

**From:** Inquiry into Career Advice Activities in Victorian Schools [REDACTED]  
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**Subject:** New Submission to Inquiry into Career Advice Activities in Victorian Schools

Inquiry Name: Inquiry into Career Advice Activities in Victorian Schools

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## **SUBMISSION CONTENT:**

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1. Examining the relationship between career advice activities and workforce participation of young Victorians.

Data is needed to examine this. Anecdotally though, in activities I have organised and run in school programs, the understanding, requirements and engagement with work improved greatly. For students and parents to know that learning about the world of work and how to get a job and then doing all related to a placement for work experience helps enormously! Some even say this is not for me rather than finding out at the end of an eg law degree. Encouraging part time work and how to get such jobs also helps as students with work experience in secondary school tend to be looked on more favourably by employers. NB: Career advice activities are many and varied and do not just involve counselling. Activities should start in primary school but at the very least in year 7 so young people can learn about their strengths, values, skills, options and pathways well before Year 10 or 12. See Career Curriculum Framework

2. Investigating the extent to which career advice activities meet the needs of school leavers. Of course data helps with this too and the ontrack data in recent years outlined student feedback on adequacy of career advice. In all cases it depends on the individual student and also on the school. Some schools have qualified careers practitioners and are reasonably well-resourced with staff and budgets for programs. However, many have very little of either! And many more have inadequate careers support and many practitioners are under-resourced and underfunded. Many are also under paid. School leavers need more than counselling. And must have qualified and trained Careers practitioners who know what they are doing

3. Examining the challenges advisers face helping young Victorians transition from education to the workforce.

Many of these challenges are listed above. If there was enough time and support given to

career departments with a department head in every school overseeing it then things could improve. What is the point of a high ATAR if there is no planning as to what to do with it in an appropriate way? The changing world of work is another challenge that many schools advisors face as many have only ever worked in schools, have little time or space to do enough research, and if they do have any ideas find it difficult to get management to understand what is required in future directed educational programs. Other challenges include helping young people find employers willing to give them a chance, even with work experience when each year more and more hurdles are required for schools and employers to jump to get a placement organised. VET MOU's are another huge hurdle for schools and another challenge for careers advisors to find time to put them together. VET helps a great deal in giving students excellent practical experience and certificates they can use to find work whilst at school or uni as well.

4. Considering strategies to improve the effectiveness of career advice activities for school leavers.

There are many activities that students can do (again see Victorian Career Curriculum Framework) but little time for Careers advisers to implement and deliver. Time needs to be given to serious career development programs throughout the year from minimum Year 7-12. They need to be engaging, practical and assessable in some cases. All teachers in schools need to understand the importance of career development programs. If they are educating them...it is more than just for self-development and a good mark, it needs to be stressed that students need to be educated in a range of technical and 'employability' skills or they will be left behind. Creativity is as important as maths science and English. STEM should include A for Creative arts and Humanities,. It needs to be holistic and also cater for individual differences and diversity. Including programs like \$20 Boss (FYA) and Girls Invent will help with giving students confidence to use their creative skills to solve current problems and use many of the skills they use in 'normal' class subjects. The whole school community needs to understand the importance of various pathways, skills sets, options and future jobs. With the Careers practitioner as the guide/director/champion. The best way to get students engaged is to get them involved in projects. They then have skills employers want and also feel a sense of success and progress/improvement as they work in teams and solve a problem. Working with Industry and Tertiary providers is another great way to do this.

5. Investigate the career advice needs of young people in regional Victoria and ways to address these needs

The issues for regional young people are the same as city young people but to a greater extreme. Finding work experience can be much harder, there are fewer employers, schools usually have smaller budgets, and so on. But again it depends on the school (Geelong Grammar may have more funds than eg XYZ regional high school)

6. Exploring what other jurisdictions both in Australia and overseas have in place that could be implemented in Victoria.

Victoria already has a great number of resources but not enough schools can implement them due to lack of training and lack of support by principals. Canada and NZ have some great resources also. And there are probably many more that could be investigated.

Overall what is required to improve Career Development Programs in schools is to educate principals first, then all teachers about what Career development is, why it is needed and what has to be done to support our young people.

Surely the ATAR is not enough anymore to show the success of a school, yet how many use it as a marketing tool for future parents.

As a parent, past school careers advisor in the Independent and Catholic sector and in groups collaborating with Government school careers advisors, I am well aware of many schools who have appalling ratios of career advisors to students. High fee paying families in some schools for eg have 1 careers advisor for over 300 year 12 students!! And government schools with 1 advisor per 480 plus students! Ridiculous!!

When principals or senior management in schools are approached they talk about careers advice not being mandated and the fact that schools are about education of students, not career development. Principals need educating - and so do their governing bodies/boards who apparently give KPI's that do not have Career planning anywhere in sight.

The CEAV recommends how many career practitioners are needed to ensure students are well supported. Why are no schools following these guidelines or recommendations? Benchmarking and reports are given to management in schools but in many cases they are ignored.

Many schools have untrained, unqualified advisors in career practitioner roles and are out of their depth.

An audit on what each school is doing would be a great data gathering exercise that would help student outcomes enormously.

Thank you

Judy O'Donohue  
Career Me Now

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File1:

File2:

File3: