



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.

Organisation Name:

Contact Name: Contact Phone:

Contact Email:

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

We consider that the following factors need to be considered when assessing participant eligibility for Transition To Work. Many of these factors are underpinned by complex sub-issues that heavily impact on and contribute to youth disengaging from study or work. These include:

The number and complexity of non-vocational barriers including homelessness, substance abuse, mental health, underlying health conditions, carer responsibilities, cultural factors and settings, criminal history, family intergenerational unemployment of the young person.

Entry or initial education level

Specific Language, Literacy and Numeracy challenges or difficulties

Lack of digital literacy

Local area labour market opportunities and challenges

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

Our experience has been that young people with complex non-vocational barriers require more than an 18 month period of supported and individualised assistance to assist them increase their capability towards a sustainable employment outcome. The following characteristics should be used to determine that a participant requires 24 months of servicing.

The number of non-vocational barriers (as participants with a higher number may be more than likely to engage in Transition To Work given the program parameters are more flexible than jobactive servicing)

Length of disengagement from employment, study or education and the education level at disengagement

The degree of family support for the young person

Family intergenerational unemployment

Cultural background relative to the local labour market

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

To support Transition to Work participants, we consider the following additional support would prove beneficial:

Allocating additional flexibility in funding for non-vocational focussed participant expenditure which is restricted under the current funding model

Support from specialised staff, such as having less qualified options

Increased access to allied health staff

Provision of on-site support programs

Where participants would benefit from group interactions conduct focussed group-based servicing

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

At the conclusion of their Transition to Work servicing period participants must be referred to Enhanced Services in order to continue the support they require for their path to work-readiness. These young people will require ongoing intensive and continuing tailored support to prepare them for the local labour market job opportunities and support them when commencing employment.

To refer Transition to Work participants to Digital Services has the potential for the momentum created in Transition to Work servicing to quickly abate, and potentially plunging the participant back into practices and experiences that were developed prior to their participation in Transition to Work.

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

We recommend that a warm handover from any existing program would assist attendance at the initial appointment. Further, Transition to Work providers should have the option to meet with participants in an agreed location that supports the participant to feel comfortable in this appointment.

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

We recommend RapidConnect be the preferred approach to achieving timely commencements as it enables and allows immediate engagement.

Questions for feedback – Performance Framework

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

Feedback to Question 7.1

We suggest the following elements should constitute education outcomes in the Transition to Work program.

Completion of one semester of a two-semester course

SEE Program completion

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

We suggests that the Department conduct employer and job seeker satisfaction surveys at two intervals: during the program phase to assess job readiness actions and fit -for-purpose training options; and at the Post Placement Support phase when on-the-job job knowledge, adjustment to a working environment and provider support can be assessed. This will assist the Department ensure high quality services are continually delivered as well as provide the Department with early advice of any changes needed to the program due to external factors eg such as dramatic changes to local labour market.

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

We consider that for disengaged youth, 4 week Employment Outcomes demonstrate significant progress and should be included in the Provider Performance Framework.

Further, we recommend that Partial Outcomes be included with an appropriate weighting to recognise:

the Gig economy

the high casual employment rates of youth, and

the positive impact any consistent employment can have on the participants career pathway.

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

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Questions for feedback – Performance Framework (Continued)

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

Feedback to Question 7.5



Questions for feedback – Performance Framework (Continued)

7.6 How might performance be benchmarked in the new model?

Feedback to Question 7.6

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

We recommend that the following be included in Youth Advisory Sessions:

Industry engagement, including local employers and industry associations

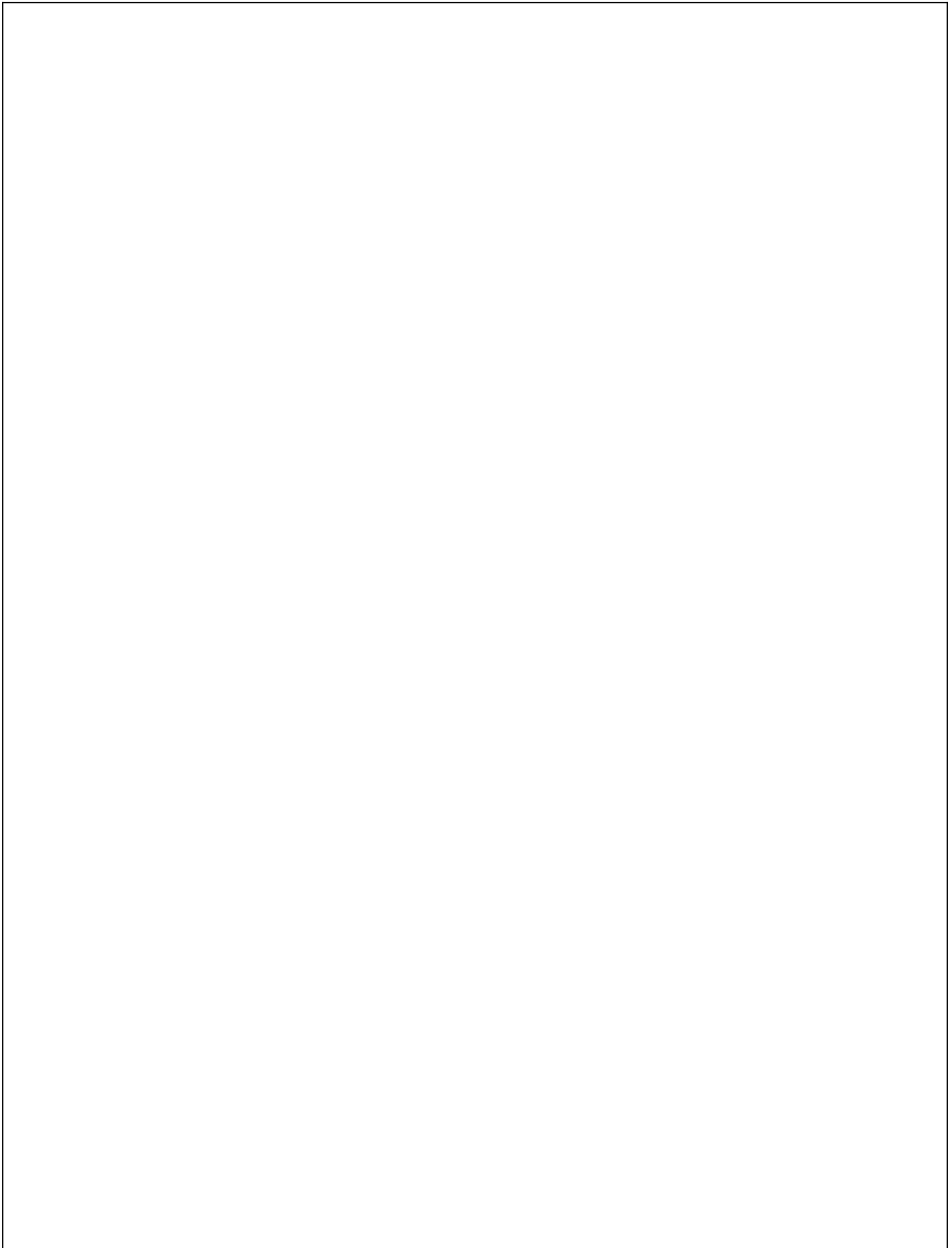
Mental health support sessions

We also suggest that where appropriate that cohort specific sessions are held eg for CALD and Indigenous participants.

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



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

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

We recommend that involving young people in the design and delivery of the services is vital. We suggest the following present opportunities to gather feedback:

Utilise Youth Advisory Sessions for feedback

Local Advisory Boards as part of program delivery

Transition to Work providers conducting their own participant surveys and extending their surveys to local employers and providing this feedback to the Department.

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

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

Feedback to Question 9.3

We suggest that the Department consider the number of providers and the current non-competition approach, as one service per region may, in some instances, limit services to Transition to Work participants.

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

We suggest the following points will contribute to better practice in supporting youth with their mental health while participating in employment services:

Ensure mental health forms a part of the assessment process

Mental health a topic as part of the Youth Advisory Sessions - how to ask for help and referral to supportive services

Provide practical training to participants and employers on the basics of managing good mental health

There should be no eligibility requirement to gain access to initial mental health support thereby enabling mental health support to be available to all participants

Strong local collaborations with specific mental health providers.

Awareness of community-based initiatives which aid in maintaining good mental health, such as sports and fitness clubs, art-based groups, social and community groups, etc.

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

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

We suggest that there be the ability to purchase services if no free services are locally available and the need to access services is urgent.

A complementary strategy could be for providers to source 'fly in, fly out' specialist services from locations that have a greater supply of these specialists which would result in faster connection for Transition to Work participants to the specialist mental health services they need.

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

Introduce a quarterly requirement for professional services/health/allied health services information sessions to be delivered by trained specialist as an integral element of the Transition to Work program.

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

Feedback to Consultation Paper - Other

We are an experienced and high performing employment service provider delivering employment services to diverse labour markets.

We welcome the Government's announcement of the expansion of the Transition to Work program as we believe it is a very successful youth program which provides flexible solutions to the complex non-vocational barriers of young people ultimately enabling them to achieve sustainable employment.

Young people have been severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Even before the pandemic ABS data show that the unemployment rate for people aged 15-24 years was around 11 per cent 'pre-COVID' and rose to a high of 16.4 per cent in July 2020 at the height of the pandemic.

Although we are now seeing a rebound in the economy, and the youth unemployment rate has now fallen to below 10 per cent, the impacts of the pandemic will be felt by individuals and Australian society for decades.

There is substantial evidence that being unemployed when young leads to a higher likelihood of long-term 'scarring' in later life in terms of subsequent lower pay, higher unemployment and reduced life prospects. There is also evidence that people who experience extended periods of unemployment while young experience increased levels of mental health problems in their 40s or 50s.

A recent paper by the Productivity Commission (Climbing the jobs ladder slower: Young people in a weak labour market, July 2020) showed that young people entering the labour market during and following the Global Financial Crisis had a harder transition into employment than those entering earlier.

In particular, the paper showed that from 2008 to 2018, young people had more difficulty getting jobs in the occupations they aspired to. Furthermore, if they started in what they considered a less attractive occupation, it was even harder than before 2008 to climb the occupation ladder. This suggests that poor initial opportunities have serious long-term consequences for young people and highlights that programs such as Transition to Work can play a vital role in improving youth transitions into employment for the longer term.

It is in this context that we provide responses to the suggested questions posed in the Consultation Paper.