

Communique:

Overview:

- The SETSCoP subgroups contribute to the overarching purpose of the community of practice: To advance good practice through shared experience, strengths and knowledge – in turn maximising the impact of SETS for refugees, vulnerable migrants, and communities.
- The SETSCoP Employment Subgroup will meet three times in 2023
- Staff from the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) presented on the Skills Assessment Pilots which are designed to support migrant skill recognition.
- The group discussed gaps in access to employment support, skill assessment processes and other specific barriers that SETS clients face

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) Skills Assessment Pilots Presentation:

- Victoria and Carla from Department of Employment and Workplace Relations presented on the Skills Assessment Pilots
- The presentation slides can be found at this link [here](#)
- For more information: www.dewr.gov.au/skills-assessment-pilots
- Victoria and Carla can provide dedication information sessions to SETS providers and their frontline staff / caseworkers
- Contact email address for Victoria, Carla and their team is AAPA@dewr.gov.au

Discussion points:

- The Employment Subgroup discussed skills assessment further, including:
 - Interest in exploring the Skills Assessment Pilots
 - How English proficiency and lower English skills factors into skills assessments
 - The need for more practical assessments
 - Analysis of the JobActive system and Workforce Australia system, with SETS providers having seen examples of SETS participants missing shifts at work to go to Workforce Australia meetings – demonstrating needs for improved capacity of mainstream services and improve cultural responsiveness in employment programmes
 - Further clarity on skills vis-à-vis qualifications recognition
 - SETS provider experience of SETS participants who have worked in the medical field and other highly-needed skill areas who struggle with the skills recognition process
- Further discussions to explore SETS providers supporting SETS participants regarding self-employment (entrepreneurs, ride-hailing and delivery services), including on tax; ABNs, etc.
- Concerns over announcement in Federal Budget 2023-2024 of the five-year limit on access to settlement support being removed but no mention about more funding for settlement support services providers
- Struggling to find external providers for referrals. A SETS provider commented that they used to refer Afghan clients to HOST international for employment support, but that programme is no longer taking new clients
- A SETS provider commented that they recently started a new arrivals employment education network and have recently started exploring connecting new arrivals with farming work as an initial way of employment
- Successful community employment connector programs such as Jobs Victoria to finish in June 2023
- A SETS provider shared that their clients had expressed feeling discouraged to apply for jobs as not only they felt that there were limited employment opportunities in the regional area they were living in but also that they did not have the local networks to be connected with jobs
- Difficulties for some refugees and newly arrived migrants to access employment opportunities due to low skills or low English proficiency



SETS CoP

- A SETS provider commented on the importance of meeting clients where they were at in terms of skills and English proficiency levels and highlighted the importance of partnerships with educational providers (e.g TAFE) that could support them
- Delays in responses from external providers and no feedback – up to at least three weeks or a month
- SETS providers commented on the issue of managing client's expectation as many hold high level qualifications in their countries of origin but once they arrive they feel frustrated with undergoing the qualifications recognition process or having to study English language
- Need for more practical based types of skills assessments and exploring in which other ways clients with practical skills can be supported in having employment where they can learn English on the job. For example, a SETS provider mentioned that many of their clients have a construction background but low English language proficiency. Therefore, even though there is currently a shortage of trade workers these clients with practical skills are excluded from accessing employment in this background due to their low English proficiency
- A SETS provider highlighted that is important to also provide culturally responsive support and understand that in certain circumstances clients with low English proficiency have found the first experience of employment traumatising
- The need for training on what it meant to be self-employed in terms of reporting taxes and capacity build case worker to guide clients in this area

Outcomes co-design:

Employment subgroup to develop outcomes related to body of work around skills and qualifications recognition

Resources:

Training for Settlement Practitioners <https://setscop.org.au/workforce-competencies/>

MyAusApp <https://www.myausapp.com/>

Employment in Settlement Practice course <https://www.myauslearning.org.au/setscop-employment/>

Next meeting: Tuesday 18 July (2pm – 3:30pm AEST)

Attendees (22 SETS):

Nicholas Ross (SPG)

Maria Rosales (SPG)

Victoria (DEWR)

Carla (DEWR)

Jenny (GyMEA NSW)

Zelka (Multicultural Services Centre WA)

Sawn (MIC East VIC)

Skye (North Coast Settlement Service NSW)

Diana (Great Southern Migrant Services WA)

Geoff (Australian Refugee Association SA)

Jantina (SSI)

Lydia (South East Community Links VIC)

Mae Sie (Wyndham CEC VIC)

Anita (Multicultural Futures WA)

Zac (SSI QLD)

Jacqui (MercyCorps WA)

Linda (CatholicCare)

Julia (GSMS Albany WA)

Carmen (Assyrian Resource Centre NSW)

Mebrathu (MRC Northern Tasmania)

Nicole (Multicultural Australia)

Kholud (Australian Muslim Women's CHR VIC)

Hiba (Whittlesea Community Connections VIC)

Preethi (Centre for Multicultural Youth VIC)

Lowilla (Uniting VIC)

Debra (Latrobe Community Health VIC)