SETSCoP

Communique: Third meeting of Job Readiness Initiatives sub-group

Videoconference – 2 March 2021

On 2 March, SETSCoP held its third meeting for members of the Job Readiness Initiatives (JRI) sub-group.

Job Readiness Mapping

Participants discussed the outcome of the JRI mapping exercise. As most of the projects mentioned focussed on providing direct support to clients, some participants expressed the need for widening the focus to developing relationships with employers and targeting programs to employers' needs.

During the mapping exercise it was found that due to the COVID-19 pandemic there are less jobs available and most service delivery has moved online. Participants commented that in addition to limited employment opportunities, some of their clients also lost their job. Attendees also noted the further ramifications of clients losing their ability to practice English Language skills, making it subsequently harder to apply for other jobs. Nevertheless, attendees emphasised the opportunity to focus on other industries that are booming due to the pandemic.

Some of the other barriers to employment discussed were:

- Limited understanding of how to present oneself through CV and cover letter;
- Limited understanding of Australian workplace culture;
- Cultural side of job interviews (e.g. selling yourself, etc.);
- Transportation to work (getting licence, navigating public transport, etc.);
- Accessibility of childcare.

Participants agreed that the one of the values of SETS providers within employment support is to be the connection point between other services, the client and employers.

Extended Job Readiness Support

Participants discussed section five of the *SETSCoP Employment Guide* focussing on how SETS providers can provide extended job readiness support.

Establishing networks

Participants discussed different examples of how you may support clients into employment through capacity building. Securing a placement for clients is considered valuable as it allows individuals to gain work experience in an Australian workplace setting. Participants

noted that in some instances placements were obtained through newly established networks and have led to longer term employment.

Some participants provided examples of how they assisted their clients to establish networks such mentorship programs, work with local firms, etc. Additionally, participants noted the role that local chambers of commerce can play in connecting employers with clients.

Australian workplace culture and building confidence

For many participants information sessions and training about Australian workplace culture is a regular part of their program delivery. Some noted that they provide the opportunity for mock interviews by HR personnel from potential employers in order to build the confidence of clients by providing a learning experience that is aligned with reality.

Others noted that a large part of building confidence is related to clients' English language capabilities. Participants emphasised the importance of practicing English on every occasion to allow clients to feel confident in their abilities.

Finally, participants mentioned the importance of keeping the emotional aspect of the process in mind such as taking a torture and trauma informed approach to the delivery of support.

Recognition of overseas qualifications

Participants agreed that recognition of overseas qualifications goes beyond getting an overseas degree recognised as many have qualifications from institutions that are not recognised in Australia. Therefore, there is an additional need to teach clients how to capture their overseas experience on their resumes and during interviews. Further, there is opportunity to encourage employers to look beyond qualifications and focus on fostering necessary experience through mentoring or training.

Resources shared

[Multicultural Queensland Ambassador Program - Overview Ambassador organisations](#)

[Employability skills and workplace culture in Australia. A guide for migrants to Western Australia planning to enter the workforce – Department of Education and Training](#)

[Settlement Service Providers' Guide to Working Effectively with Employers - SETSCoP](#)