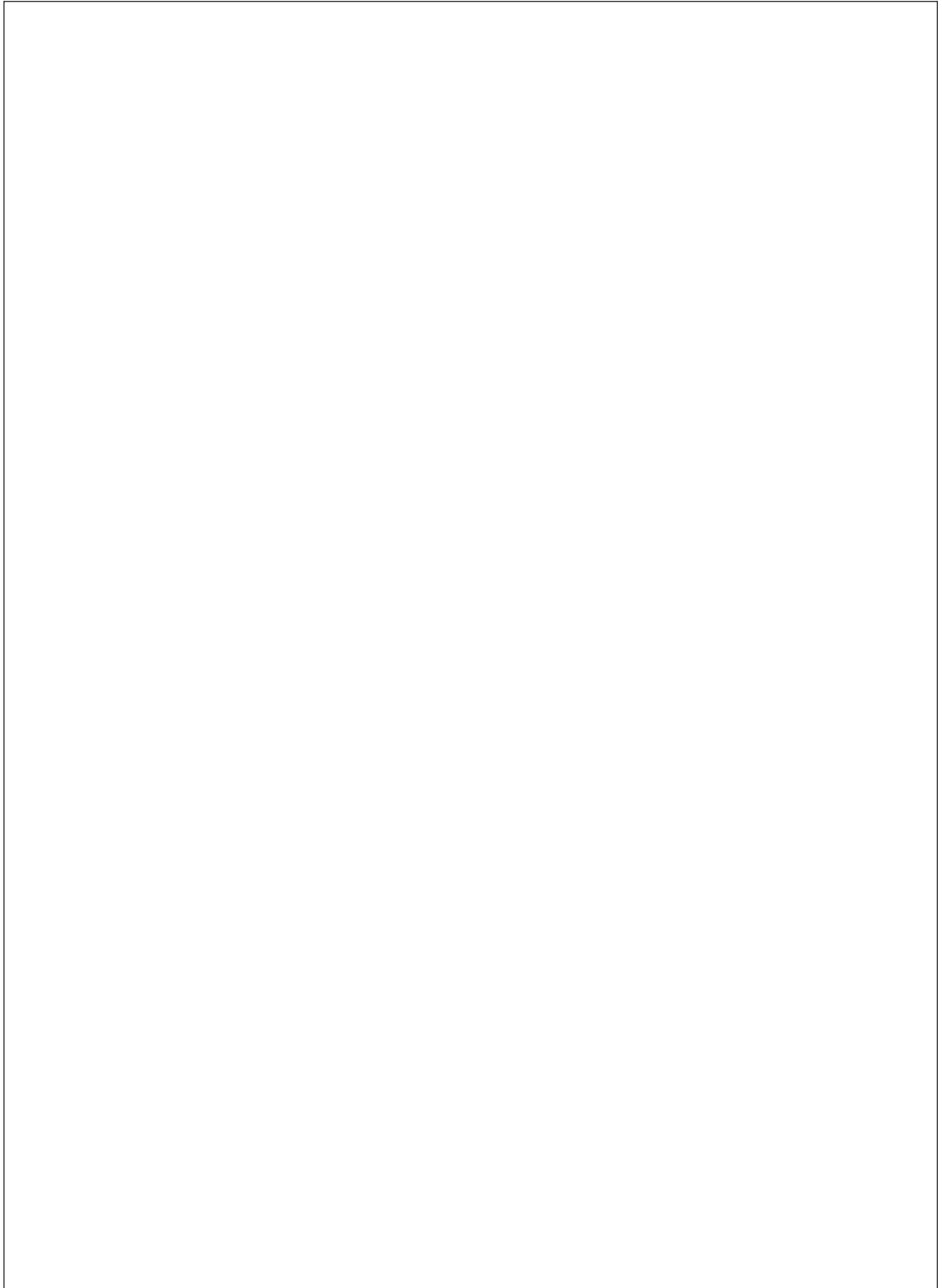
Feedback to Question 9.2

Commissioning to include mechanisms for young peoples' meaningful contribution, which provide the opportunity and support to have voice and agency in decisions that affect them. Mechanisms should be demonstrated in a youth participation plan, and could include support to:

- ñ Participate in a locally developed youth participation group such as a youth alliance or youth advisory group;
- ñ Share their employment pathway and experiences with other young people, employers, training providers and other key stakeholders in the employment system, through forums such as video, social media, and information sessions; and
- ñ Participate in activities to build leadership capabilities.

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

Feedback to Question 9.3



Questions for feedback – Other Service Settings to improve outcomes (Continued)

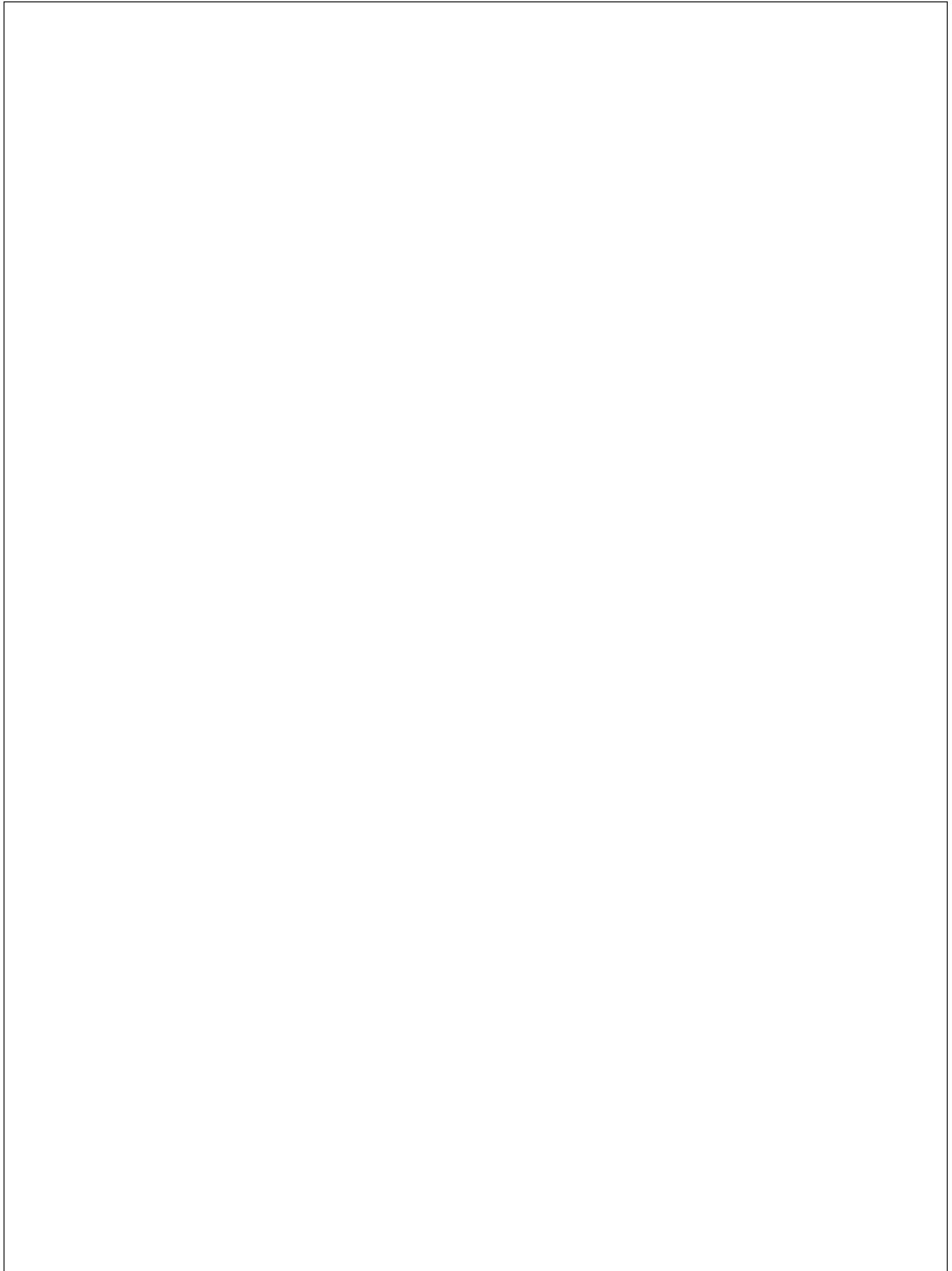
9.4 What do you think constitutes best practice with regard to supporting the mental health of participants in an employment service and how do we improve the ability of the service to deliver to this standard?

Feedback to Question 9.4

Best practice includes ensuring employment services staff have adequate skills and experience and professional development in this space. E.g. WSA deliver Mental Health 1st Aid Training to all TtW staff and have an inhouse multi-disciplinary team of Allied Health Professionals for complex customer requirements.

9.5 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?

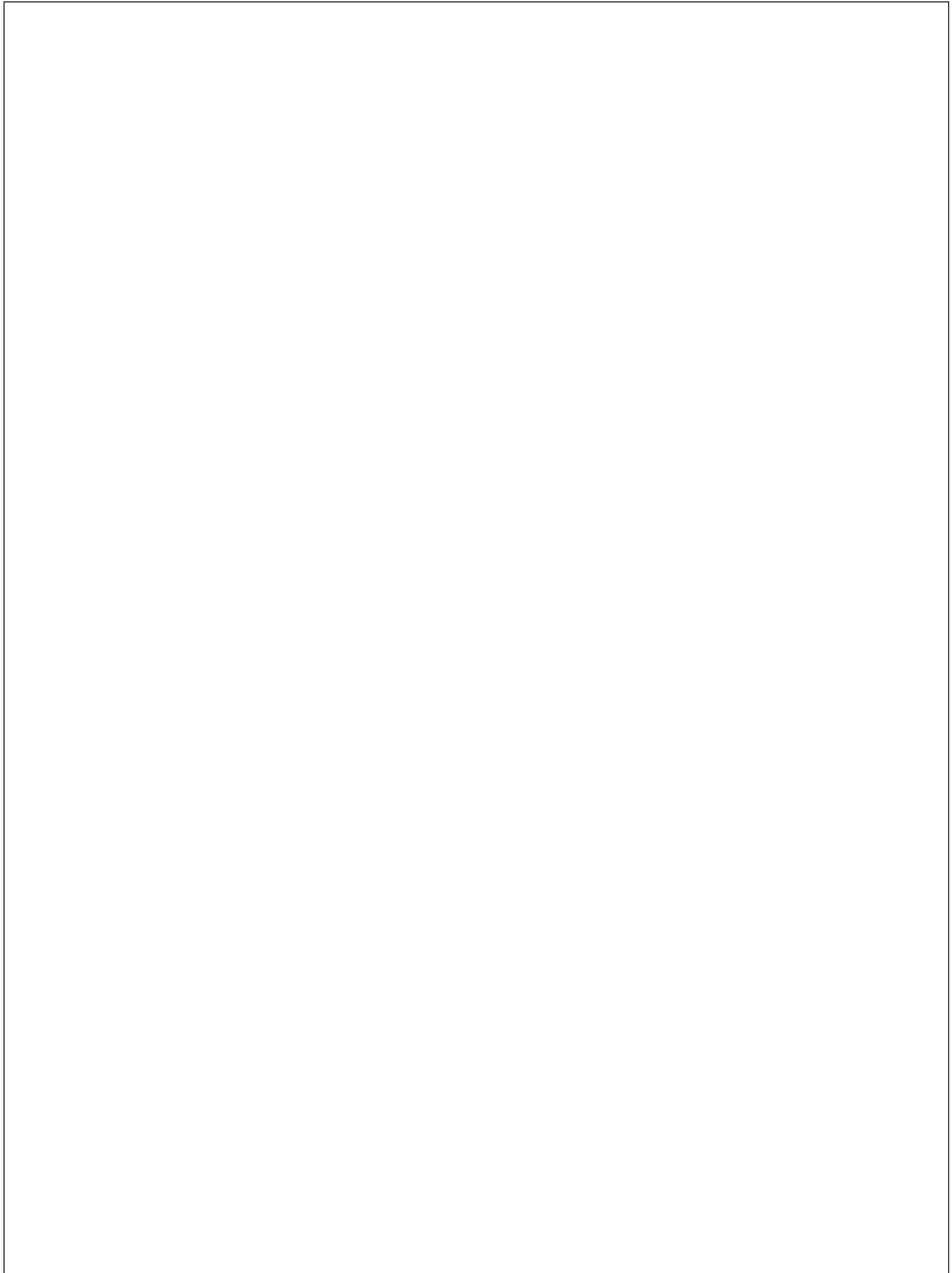
Feedback to Question 9.5



Questions for feedback – Other Service Settings to improve outcomes (Continued)

9.6 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 9.6



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

Feedback to Consultation Paper - Other

WSA commends DESE on the committed and increased investment in Transition to Work over the next several years, and in aiming to strengthen the program's position as the sole youth specialist service, in the new employment services model.

Furthermore, WSA welcomes that at a high level, the ethos and core framework of the program appear and intend to remain vastly the same, with some envisioned enhancements and potential improvements. This is positive. The program has largely performed strongly against targets that are (at minimum) 25% above the jobactive performance achievements with this same cohort.

WSA support's that the program will remain voluntary in nature, as we believe this correlates to both increased and positive engagement with young people.

We know that even prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, young people aged 15-24 were disproportionately adversely affected in the labour market compared to other cohort groups. Due to the nature of the work that young people traditionally undertake, and the sectors in which they characteristically work in (Retail, Hospitality etc.) young people have become even more vulnerable in the labour market, loosing their jobs, having their hours reduced and competing in a labour market with highly skilled, qualified, experienced and more mature age workers.

Our view is that TtW plays a pivotal role in the supporting young people with these immediate and also longer- term challenges, in a post COVID environment, and plays a critical role in supporting the overall aim of achieving parity in this area, reducing youth UE rates across Australia.