



Scoping Paper:
Potential synergies between
NCVER and CICA

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Introduction

The purpose of this scoping paper is to identify areas of mutual interest to NCVER and the Career Industry Council of Australia (CICA). CICA membership comprises 11 practitioner associations and 1 peak support organisation (see Appendix 1). CICA's vision is to enhance participation and productivity by advocating the individual, social and economic benefits of quality career development for all Australians. It has interests across all three education sectors.

This scoping paper has benefited from entering a dialogue with Peter Tatham, CICA's Executive Director.

NCVER's research interests are guided by the National VET research priorities for 2007 to 2010 which have been agreed by The Ministerial Council for Vocational and Technical Education (MCVTE) and include:

- ✧ Growing the labour supply,
- ✧ Motivating individuals to participate in VET
- ✧ Sustaining a skills base through apprenticeships and traineeships
- ✧ Enhancing the productive capacity of enterprises
- ✧ Enabling VET providers to compete effectively

NCVER is also particularly interested in links between education, training and the labour market. Career education is fundamentally about using information to improve individuals' labour market outcomes. Thus there is a large degree of commonality between our organisations; although career education is relevant to all education sectors, while NCVER's primary focus (at the moment) is vocational education and training.

Accordingly NCVER has several broad areas of activity that seem pertinent to CICA's strategic interests and include:

- ✧ analysis of data on vocational education and training (VET) student outcomes. This includes student qualifications and units of competency attained and student destination related surveys,
- ✧ a strategic program of vocational education and training research organised around five key areas of students and individuals, teaching and learning, industry and employers, the VET system and VET in context,
- ✧ management of a number of national research competitive grants programs including the National Vocational Education and Training Research and Evaluation (NVE TRE); the 2002-2006 Adult Literacy Research Program; the Research Innovation and Expansion Fund (which encourages research using the Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth),
- ✧ collecting and disseminating research findings on VET from across the world through NCVER's VOCED research database,
- ✧ an extensive analytical program of the Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth (LSAY),
- ✧ commercial consultancies supporting a diverse client base including the development, implementation and evaluation of VET related Quality Frameworks and Business Excellence Systems.

The potential benefits to both organisations

Areas of mutual interest are probably best summarised in the following table that shows the links to CICA Strategic Plan 2009 - 2011:

Area	NCVER area of capability	Potential links to CICA Strategic Plan 2009 - 2011¹ and associated action points
1	Development of a Clearinghouse Services research database	<i>Strategy 7 Action Plans</i> dot point items 1-5
2	Managed research and dissemination role	<i>Strategy 7 Action Plans</i> dot point item 7
3	Develop a research strategy	<i>Strategy 7 Action Plans</i> dot point item 7 <i>Strategy 8 Action Plans</i> dot point items 2 & 3
4	Develop student outcome resources for career advisors	<i>Strategy 3 Action Plans</i> dot point item 1
5	Build research capacity for career development practitioners and NCVER staff	<i>Strategy 2 Action Plans</i> dot point item 2 <i>Strategy 3 Action Plans</i> dot point items 2 <i>Strategy 7 Action Plans</i> dot point item 7
6	Improving quality frameworks, implementation and developing performance indicators	<i>Strategy 2 Action Plans</i> dot point items 3 & 4 <i>Strategy 3 Action Plans</i> dot point item 7 <i>Strategy 4 Action Plans</i> dot point items 1, 5 <i>Strategy 5 Action Plans</i> dot point items 3, 5, 6

We should expect an increased research capability and presence within the career development arena by both NCVER and CICA resulting from such cooperation. This relationship could extend across all three education sectors. As an example, with CICA's input, there could be opportunities for enhanced LSAY-based research.

¹ See Appendix 2 for a list of the CICA Strategies listed in the table with their action plans

NCVER and CICA areas of mutual interest

1. Development of a Clearinghouse Services research database

The area with the most immediate benefits for both organisations is in the collection and dissemination of key research using the VOCED research database.

VOCED is the international database for vocational education and training research, which is available on the web and is free to all at:

<http://www.voced.edu.au/index.html>

With relatively straightforward customisation of the existing database, a link to key papers in 'career development' research could be set up and maintained by NCVER.

Indicative stages in this process include:

- ✧ Making career development resources (as identified by CICA as suitable for inclusion) available from the VOCED database or in hard copy for loan from the NCVER library.
- ✧ The resources in VOCED reach a wide audience as VOCED records are indexed by the major search engines and the Training.com and EDNA online websites.
- ✧ Career development resources could be accessed from the VOCED search homepage either by undertaking a standard search or by selecting an easily identifiable career development check/tick box similar to the current ALNP, WELL and Reframing the Future collections.
- ✧ Each career development VOCED record would provide standard bibliographic information (i.e. author, title, publisher, date of publication and abstract) together with web links to the full text resources (i.e. multimedia, WORD, PDF formats) or if this is not available, information on how to access the resource (e.g. to borrow the item from the NCVER library) would be provided.
- ✧ Links to full text would regularly be checked to maintain active URLs.
- ✧ NCVER would be able to answer queries in relation to accessing these resources.
- ✧ New resources can be added on an ongoing basis either by:
 - 1 CICA and/or members suggesting items for inclusion with NCVER producing the VOCED records or
 - 2 NCVER harvesting new resources and producing the VOCED records.
 - 3 or a combination of both approaches

An initial establishment cost of Career Development resources to the VOCED database, including indexing for in the vicinity of 60-70 references in the first year would be approximately \$7,500. The cost would likely decrease in subsequent years where only new or additional references are added.

2. Develop a research strategy

CICA is seeking a more formalised approach to research in Career Development. There are several models that could be used to initiate a plan and program. One approach, that has proved successful for NCVER, aims to identify several major issues in the area and then develop a more systematic strategy to articulate and focus new research.

While there are various models that could be used to help initiate establish a research plan and program, we suggest:

- ✧ Convene a one-day workshop for around 20 prominent persons who currently have an interest in career development which may include researchers, practitioners, and government, industry and key representatives of the three education sectors. We suggest invitations be sent to any other interested parties and funding bodies who could help support your agenda.

Key stages in setting up a workshop could include:

- ◆ Identify a number of areas that CICA's membership would like to explore in more depth.
- ◆ Develop a succinct *background* paper that seeks to scope and define 'Career Development' (and other related areas of research) of interest to CICA and its members. These might be framed in an Australian context but also referenced to international practice. Such work may already be partially developed by CICA.
- ◆ Prioritise key issues and identify an expert or relevant person (maybe a mix of local and or even internationally based) to develop a 4 000 word paper for each of the top two or three issues. Each work should be authoritative, fact based, preferably controversial, perhaps refuting some existing dogmas. Each paper should then seek to identify gaps in knowledge, pose potential questions and canvas possible solutions. Authors would typically receive an honorarium with funding for travel to attend the meeting.
- ◆ Identify discussants who can speak to each paper. Discussants would typically receive funding for travel to attend the meeting.
- ◆ The workshop can then be used to further refine the topics, identify where and what research is needed and how it might be done.
- ◆ Publish the papers as a set together with possible directions arising from the workshop. This would provide a base for CICA's Research plan and research lobbying platform.

A typical cost for developing papers, the workshop, honorariums, travel, venue hire, accommodation and administration, and publication would be approximately \$50,000. If required NCVER would be able to assist and help co-ordinate the event and/or undertake some of the related research.

3. Managed research and dissemination role

NCVER has considerable expertise in managing research in a number of national competitive grants programs including the National Vocational Education and Training Research and Evaluation (NVETRE) and the Adult Literacy Research Programs. Depending on the agreed deliverables, arrangements are then usually made for active dissemination of the research findings through NCVER's extensive VET Network.

CICA might wish to have a dedicated career development managed research program as a longer term goal. However in the short to medium term there are opportunities for CICA to still raise the profile of career development related research. This could occur by linking to an existing research program under NCVER's current management. CICA would be eligible to bid for

research funds under NVETRE's competitive 'Open Round'. In the meantime CICA could also seek to lever more dedicated career development research funding. As an example an extra \$150 000 annual grant from DEEWR for this purpose could fund the equivalent of two significant projects per year, with a view to building a body of research over a five-year period. This was done, with a somewhat larger grant, for adult literacy research (see www.adultliteracyresource.edu.au).

Within an existing program a typical NCVER fee structure would be 15% of the project value to help underpin administration, commissioning, ongoing management and review, plus any associated dissemination activities and costs.

4. Develop student outcome resources for career advisors

Besides standard reports and data spreadsheets, NCVER has considerable expertise in developing stand-alone interactive databases (also called SuperCUBEs) that contain a variety of career outcome related research.

Examples of existing cubes which could address qualifications completed by students or labour market outcome surveys include:

'Completions by industry skills council training package groupings' which can be found at:

<http://www.ncver.edu.au/statistic/publications/2019.html>

or 'Graduates - labour force status after training, 2008' at:

<http://www.ncver.edu.au/statistic/publications/2083.html>

Typical costs for NCVER to run specific data queries or else develop tailored data cubes is \$99 per hour. Depending on complexity, a typical data cube may take up to several days to develop. There is also some flexibility with the configuration of datacubes like SuperCUBE and they can be run as stand alone products on a local PC or else hosted over a web link.

5. Build research capacity for career development practitioners and NCVER staff

A core NCVER goal is to build new and existing VET researcher capability in technical and policy related areas. There are a number of activities which could help build researcher (including some of NCVER's staff) capability in career development. It is probable some of the directions might flow on from the research strategies in Section 2 above:

- ✧ further understand available data in databases such as LSAY, Graduate Destination surveys, Apprenticeship and Traineeship surveys
- ✧ use this data to answer questions of interest in career development
- ✧ help articulate and develop other questions for which answers may not be as readily available
- ✧ prepare project proposals and apply for funding from available sources to address questions of interest to CICA membership
- ✧ input into database review processes at NCVER so that fields that can help answer these questions might be formally incorporated in later versions of the surveys
- ✧ use technical skills to link NCVER data to other data from other stakeholders such as ABS and HILDA

- ✧ build up new researcher capabilities in career development through a variety of proactive approaches (such as fellowships, scholarships and communities of practice) along the lines of a similar program NCVER runs for novice researchers in the VET sector see: <http://www.ncver.edu.au/resources/resinfo/building.html>

Costings will vary depending on the nature and extent of the program.

6. Improving quality frameworks, implementation and developing performance indicators

NCVER can offer its extensive expertise in Quality Frameworks such ISO 9000, AS ISO/IEC 17024 — 2004 “Conformity assessment - General requirements for bodies operating certification of persons” and our direct experience in implementation, analysis and evaluation of the Australian Qualifications Training Framework (AQTF) for RTOs, AQTF for Registering Bodies and the AQTF Excellence Framework plus skills in benchmarking good practice in other industries.

There are sections of each of these Standards and Frameworks which appear useful for providing support to help address CICA’s Action Plans. This includes the aim to increase both the quality and capability of personnel offering career development services and, where required, a consistency in operations.

CICA’s focus on continuous improvement of its quality framework appears to have parallels with the aspirations of many other service industries.

Costings would be in line with NCVER’s standard daily consulting rate

Appendix 1

Member Organisations of CICA

CICA membership comprises 11 practitioner associations and 1 peak support organisation.

National organisations

- ✧ Career Development Association of Australia Inc (CDAA; formerly Australian Association of Career Counsellors Inc - AACC) – represents private practitioners and a range of other members, many of whom hold primary membership in other CICA Member Associations
- ✧ National Association of Graduate Career Advisory Services (Aust) Inc (NAGCAS) – represents career practitioners in university career advisory services
- ✧ National Coach & Athlete Career and Education Program (NCACE) – represents career practitioners working with elite athletes and their coaches
- ✧ Rehabilitation Counselling Association of Australasia Inc (RCAA) – represents career practitioners specialising in rehabilitation counselling
- ✧ Graduate Careers Australia Ltd (GCA) – provides career information services to university career services

State and Territory organisations

Representing school careers advisors in Government and Non-Government schools and, in some cases, other career practitioners or guidance officers working in related or other fields:

- ✧ Australian Capital Territory Career Education Association Inc (ACTCEA)
- ✧ Careers Advisers Association of New South Wales (CAANSW) Inc
- ✧ Career Education Association of Victoria Inc (CEAV)
- ✧ Career Education Association of Western Australia Inc (CEAWA)
- ✧ Career Educators Association of Northern Territory Inc (CEANT)
- ✧ Queensland Association of Student Advisers Inc (QASA)
- ✧ Queensland Guidance and Counselling Association Inc (QGCA)

STRATEGY 2: Implementation of professional standards and accreditation

CICA has specific responsibility for implementing career development standards in Australia

PLANNED OUTCOMES

- 1 Promotion and maintenance of the Professional Standards for Australian Career Development Practitioners
- 2 Development of the online tracking system for Continuing Professional Development

ACTION PLANS

- 1 Continued promotion of standards and assistance to organisations seeking accreditation CICA From Jan 2009 to end Jun 2011
- 2 Continuing Professional Development database and policy Associations By end Sep 2009
- 3 Develop reporting framework from associations regarding compliance with standards CICA By end Dec 2009
- 4 Plan and schedule an ongoing process of review of the standards and compliance
- 5 Review accreditation/endorsement process for course providers

STRATEGY 3: Promote access and advocate the benefits of career development

CICA is committed to improving access to career services for all Australians to enhance productivity and participation

PLANNED OUTCOMES

- 1 Development of key benefits against the vision
- 2 Development and dissemination of stakeholder relevant information and greater awareness to enhance social inclusion
- 3 Defined program of stakeholder briefings
- 4 Measurable improvement in the level of media coverage of career development issues
- 5 Measurable improvement in the participation rate of access to career development addressing a social inclusion agenda

ACTION PLANS

- 1 Undertake further research to determine key benefits of career development (individual, social and economic benefits and impact on participation, productivity)
- 2 Engage member associations
- 3 Contribute to the development of a nationally consistent language for career development
- 4 Develop a data base of major career programs across Australia
- 5 Identify gaps in career services in Australia and propose solutions to stakeholders

- 6 Develop appropriate communication tools and resources across a range of mediums
- 7 Develop evaluation (measurement) tools and KPI's
- 8 Compile a list of key government and industry contacts and schedule meetings – establish database and provide regular briefings
- 9 Monitor government activity and enquiries to determine areas where CICA input is appropriate
- 10 Identify opportunities for stakeholders to cooperate in improving cost effectiveness of service delivery through reduction in duplication and improvement in access
- 11 Promote National Career Development Week to promote awareness of career development
- 12 Undertake a regular series of visits to key identified people Secretariat

STRATEGY 4: Promote quality frameworks

CICA supports the development and implementation of frameworks that improve consistency and quality of career services and information

PLANNED OUTCOMES

- 1 Policy documents prepared about the standards, guidelines and on other frameworks including the Australian Blueprint for Career Development
- 2 Deliver documents to Ministers, Commonwealth and State Governments and to officers responsible for curricula development
- 3 Deliver policy document to industry and community stakeholders
- 4 Increased uptake and use of blueprint, standards and guidelines to promote continuous improvement in career industry

ACTION PLANS

- 1 Develop further documentation to facilitate implementation of professional standards
- 2 Prepare and distribute position papers promoting the implementation of career development (and specifically the ABCD) into the curricula
- 3 Lobby the Minister of each State with information on quality framework and relevant career development issues before key decisions/meetings are made on career matters (MCEETYA)
- 4 Write articles for media publications and industry journals to promote quality frameworks
- 5 Develop evaluation (measurement) tools and KPI's

STRATEGY 5: Continuous improvement of quality frameworks and other tools to enhance the quality of Australia's national career development system

CICA is committed to quality improvements in state and Commonwealth career initiatives that are inclusive, equitable and meet the needs of individuals and support participation and productivity

PLANNED OUTCOMES

- 1 Enhanced quality frameworks
- 2 Enhanced Guiding Principles for Career Development Services and Information Products
- 3 Increased use of frameworks

ACTION PLANS

- 1 Establish a Quality Assurance Working Party within CICA
- 2 Develop examples and case studies of applications
- 3 Develop a checklist or matrix of compliance issues
- 4 Undertake regular international comparison of best practice (international symposia)
- 5 Develop evaluation (measurement) tools and KPI's
- 6 Investigate the feasibility of a quality assurance mechanism for career products and services CICA
- 7 Further develop the Guiding Principles for Career Development Services and Information Products and review annually

STRATEGY 7: Coordinate, develop and disseminate evidence-based research

CICA is committed to evidence based career development services

PLANNED OUTCOMES

- 1 Expansion of research capacity to generate applied knowledge of international quality
- 2 Creation of a centralised repository of evidence-based research
- 3 Provision of user-friendly access to the research repository
- 4 Promotion of the research database in CICA publications

ACTION PLANS

- 1 Conduct a scan to identify key research documents – nationally/internationally Secretariat (ED) and other resources as determined
- 2 Determine how will it be catalogued and stored and where located Secretariat (ED)
- 3 Determine what is missing and consider strategies to cover Secretariat (ED) and CICA
- 4 Determine how availability of the resources will be promoted to relevant people
- 5 Develop and implement a maintenance regime to keep the repository current
- 6 Investigate closer cooperation between CICA and the Australian Journal of Career Development including scoping out the possibility of the AJCD being the national journal of all member associations
- 7 Establish an annual research agenda and facilitate new research that supports an improvement in quality and identifies gaps in service delivery
- 8 Develop partnerships to identify opportunities for using technology to improve career service delivery

STRATEGY 8: Corporate governance and organisational sustainability

CICA is committed to achieving long term sustainability to facilitate ongoing improvement in the quality and access to career services in Australia

PLANNED OUTCOMES

- 1 A governance framework that meets stakeholder expectations for transparency and accountability
- 2 A resource plan that identifies a sustainable financial and human resource strategy

ACTION PLANS

- 1 Establish and maintain a secretariat to support the President and resource operations CICA
- 2 Assess all available government funding sources and other potential funding sources
Secretariat
- 3 Develop Funding Plan Secretariat and CICA
- 4 Review constitution and structure Secretariat and CICA
- 5 Investigate member capitation fees and subsequent de-capitation CICA Board
- 6 Investigate expanded relationship categories and potential fee income CICA Board
- 7 Prepare human resource plan
- 8 Prepare corporate governance procedure handbook