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Moving forward – Shaping a career development culture: Quality standards, quality practice, quality outcomes

**Prepared by Mary McMahon
for the Career Industry Council of Australia**

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Moving forward - Shaping a career development culture: Quality standards, quality practice, quality outcomes

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The views expressed in this paper do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Education, Science and Training.

This document serves as a record of discussion at the National Forum for Career Practitioners and poses questions for the consultation phase of the project.

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1. Introduction

The development and implementation of quality standards for career practitioners has been on the agenda of countries such as Canada, the United States of America, Ireland, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom for several years. In essence, this quality standards agenda is a response to growing national and international awareness that the provision of career guidance contributes to the implementation of policies related to lifelong learning, the labour market and social equity.

Such high levels of interest in the contribution of career guidance prompted international reviews of career guidance and public policy such as that conducted by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD, 2003). Significantly, the OECD review highlighted inadequacies in the training and qualifications of career practitioners in many countries including Australia. Thus, just at the time when demand for career services is increasing and the individual, social, and economic value of career guidance is being recognised, the industry finds itself needing to address quality standards issues.

With the commissioning of this project on National Standards and Accreditation of Career Practitioners by the Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) through the Career Industry Council of Australia (CICA), the issue of quality standards has now been firmly placed on the current agenda of the Australian career industry.

Background on the project

This paper represents the second of two papers written as part of the National Standards and Accreditation of Career Practitioners project. The first, a scoping paper titled *Shaping a career development culture: Quality standards, quality practice, quality outcomes* (McMahon, 2004), provided information for and guided discussion at the National Forum for

Career Practitioners held in Sydney on 25–26 August 2004.

The purpose of the scoping paper was to:

- identify current standards guiding career practitioners in Australia
- review international work on standards including examples of best practice and advise on how this work might be relevant to the development of national standards and accreditation in the Australian context
- be informed by outcomes of national workshops, forums, and conferences 2000 - 2004
- identify the current membership requirements of professional career associations and bodies both nationally and internationally
- assess how prior learning or qualifications might be recognised and developed to fit within and meet the requirements of the quality standards
- identify the issues that need to be addressed in the development of national standards.

The National Forum for Career Practitioners began the consultation phase of the project. Participation in the Forum was by invitation, and invitees represented the stakeholder groups identified in the scoping paper. Represented at the Forum were groups as diverse as career practitioners, career practitioner associations, CICA, policy makers, consumers/clients, parents, training providers, business and industry, employers of career practitioners, and service providers. The aims of the Forum were:

- to develop a sound understanding of the concept of quality standards for the career industry in Australia
- to obtain a commitment from participants to establishing quality standards for the career industry in Australia

- to help frame the next stage of the consultation process.

During the Forum, group work and discussion were based on issues identified in the scoping paper. Individual and group responses, opinions, ideas and suggestions were recorded during the Forum on activity sheets that were then collated (McCowan, 2004). It was not intended to bring closure on any items raised during the Forum, but rather to open up issues for the next phase of the consultation process to be managed by Miles Morgan Australia (McCowan).

The present paper

The present paper serves as a record of the Forum discussion, and as a bridge between the scoping paper, the Forum, and the consultation phase of the project.

Four sets of issues were presented in the scoping paper and discussed at the Forum, specifically:

- industry membership and associated terminology
- the development and implementation of the quality standards
- the administration, management and maintenance of the standards
- the role of stakeholder groups.

Each issue will now be discussed. First, a brief background to the issue as described in the scoping paper will be presented. This will be followed by an outline of the Forum process and a summary of the discussion. Finally, issues that may warrant further exploration in the consultancy process will be discussed where possible by drawing on the case studies presented in the scoping paper. Where appropriate, comments made by Forum participants will be included in quotation marks.

2. Industry Membership and Terminology

Internationally the profile of career services has risen as governments of many countries including Australia recognise their contribution in developing the lifelong learning and career self-management skills needed by all citizens to thrive in the knowledge economy. One of the issues highlighted in the scoping paper and discussed throughout the Forum is that of terminology. For example, the OECD, the United Kingdom, and Ireland all use *career guidance* as an umbrella term, whereas Canada and the United States of America use the term *career development*. Australia has been influenced by practices from Europe, in particular the United Kingdom, and also from Canada and the United States of America and has not yet adopted either term. Similarly in Australia, variation is found in the use of the terms *career* (more commonly used in Canada and the United States) and *careers* (more commonly used in the United Kingdom and Ireland), as evidenced in the terms *careers adviser* and *career counsellor*.

At the most fundamental level an agreed terminology would facilitate understanding about the industry and what people who work in it do (McMahon, 2004, August). For example, the OECD (2003) defined career guidance as the information, guidance and counselling services intended to assist individuals, of any age and at any point throughout their lives, to make educational, training and occupational choices and to manage their careers. Such an understanding provides a framework within which practitioners may locate their work in terms of their client group and occupation. It provides a cohesive structure within which an industry that may seem fragmented may appear united in purpose. Further, it also helps to define who belongs in the industry and who does not (McMahon).

In relation to industry membership and terminology, the Forum sought opinion on

- the possible adoption of the OECD definition in Australia
- preference for use of the term *career guidance* or *career development* in Australia.

In addition, there was discussion at the Forum about the use of the term *industry* that warrants further clarification. The terms *professional* and *practitioner* used throughout the Forum also merit discussion in this paper.

The adoption of a definition

Participants at the Forum were asked to indicate whether the OECD definition on career guidance could be adopted in Australia, that is *the information, guidance and counselling services intended to assist individuals, of any age and at any point throughout their lives, to make educational, training and occupational choices and to manage their careers* (OECD, 2003).

Forum discussion

Of 80 participant responses recorded, 17 indicated that it should not be adopted. Of the 63 who indicated that the definition should be adopted, almost half (28) qualified their responses with suggestions about changes to the definition before it is adopted.

Suggestions about changes to the definition included that:

- the reference to guidance be deleted
- the purpose of career services described in the definition should reflect the holistic definitions of career and career development already found in the Australian Blueprint for Career Development (Miles Morgan Australia, 2003)
- a holistic understanding of career should be reflected so that the definition includes more than an employment focus.

Issues for further consideration

The indication from the Forum was that the definition proposed needs refinement and amendment before it is adopted in Australia. Further consideration may need to be given to the nature of an umbrella definition for career development services in Australia.

Career guidance vs career development

Participants at the Forum were also asked to indicate whether the term *career guidance* or *career development* could be the term used in Australia to preface the definition.

Forum discussion

Of the 80 participant responses, 65 supported the adoption of the term *career development*, 9 supported the adoption of the term *career guidance*, and 6 indicated that neither term should be adopted.

Some discussion occurred around use of the term *career development*. For example, comments included “if we are defining services then career development doesn’t fit”, “career development is a process not a service”, “if career development is used, practitioner name is not clear”, “are we career developers” and “development doesn’t fit – I will develop your career”. In regard to such comments, several participants drew attention to the definition of career development found in the Australian Blueprint for Career Development (Miles Morgan Australia, 2003), where career development is a noun that refers to a personal process of learning, growth and change over a time. Essentially, the discussion centred on whether *career development*, which is already well understood as a personal process, can also be used to describe career services.

In relation to the term *career guidance*, some participants suggested that it is about “advice giving”, “old fashioned”, implies “someone else having

power/knowledge/control”, “the expert directing the client”, and that it is “too mechanistic, one-off and schooly”.

One participant simply asked “Can we find a better term?” However, no alternatives were suggested at the Forum.

Issues for further consideration

Further consideration may need to be given to the adoption of an umbrella term such as *career guidance* or *career development*.

Clarification of the term industry

During the Forum, there was discussion of the term *industry* that was used throughout the scoping paper when this project clearly relates to the standards related to practitioners. Practitioners are fundamental to the provision of quality career services. However, the quality of their service is in part dependent on the quality of the labour market, occupational and educational information that is available to them, and on the quality of computer based and print resources. Further, their training, ongoing professional development and the policies and organisations within which they work have a bearing on the quality of the service they may be able to provide. In addition, for career services to remain relevant, they must seek feedback from consumers and clients and also be responsive to the needs of business and industry. In the Canadian Standards and Guidelines for Career Development Practitioners, specific mention is made of “important work associated with the provision of quality career development services which do not involve direct contact with clients” (National Steering Committee for Career Development Guidelines and Standards, 2004, p. 8). For example, they mention researchers involved in the gathering and analysis of labour market information and individuals who develop self-exploration tools. Watts (2004), in his reflection on Forum discussion, asked whether standards focusing solely on practitioner standards may risk reflecting an outdated model of service delivery that does not take into

account career development delivery systems that are not based on contact with a practitioner, but rather through technology.

Thus the achievement of quality outcomes and quality practice in the provision of career services is predicated on much more than the standards of practitioners alone. Practitioner standards must be set into the broader context of a group of stakeholders, all of whom have an interest in and role to play in the delivery of quality career services. It is this broader membership of individuals and organisations who contribute either directly or indirectly to the provision of career services that was termed the *career industry* in the scoping paper.

At the present time in Australia, there does not seem to be an agreed definition of *industry*. The term *industry* may be used to represent a collective of businesses or other types of organisations or to define a particular group of businesses or organisations. By way of example, the education and training sector may be viewed as an industry. In a similar way, those who work either directly or indirectly in career services such as practitioners, resource developers, training providers, career service providers, and practitioner associations may be regarded as an industry group. As discussed later in this paper, there is already evidence of and recommendations that quality standards be developed in other facets of the industry such as labour market, occupational and educational information, and service delivery (Plant, 2004).

Issues for further consideration

Attention has been drawn to possible complementarity of organisational standards and practitioner standards. Thus it is likely that at some future time standards for other facets of the Australian career industry will be developed (as discussed later in this paper). While this is not of immediate concern to the present project, at some future time consideration may need to be given to:

- identifying other facets of the industry where standards may be developed and applied
- the nature of standards in other facets of the industry; for example a code of service for employers and career service providers and a charter of client rights and responsibilities
- the timing of standards development in other facets of the industry, e.g., short-, medium-, or long-term.

Profession vs practitioner

Several participants at the Forum used the terms *career profession* and *professional* to describe the work of career practitioners. Throughout the scoping paper, the term *practitioner* was consistently used. The use of these terms is related to discussion in the scoping paper on standards guiding professional associations in Australia and the occupational titles found among workers in the Australian career industry (McMahon, 2004).

As discussed in the scoping paper, if the Professions Australia definition of *profession* is applied to those working in the career field, it is debatable how many career *practitioners* could be regarded as career *professionals* and how many of the career *practitioner* associations could be regarded as *professional* associations. Professions Australia define *professions* as “a disciplined group of individuals who adhere to ethical standards and uphold themselves to, and are accepted by the public as possessing special knowledge and skills in a widely recognised body of learning derived from research, education and training at a high level, and who are prepared to exercise this knowledge and skills in the interest of others” (Professions Australia, 2004). As highlighted in the Australia Country Note of the OECD review, many *career practitioners* do not possess “special knowledge and skills ... education and training at a high level” as they have inadequate training and qualifications (OECD, 2002a) in career development theory and practice. While

many career practitioners have qualifications that qualify them to work as professionals in related fields such as education, social work and psychology, they have not undertaken such training in career development. In addition, several of the career practitioner associations have not yet adopted codes of ethical practice. However, this needs to be set in the context that the work of many career practitioners accords with the ethical codes accepted by other related professions such as teaching, psychology, or social work.

Watts (2004) discussed the terms *professional* and *practitioner* in relation to inclusion and exclusion. *Practitioner* may be viewed as a more inclusive term that attempts to cover as many as possible of those who provide career services to clients. The term *profession* may be viewed as a more exclusive term. Indeed, the adoption of standards could create a *career development profession* within Australia, a suggestion made by the Australian Government Minister for Education, Science and Training, the Honourable Brendan Nelson MP, in his address to the Forum. Watts suggested that competency frameworks are more accommodating of inclusivity, whereas mechanisms like accreditation, registration or licensing are more concerned with establishing a profession and are therefore more indicative of exclusivity. Utilising both in a complementary manner is a possible option in Australia as evidenced in the case study of the Career Development Association of Alberta (McMahon, 2004).

Forum discussion

There was some discussion about the need to “create a database/map of practitioners” in which their skills and qualifications are recorded. It was suggested that this occur prior to the development of standards. Further, it was suggested that such a process might reveal multiple entry points into career services work and a need for “tiered” standards.

Issues for further consideration

A fundamental issue in the development of standards for Australian career practitioners is how to accommodate the diversity of practice that exists in relation to the nature of occupations and the nature of work in the career industry. As discussed later in this paper, over three quarters of the Forum participants favoured the development of competency standards and over half indicated that career specific entry-level qualifications that take into account professional and paraprofessional levels of training be adopted. Thus, further consideration may need to be given to whether the standards represent:

- an inclusive model
- an exclusive model
- or
- a model that accommodates the development of a profession as well as the inclusion of all practitioners.

In addition consideration may need to be given to identifying:

- practitioners who regard themselves as professionals
- practitioners who do not work in professional roles
- the skills, qualifications and training of career professionals
- the occupations of career professionals
- the skills, qualifications and training of career practitioners
- the occupations of career practitioners
- the nature of work undertaken by these occupational groups.

3. Development and implementation of quality standards

With the emergence of the knowledge economy, many countries including Australia are positioning themselves to develop policy and practice that prepares citizens “to become lifelong learners, able to move between work and learning and to adapt to new and challenging situations” (OECD, 2002a, p. 4), and to self-manage their careers. Increasingly, effective career services are being recognised as an essential part of a national strategy in relation to lifelong learning, the labour market and social equity. At the present time this is reflected by several significant projects in the career field initiated by DEST. Thus it seems that policy makers are committed to the MCEETYA Taskforce recommendation to develop “a national approach to promote, establish and monitor quality outcomes for individuals and for the Australian economy, to establish what forms of career guidance best suit the Australian context and to identify any unevenness in the delivery of services in the different sectors” and to achieve a “national quality approach” (MCEETYA, 2002, p. iv) to career services. Thus the present project is consistent with the goal of “a national quality approach”.

A possible goal – Career development culture

Complementing this is a proactive career industry that is committed to developing quality standards and promoting a career development culture in Australia (CICA, 2004). It seems that the small beginnings of a career development culture that will position Australia well in a global knowledge economy are emerging. McMahon (2004, August) described possible elements of a career development culture. For example:

- the industry is understood as there is agreed terminology and an understanding about what people who work in the industry do
- career practitioners are guided by a code of ethics or professional conduct, their work is informed by

career specific training and they meet entry-level requirements and core competencies as well as those relating to their particular specialisation, and they are committed to ongoing professional development

- practitioner standards are implemented, maintained and reviewed by an appropriate body
- policy makers recognise and understand the contribution of career services to the achievement of policy directions on lifelong learning, the labour market and social equity and are committed to developing and maintaining a framework of quality career services
- the general public is aware of a range of career services and is proactive in deciding when and which services to access. Further, they have access to basic information that not only helps them but also enhances the quality of assistance they provide to others
- training providers meet practitioner entry requirements for the industry and collaborate with practitioners and other stakeholders on course development
- employers of career practitioners employ staff who are appropriately trained and meet entry-level requirements, deploy staff according to their specialisations, encourage and support staff to engage in professional development, and are guided by a code of service
- business and industry recognise the career development needs of staff and their in-house career development programs comply with industry standards.

Forum discussion

Reaction to the concept of a career development culture was positive. Of

interest was the comment by one participant that “some of us created the concept 25 years ago. Hence it’s not a new concept - it’s a renewal, stimulation, evolution in which we are engaged today”. As discussed in the scoping paper, the issue of quality standards is not new in the Australian setting and significant work has previously been undertaken (McMahon, 2004). While the original source of this concept is unknown, the notion of a career development culture may serve as a bridge between previous Australian quality standards work and the work that is yet to come. It is testament to the commitment to quality standards of many in the career field over a long period of time.

Some participants suggested that the concept of a career development culture provides a clearly defined purpose that is “inclusive”, “visionary”, “provides a shared meaning” and is “useful to all Australians”. For example, one commented that “government and the diversity of stakeholders and consumers share the same goals and have a clearly defined purpose to product development and service delivery”. Others suggested that a career development culture requires strong leadership and effective communication with all stakeholders as it will be in a “dynamic and continually emerging state”.

Some participants commented on challenges arising out of the concept of a career development culture. For example, some participants commented on the challenge of promoting the concept to all stakeholders such as consumers, business and industry, and that it not be “just kept to the profession”. One suggested that “we, as an industry must lead this, it must permeate the population at all stages of lifelong learning”.

As an overall goal, one participant remarked “it is a sound concept” but that “we have a huge task ahead of us to get the diverse practitioners on the same page and drag the Australian public with us”.

Issues for further consideration

Further consideration may need to be given to whether the notion of a career development culture may be viewed as an overarching goal of the quality standards journey outlined by McMahon (2004, August)

A possible scaffold

The Canadian Standards and Guidelines for Career Development Practitioners are described as:

“The systems and procedures developed by career practitioners and stakeholders in the career industry that:

- define the career industry, its membership and its services
- recognise the diverse skills and knowledge of career practitioners
- guide practitioner entry into the industry
- provide a foundation for designing career practitioner training
- provide quality assurance to the public and other stakeholders in the industry
- create an agreed terminology for the industry“

(adapted from National Steering Committee for Career Development Guidelines and Standards, 2004b).

Such a description provides a statement of purpose for standards. This description was referred to in the Forum, as a possible scaffold that could guide Australian standards. Participants were asked to discuss this possibility.

Forum discussion

Participants wrote an individual response to the notion of the scaffold and then engaged in group discussion. In general, comments about the scaffold could be grouped into four categories – benefits, challenges, the implementation process, and suggestions for change to the scaffold. Each will now be discussed.

Benefits

The scaffold was variously described as a “building block”, a “solid structure”, a “positive tool to support and grow the

industry”, a “valuable framework”, and a “vision from which to work”. Some suggested that it helps “set the scene” for the development of standards, “provides clear parameters” and “gives some structure to our task and outlines the key areas to be progressed”. In relation to public perception about standards, some participants remarked that it is “a way to promote public confidence in services offered”, promotes accountability, and “enables customers to know what to buy, where to go, and how to evaluate services within an ethical framework”. One participant observed that the scaffold could be “used as a vehicle for promotion of the sector”.

Challenges

The main challenge identified by participants is the need for the scaffold to be flexible enough to accommodate the diversity of practitioners. A further challenge identified was educating stakeholders about the standards. One participant suggested that “it will become contentious as people start to realise what this will mean in practice”. One participant simply remarked “a very overwhelming endeavour”.

Implementation process

A number of participants noted that the scaffold provides a “systematic and orderly process to follow”, and provides a possible structure. One suggested that “the scaffold shows that it does not all have to be done at once”. A number raised concerns about how the process may be funded and resourced.

Suggestions for change to the scaffold

Suggestions included the inclusion of practitioner professional development as a separate bullet point. Suggested word changes included changing “recognise” to “identify”. Some comments related to service standards and “licensing arrangements for career organisations”.

Issues for further consideration

While reaction at the Forum to the scaffold was generally positive, further consideration may need to be given to:

- its application to the present project
- suggested amendments or changes.

A possible starting point

As discussed previously, membership of the career industry is broader than practitioners. Plant (2001) suggests that quality standards be applied broadly across all facets of the industry including the qualifications and competencies of guidance personnel, occupational and educational information and products, and the delivery of guidance. He regards the issue of quality standards in the provision of print, computerized and internet-based information as less complicated than the development of standards in other facets of the industry. Despite the extensive work done in Canada on the development and implementation of quality standards for practitioners, the OECD Canada Country Note (OECD, 2002b) suggested that the development of organisational quality standards for service delivery in the field would complement the professional standards and guidelines work already done. An example of standards related to service delivery is found in the United Kingdom where the matrix standard focuses on the delivery and management of services from a consumer perspective (Howard, Neary, & Rankin, 2002), and provides a standard against which information, advice and guidance services are accredited in order to receive government funding (Sultana, 2004). An Australian example of such a standard is the Careers Education Quality Framework which was developed as a “practical tool for self-assessing Careers Education and developing action plans for improvement” (Willett, 1999, p. 2).

However, as evidenced in the Canadian example, the starting point for the introduction of quality standards into the career industry in most countries including

the United Kingdom, the United States of America, Ireland, and New Zealand has been with practitioner standards (see McMahon, 2004). Indeed the focus of this project is on practitioner standards. In general, as evidenced in the case studies (McMahon), practitioner standards comprise components such as codes of ethics, competency frameworks, entry-level qualifications, continuing professional development, accreditation or registration of career practitioners, recognised qualifications, and complaints procedures. Some of the case study examples provided in the scoping paper incorporated grandfather clauses for a period of time in recognition of the diversity of backgrounds of practitioner association members. In addition, codes of service for employers and service providers and a charter of client rights and

responsibilities are examples of the application of quality standards to other facets of the industry.

Forum discussion

Each of the possible components of practitioner standards was listed and participants were asked to indicate which they would like to see implemented. In addition, for the practitioner standards, the focus of this project, participants were asked to indicate whether they envisaged implementation in the short, medium or long term. Short term was described as being within 6 months, medium term was described as being within 18 months, and long term was described as being within 3 years. The findings are illustrated in Table 1. The components will be discussed first followed by the timeframe.

Table 1. Possible components of Australian standards and suggested timeframe

Possible Component	Yes	No	Maybe	Timeframe		
				Short	Medium	Long
1. Code of Ethics/Professional Conduct	90	0	0	64	5	1
2. Career specific entry-level qualification (could take into account professional and paraprofessional career practitioners)	53	1	26	17	46	7
3. Career qualifications endorsed by industry	80	0	10	16	44	10
4. Continuing Professional Development	88	0	2	22	37	11
5. Accreditation or registration of career practitioners	83	0	6	5	35	30
6. Competency Framework that recognises core competencies and specialised competencies	76	0	14	26	43	1
7. Complaints Procedure	82	0	8	17	30	23
8. Grandfather clause that recognises existing practitioners (in introductory phase only)	86	0	4	23	26	21
9. Code of service for employers and service providers	41	0	39			
10. Charter of client rights and responsibilities	54	3	23			

Components of practitioner standards

As indicated in Table 1, participants were overwhelmingly in favour of developing standards for career practitioners. Further,

most participants indicated that practitioner standards should contain all of the components. In regard to career specific entry requirements, 10 of the 90

participants did not respond. However, two-thirds of those who did were in favour of career specific entry-level qualifications also being a component of the standards. Table 1 also indicates that there is less support for a code of service for employers and service providers and a charter of client rights and responsibilities. This may be a reflection of the focus of the present project. That more than half those who responded supported the inclusion of each of these components in quality standards may indicate that they could be investigated further at some time in the future.

Groups were also asked to comment on each of the components. A brief summary of comments will now be provided.

Code of Ethics/Professional Conduct

A number of groups commented on a code of ethics or professional conduct being an essential component of the standards and related it to such concepts as transparency, accountability, and public trust. Some suggested that such a code would allow for the exclusion of bad practice and suggested that it be linked to complaints procedures and accreditation or registration. One group noted that such a code should be short and written in plain English.

Career specific entry-level qualification (could take into account professional and paraprofessional career practitioners)

Comments on this component related to three main issues, specifically:

- the need for such qualifications to take into account the diversity of practitioners and the multiple levels or tiers of work such as professional and paraprofessional
- practitioners having qualifications in fields such as psychology and education and if or how these may be taken into account
- recognition of prior learning.

Other points raised included the notion of “minimum standards”, the issue of competence versus qualifications, and

whether there would be any relationship between the Australian Qualifications Framework and entry-level qualifications.

Career qualifications endorsed by the industry

Much discussion centred on the issue of who or which body would endorse the standards with some suggestions that it could be a “group of expert career practitioners”, the profession, a “regulatory body” or a “recommended career body”. Other comments related to the need for the level of endorsement being linked to the level of career service, the need to consider employer endorsement and cost, and the need to implement this slowly in order that “sufficient programs are available to ensure equity and access”.

Continuing professional development

Discussion centred around four main issues, specifically:

- the importance of maintaining currency through continuing professional development
- the cost of continuing professional development and whether practitioners or employers should pay
- the implementation process such as a point system, assessment, the nature of professional development that is acceptable, and how it will be recorded and monitored
- accessibility and availability, the need for variety, and flexible and distance education options.

Accreditation or registration of career practitioners

Discussion centred around three main issues, specifically:

- the need for different levels of registration or accreditation
- whether accreditation or registration should be for professionals only
- administration by a national body such as a board and the resourcing and composition of

such a body.

Competency framework

As indicated in Table 1, the competency framework would recognise core competencies as well as specialised competencies. Discussion was varied. Topics included the relationship between competencies and courses, particularly university courses, resourcing issues such as who assesses, monitors, trains and updates competencies, and whether there is any possible relationship between the competencies and the Australian Blueprint for Career Development.

Complaints procedure

Discussion was varied with the main topic raised again being resourcing and the management and administration infrastructure.

Grandfather clause

As indicated in Table 1, the purpose of the grandfather clause is to recognise existing practitioners. Thus it would be applied only in the introductory phase of standards development. Discussion centred on two main issues, specifically:

- the use of a term such as “sunset clause” instead of “grandfather clause”
- the time limit of the clause with some suggestions that one year is too short and that three or five years may be more appropriate.

Code of service for employers and service providers

Discussion was varied partly as a result of varied understanding about the component. Some groups discussed alternatives to a code such as a framework or quality endorsement.

Charter of client rights and responsibilities

Several groups expressed some caution in relation to this component through comments related to litigation, an adversarial culture, and possible differences between adult and under-age clients.

Issues for further consideration

On the basis of the Forum discussion and the case studies previously presented (McMahon, 2004), issues related to some of the components warrant further discussion in this paper and consideration in the consultation process. In particular the ethical code, continuing professional development, the grandfather clause, accreditation or registration of career practitioners, and a competency framework that recognises core competencies and specialised competencies will be discussed. Where necessary, additional information is provided on the case studies.

Ethical Code

All participants at the Forum supported the adoption of a code of ethics/professional conduct which has been described as “a practical guide for professional behaviour and practice for those who offer direct service in career development and to inform the public which career development practitioners serve” (National Steering Committee for Career Development Guidelines and Standards, 2004, p. 3). As evidenced in the case studies, the development of an ethical code raises questions about what such a document will be called and what elements it will contain (see Appendix 1).

The case study of the Career Industry Council of Australia (McMahon, 2004) draws attention to the variability of standards among Australian career practitioner associations. Some associations such as the Queensland Guidance and Counselling Association and the Australian Association of Career Counsellors have already adopted ethical codes, whereas some others have not. An example of how this may be dealt with is provided in the case study of the United Kingdom where the Federation of Professional Associations in Guidance (2004) publishes a statement of Common Ethical Principles, and each of its member associations incorporates the core requirements into their own ethical code.

The case studies raise some issues that warrant further consideration in relation to the development of an ethical code for career practitioners, specifically:

- a range of terms including Code of Ethics, Code of Ethical Practice, Ethical Standards and Code of Professional Conduct are used to describe very similar documents. Consideration may need to be given to the term adopted.
- the elements contained in existing codes found in career associations are listed in Appendix 1. Consideration may need to be given to the content of the Australian ethical code.
- if, as previously discussed, the development of standards may also see the establishment of a career profession in Australia, consideration may also need to be given to the content of ethical codes from more clearly defined related professions such as social work and psychology in Australia, or counselling in other countries such as Canada.
- some Australian career practitioner associations have already adopted ethical codes. Consideration may need to be given to how these existing standards may be accommodated.

Continuing Professional Development

A number of associations described in the case studies (McMahon, 2004) have adopted models of continuing professional development. The elements of the models of three associations are presented in Appendix 2. As evidenced in these case studies, some issues may warrant further consideration, specifically:

- terms such as Continuing Professional Education, Professional Development, and Continuing Professional Development are used to describe

these models. Consideration may need to be given to the term adopted.

- some models require members to record their professional development in a cycle over more than one year while another operates on the basis of membership subscription years. Consideration may need to be given to the length of the professional development cycle.
- some models of professional development operate on a point system. Another operates on the basis of hours of professional development. Consideration may need to be given to the method adopted.
- all models contain a system through which members are required to record their professional development, such as a logbook or journal. Consideration may need to be given to the nature of the recording method to be adopted.
- some models operate on an honour system whereas others require proof of professional development to be submitted and others conduct random audits. Consideration may need to be given to the model adopted.

Grandfather Clause

Almost all participants were in favour of including a “grandfather clause” that recognises existing practitioners in the introductory phase of implementing the standards and accreditation. Discussion ensued at the Forum about the terminology with some suggestions that it be termed a *sunset clause*. A model that has been implemented is that of the Career Development Association of Alberta. Their grandfather clause is outlined in the CDAA Professional Certification Process and Criteria (CDAA, 2004). The clause states that:

“The CDAA requires that, for a one-year period after launching professional certification, all CDAA members in good standing may apply for professional certification through a “grandfather clause” that offers an alternative to the Education and Experience component, if they meet the following criteria:

- minimum five years full-time-equivalent career development experience
- demonstrated competencies
- security clearance
- references
- a course/seminar in Ethics and Professional Conduct and a course/seminar in Career Development Theories if not completed in prior formal education.”

In essence, the CDAA grandfather clause requires members to meet certification criteria that are not dependent on prior education and experience, and gives an alternative to the combination of education and experience criteria.

As evidenced in the Forum discussion and this case study, some issues may warrant further consideration, specifically:

- the name of the clause, for example grandfather or sunset
- the duration of the clause, for example one year, three years, five years
- the content of the clause in relation to other membership requirements.

Accreditation or registration of career practitioners

Some associations have adopted membership standards that enable practitioners to fulfil additional requirements. In so doing, terms such as *accredited*, *certified*, *registered* or *chartered* are used to distinguish such practitioners. In some professions such as social work, the professional association monitors the process of registration, certifying, accreditation, or chartering. In others, such as psychology, a separate

body or board monitors the process. Some issues may warrant further consideration, specifically:

- whether a process of accreditation, registration, chartering, or certifying should be adopted
- if so, what terminology is preferred
- in light of the number of career practitioner associations in Australia, how would such a process be best managed and by whom.

Competency framework

Several examples of competency frameworks already exist that identify core competencies related to career development work. Similarities exist across these competencies as evidenced in Appendix 3. In addition, the National Career Development Association (1997, 2003) has developed competencies for different levels of work such as career counselling and career development facilitation that are reflective of the core competencies identified by the International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance (IAEVG, 2003), the Canadian Standards and Guidelines for Career Development Practitioners, and the National Board of Employment Education and Training (NBEET, 1992). Recently the Australian Association of Career Counsellors developed a set of skills and knowledge appropriate to their membership based on these competency frameworks (see Appendix 3).

While there are several examples of core competency frameworks, there are fewer examples of competencies within specialisations. The Career Development Standards and Guidelines for Career Development Practitioners developed in Canada provide a comprehensive example of competencies developed for particular specialisations of career development work. Six areas of specialisation have been recognised that are reflective of the diverse range of work undertaken by career development practitioners and illustrate the additional skills, knowledge, and attitudes required

depending on the type of work setting and the client group being served. The areas of specialisation are Assessment, Facilitated individual and group learning, Career counselling, Information and resource management, Work development, and Community capacity building (National Steering Committee for Career Development Guidelines and Standards, 2004).

The case studies raise some issues that warrant further consideration in relation to the development of a competency framework for career practitioners in the Australian setting, specifically:

- the applicability of existing models of core competencies to Australian practitioners
- the possibility of variations between core competencies for professional practitioners and other practitioners (see the NCDA examples in Appendix 3)
- the nature of specialisations that exist in Australian career work

- the possibility of adapting the existing Canadian specialist competencies.

A possible timeframe

As described in the case studies, the development and implementation of standards for career practitioners is a time consuming and rigorous process. For example, discussion on development of the Canadian Standards and Guidelines began in 1996 and implementation continues at the present time.

Forum discussion

As explained previously, participants at the Forum were asked to consider the timeframe for the development and implementation of the components of practitioner standards. They were asked to indicate whether they envisaged implementation of the components in the short, medium or long term. The findings are illustrated in Table 2.

Table 2. Timeframe for development of quality standards suggested by Forum

Short term (within 6 months)	Medium term (within 18 months)	Medium to long term (long term - within 3 years)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Code of Ethics/Professional Conduct 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career specific entry level qualification (could take into account professional and paraprofessional career practitioners) • Career qualifications endorsed by the industry • Competency framework that recognises core competencies and specialised competencies • Continuing professional development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accreditation or registration of career practitioners

For the first 6 components listed, clear preferences emerged for the timeframe. However, the timeframe was less clear for the complaints procedure and the grandfather clause even though most participants indicated that they should be

included in the standards. In regard to continuing professional development, most participants indicated that this component could be achieved in the short or medium term, hence its location in the medium term column.

Table 2 provides a summary of the components according to the timeframe. One forum participant provided a timeline representation of Table 2 that is contained in Appendix 4. A difference appears between Table 2 and Appendix 4 in relation to the location of continuing professional development. The timeline also illustrates how the components of the standards may interrelate.

Issues for further consideration

While Table 2 depicts the timeframe suggested at the Forum, it remains to be confirmed by the consultation process.

Possible approach

The case studies described in the scoping paper (McMahon, 2004) provide examples of how a number of practitioner associations from various countries have approached the development and implementation of standards. Australian examples were also provided including examples of career practitioner associations and other professional associations, some of whose members would also be career practitioners. As evidenced in the case studies, contextual considerations are important in the development and implementation of quality standards. The development and implementation of the Canadian Standards and Guidelines for Career Development Practitioners clearly demonstrated the importance of a consultative, collaborative, and inclusive process for building a sense of ownership of and commitment to the standards and guidelines. In his address to the Forum, Watts (2004, August) stressed to the audience “the processes and structures you adopt may be as important as the outcomes” (p. 9). Further, in his reflections on the Forum discussion, Watts (2004) discussed the tension between the “impatient activists and the professional custodians: the need for lengthy consultation and the need for impetus and action” (p. 2). Thus, as evidenced in the case studies, a dual challenge exists, specifically that of adopting a development and implementation process that is facilitative of success, and of developing

and adopting standards that are appropriate and accepted by practitioners.

Forum discussion

In groups, the Forum participants discussed the process of developing and implementing quality standards. In essence, their suggestions could be grouped under seven main categories. Each will now be described.

Modify, adapt, amend

Many participants indicated that, where possible, the case study examples should be used as models that may be modified or adapted for the Australian setting. Several stressed the importance of not “reinventing the wheel”.

A process of several phases

Most participants were supportive of a process that accommodated a phasing in of standards. The timeframe discussed earlier has the potential to accommodate the competing needs of “the impatient activists and the professional custodians” described by Watts (2004). The achievement of short term goals may meet the needs of some of the “impatient activists” who expressed the need in the Forum interaction to “get runs on the board” or to demonstrate progress quickly.

Strategic plan

In addition to a timeframe, some groups discussed the need for a strategic plan that can be communicated to stakeholders.

Communication strategy

Most groups discussed the importance of an effective communication strategy to inform the stakeholder groups. Key issues raised were the:

- need to communicate the strategy to all stakeholders
- use of multiple communication channels including association newsletters, the Australian Journal for Career Development,

- association websites, and conferences
- possibility of “generic letters” being drafted centrally and distributed to the stakeholder groups.

Use of technology

Most groups discussed the use of technology as being appropriate in the consultation process and also in the communication strategy.

Feedback and trialing

Most groups discussed the need for a feedback and trialing process.

Suggestions included providing the opportunity to respond to draft documents, state forums, and online feedback processes. The feedback and trialing processes used in the development of the Australian Blueprint for Career Development and the Australian Career Development Studies project were suggested as possible models.

Stakeholder involvement

There was general agreement that all stakeholders need to be involved throughout the process of developing and implementing the standards. Some groups indicated that such involvement would facilitate “buy-in” by stakeholders. The discussion on stakeholder involvement was also indicative of the need for an inclusive process.

Issues for further consideration

In terms of development of the standards, Forum participants were in favour of modifying, adapting or amending existing models. However, the case studies also illustrate the importance of standards being context appropriate. Care must be taken to create an Australian model. Consideration may need to be given to:

- which models are considered and on what basis
- encouragement of original ideas
- standards that are appropriate to the Australian context.

In terms of the development and implementation of standards, the Forum participants favoured an inclusive, collaborative and consultative process. The importance of “buy-in” by stakeholders cannot be understated.

The case studies and the Forum discussion highlight the need for a development and implementation process to be established that extends well beyond the duration of this project. This issue is also discussed in the next section on the administration, management and maintenance of the standards. Further consideration may need to be given to:

- the elements of the implementation process
- the adoption of inclusive, consultative and collaborative strategies.

4. The administration, management and maintenance of the standards

In his address to the Forum, Watts (2004) suggested that the development of standards may be set into the broader context of issues such as evidence, delivery, resourcing and leadership. Further, he discussed the importance of strategic leadership in the field of career guidance and of the role of governments and stakeholders. This project provides an example of the impact of strategic leadership and resourcing. Further examples in relation to standards are provided in the case studies (McMahon, 2004). For example, the case study of the development and implementation of the Canadian Standards and Guidelines for Career Development Practitioners draws attention to a number of critical issues, specifically:

- the importance of an inclusive body (the National Steering Committee) that guided the development of the standards
- resourcing and funding issues
- the importance of an inclusive, collaborative and consultative process in facilitating “buy-in” by practitioners and practitioner associations
- the difficulties that may emerge by not having a central body to administer, manage and maintain the standards.

Other case studies provided examples of where standards are administered, managed and maintained by a central body. For example, in Australian professions where there is one predominant association such as psychology or social work, the role of administration, management and maintenance of standards is undertaken by the professional association itself.

Forum discussion

In groups, the Forum participants discussed the administration,

management and maintenance of the standards. Much discussion centred around the issues highlighted by the Canadian case study. Several groups suggested CICA as the body that would facilitate the administration, management, and maintenance of the standards. CICA membership was discussed by some groups, and there were some suggestions that CICA adopt a broader membership base. There were also some suggestions that a separate body or board be set up to undertake the administration, management, and maintenance role. In regard to CICA undertaking this role, several groups questioned the capacity of volunteers to do so, and thus the issue of funding and resourcing was raised. The discussion highlighted the importance of leadership and of having an infrastructure in place to further the development and implementation of the standards beyond the duration of the present project. In this regard, there were suggestions about the need for a steering committee or reference group that is representative of the stakeholder groups.

Issues for further consideration

Consideration may need to be given to:

- the formation and composition of a steering committee that guides the development and implementation of the standards beyond the present project
- who will administer the standards, that is CICA or another “board” or body
- how the ongoing development and implementation of the standards will be funded and resourced.

5. Stakeholder groups – issues and roles

Watts and Sultana (2004) identify seven issues that policy makers need to address in the creation and management of lifelong guidance systems including “developing better quality assurance mechanisms and linking these to the funding of services”, “developing stronger structures for strategic leadership”, and “working more closely with professional associations and training bodies to improve education and training for career guidance practitioners, preferably on a cross-sectoral basis, producing professionals who can manage guidance resources as well as be engaged in service delivery”. These issues are reflective of Plant’s (2004) suggestion that quality standards are best defined within a national framework. In addition, he claims that cross-sectoral co-operation is needed, and that to succeed, a broad national lead body must include all relevant partners including career practitioner associations, education and labour market authorities, and policy makers. To date this project has been reflective of the previous suggestions, specifically it represents collaboration between policy makers (DEST) and an industry council (CICA). In addition, the Forum included participants from a range of stakeholder groups including practitioners, CICA, practitioner associations, policy makers, consumers/clients, parents, training providers, employers of career practitioners, service providers, and business and industry. There was recognition at the Forum that participants may belong to more than one stakeholder group.

Forum discussion

The stakeholder groups were asked to consider the benefits of standards, their concerns about standards, the processes/strategies that may allay their concerns and the potential role their stakeholder group may play in the development and implementation of the standards. Each of these will now be discussed. As some of the findings are identifiable to particular people or

organisations, and some are not attributable to any particular stakeholder group, a collation will be presented here.

Benefits of standards

All groups were able to identify considerable benefits from the development and implementation of standards. These included:

- enhanced credibility with the public, employers, policy makers
- benchmarking
- consistency across the profession
- a common language and agreed terminology
- accountability
- enhanced quality of services
- a guide to recruitment, employment and performance management of career practitioners
- a guide to course development
- an agenda for training and professional development.

Concerns about standards

All groups also expressed concerns about the development and implementation of standards. These included:

- obtaining a balance between standards that are too inclusive or too exclusive
- possible increased costs to employers, practitioners, government
- the need for a timeline that maintains momentum
- resistance to change
- the possible need to obtain further qualifications and the time involved
- resources needed to develop and implement standards
- affordability
- different standards for different specialisations e.g., career education and career counselling

- distinction between levels of work in career services.

Processes/strategies that may allay concerns

All groups suggested strategies that could allay their concerns. These are reflective of some of the implementation suggestions discussed previously in this paper. Processes/strategies that could allay concerns included:

- a clearly defined implementation process
- promotion of the benefits to stakeholder groups
- a phased-in implementation period
- a range of tiered qualifications
- differentiation between specialisations within career service delivery
- adequate funding and resourcing
- effective communication
- a “grandfather”/“sunset” clause
- recognition of prior learning
- achieving some things quickly
- the involvement of unions
- a conceptual framework
- built-in review processes
- cultural awareness training
- consideration for regional and remote areas.

Potential role

Evidence of the stakeholders’ recognition of the importance of and commitment to the development and implementation of standards was reflected in the suggestions made about their possible roles in the process. These included:

- sharing previous experience in the development of standards, policy, research and exemplars
- possible funding
- building standards into employment contracts
- communicating and advocating with stakeholder groups
- marketing and promotion
- seeking out indigenous groups as reference/advisory groups

- representation in and contribution to development of standards
- developing guidelines for information and diagnostic tools
- lobbying the executives of relevant systems
- participating in trials and pilots
- supporting, providing, and promoting professional development for practitioners.

Issues for further consideration

Further consideration may need to be given to broadening the range of stakeholder groups included in the process. For example, several stakeholder groups mentioned the possible role of unions in the implementation of the standards. It was also suggested that the group ‘service providers’ is too broad and that researchers involved in the gathering and analysis of labour market information and individuals who develop self-exploration tools could be included as stakeholder groups in their own right. In addition, inclusion of Indigenous and cultural stakeholder groups may be made more explicit.

The diverse backgrounds of the stakeholder groups and their potential contributions to the process warrant consideration in the formation of the steering committee as discussed previously.

6. Conclusion

It is apparent from the discussion at the Forum that the National Standards and Accreditation of Career Practitioners Project is a project whose time has come. The high level of commitment to the success of the project displayed at the Forum is testament to the importance placed on the provision of quality career services. However, the Forum discussion also drew attention to the challenges to be faced in the project. In particular, the need to move beyond the project with a structure and personnel in place that will oversee the development and implementation of standards is critical. The richness of discussion at the Forum and the generosity of spirit in which contributions were and will be made by the stakeholder groups provide a firm foundation for the success of the project. In addition, the history of commitment to quality standards in the Australian career industry and to a vision of a career development culture will facilitate the provision of quality career services for all Australians.

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Appendix 1: Comparison of ethical codes

The table below depicts the titles of ethical codes of selected case study examples. In addition, the elements of each of the ethical codes are listed.

Organisation	Title of ethical code	Elements of ethical code
International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance (IAEVG, 1995)	Ethical Standards	<p>The Ethical Standards contain 5 sections titled:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsibilities to clients • Colleagues and professional associates • Government and other community agencies • Research and related processes • Responsibilities as an individual practitioner. <p>Each section contains several sub-points.</p>
National Steering Committee for Career Development Guidelines and Standards (2004b)	Code of Ethics	<p>The Code of Ethics contains a preamble followed by three sections titled:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethical principles for professional competency and conduct • Ethical principles for career development practitioner-client relationships • Ethical principles for professional relationships. <p>Each section contains several sub-points. In addition, a section of the Code presents an Ethical Decision-Making Model that contains five sub-points.</p>
Ordre des Conseillers et des Conseillères en Orientation et des Psychoéducateurs et Psychoéducatrices du Québec (OCCOPPQ, 2004).	Code of Ethics of Guidance Counsellors and Psychoeducators	<p>The Code of Ethics of Guidance Counsellors and Psychoeducators contains six sections titled:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General provisions • Duties and obligations towards the public • Duties and obligations towards clients • Duties and obligations towards the profession • Restrictions and obligations with respect to advertising • Graphic symbol of the Ordre des Conseillers et des Conseillères en Orientation et des Psychoéducateurs et Psychoéducatrices du Québec.

Organisation	Title of ethical code	Elements of ethical code
Institute of Guidance Counsellors (IGC, 2004)	Code of Ethics	<p>The Code of Ethics contains 7 sections titled:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preamble • Competence • Conduct • Confidentiality • Consent • Testing and evaluation • Research. <p>Each section contains several sub-points. In addition two appendices describe recommended procedures for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethical decision-making • Data protection.
Institute of Career Guidance (ICG, 2003)	Code of Ethical Practice	<p>The Code of Ethical Practice contains 4 sections titled:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The context • The Principles • The Practice • Implementation. <p>Each of the first three sections contains several sub-points, and the fourth section contains a statement.</p>
National Career Development Association (NCDA, 2003)	Ethical Standards	<p>The Ethical Standards contain a brief preamble followed by 6 sections titled:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General • Counseling relationship • Measurement and evaluation • Research and publication • Consulting • Private practice. <p>Each section contains several sub-points. In addition, there is a section titled:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procedures for processing ethical complaints.

Organisation	Title of ethical code	Elements of ethical code
<p>Australian Association of Career Counsellors (AACC, 2004)</p>	<p>Code of Professional Conduct</p>	<p>The Code of Professional Conduct lists the principles of professional conduct developed to safeguard the welfare of consumers of career services and the integrity of the profession.</p> <p>The code has been developed from the Association's Ethical Code and contains 8 sections titled:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General principles • Consulting relationships • Assessment procedures • Use of information • Training and supervision in career counselling • Research • Public statements • Violation of the code. <p>Each section contains either several sub-points or a statement.</p>

Appendix 2: Comparison of models of continuing professional development

The table below illustrates key features of the continuing professional development programs of three organisations. There is considerable agreement in how these programs are administered.

Professional Association	Brief outline of professional development program
Australian Psychological Society (APS, 2004)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The APS Professional Development (PD) program operates on a two-year cycle • Members are required to complete a PD log sheet • Members are required to accumulate 60 points over a two year period • A table indicating a selection of PD activities and their point allocation is provided on the APS website • Members are required to submit a signed copy of the PD log sheet indicating the number of points accrued over this two year cycle • The total number of points is recorded on the Member's PD record and a PD Certificate is issued to member • Members may be randomly selected for an audit, members are required to submit all supporting documentation to the activities being claimed.
Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW, 2004)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing Professional Education (CPE) operates on a two-year cycle • CPE is part of the association's self-regulation strategy • Members are required to accumulate 150 points or more by engaging in recognised CPE activities • Members are supplied with a logbook to record their CPE activities • When renewing their membership, members sign a declaration confirming that they have complied with the CPE requirements for the previous cycle • Members who complete the requirements regarding CPE are eligible to be recognised as accredited social workers • AASW is also implementing a process of "Appellation" whereby CPE programs may be approved on the basis of its relevance to effective social work practice. CPE activities that receive appellation will receive double points for member participants.
Career Practitioners Association of New Zealand (CPANZ, 2000)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional Development requirements operate according to subscription years • A minimum of 50 hours of professional development per subscription year is required of members applying for or renewing membership • PD must cover a range of activities relevant to the career industry • Members are advised to keep a PD journal with information on the date, activity, provider, outline of the content and the time spent on the activity • PD activities must be completed outside normal work requirements.

Appendix 3: Comparison of competencies

The table below depicts the competencies identified in the case study examples. The Core Competencies of the IAEVG, the only international case study, have been used as the point of comparison. As evidenced in the table, there is considerable agreement across the competencies adopted by the case study examples.

IAEVG Core Competencies (2003)	Canada (National Steering Committee for Career Development Guidelines and Standards, 2004a)	NCDA Career Counselling Competencies (1997)	NCDA Career Development Facilitator Competencies (2003)	NBEET Career Coordinator Competencies (1992)	AACC Skills and Knowledge (2004)
C1 Demonstrate appropriate ethical behaviour and professional conduct in the fulfillment of roles and responsibilities	Professional Behaviour	Supervision Ethical and legal issues	5. Ethical and legal issues 7. Consultation/supervision	Professional knowledge and practice	1. Appropriate ethical behavior and professional conduct and commitment to lifelong learning in the fulfillment of roles and responsibilities
C2 Demonstrate advocacy and leadership in advancing clients learning, career development and personal concerns	Professional Behaviour	Coaching, consultation and performance improvement	1. Helping skills 6. Employability skills 8. Training clients and peers	Counselling and career counselling	2. Advocacy and leadership in advancing clients' learning, career development and life/work transitions
C3 Demonstrate awareness and appreciation of clients' cultural differences to interact effectively with all populations	Interpersonal Competence	Diverse populations	3. Working with diverse populations	Professional knowledge and practice	3. Awareness and appreciation of and sensitivity to clients' social and cultural differences in order to interact effectively with all populations

IAEVG Core Competencies (2003)	Canada (National Steering Committee for Career Development Guidelines and Standards, 2004a)	NCDA Career Counselling Competencies (1997)	NCDA Career Development Facilitator Competencies (2003)	NBEET Career Coordinator Competencies (1992)	AACC Skills and Knowledge (2004)
C4 Integrate theory and research into practice in guidance, career development, counselling, and consultation	Career Development Knowledge	Career development theory Research/evaluation	9. Career development theories and models	Professional knowledge and practice	4. Ability to integrate theory and research into practice
C5 Skills to design, implement and evaluate guidance and counselling programs and interventions	Needs Assessment and Referral Career Development Knowledge	Individual and group counselling skills Individual and group assessment Program promotion, management and implementation Research/evaluation Technology	1. Helping skills 4. Technology and career development 10. Program management and implementation 11. Assessment	Curriculum and program design Professional knowledge and practice Career education and career guidance	5. Skills to design, implement and evaluate guidance and counselling programs and interventions
C6 Demonstrate awareness of his/her own capacity and limitations	Interpersonal Competence	Supervision	7. Consultation/supervision	Professional knowledge and practice	6. Awareness of his/her own capacity, limitations and learning needs
C7 Ability to communicate effectively with colleagues or clients, using the appropriate level of language	Interpersonal Competence	Diverse populations Technology	1. Helping skills 7. Consultation/supervision 8. Training clients and peers 12. Promotion and public relations	Professional knowledge and practice Counselling and career counselling	7. Ability to communicate appropriately and effectively with colleagues or clients

IAEVG Core Competencies (2003)	Canada (National Steering Committee for Career Development Guidelines and Standards, 2004a)	NCDA Career Counselling Competencies (1997)	NCDA Career Development Facilitator Competencies (2003)	NBEET Career Coordinator Competencies (1992)	AACC Skills and Knowledge (2004)
C8 Knowledge of updated information on educational, training, employment trends, labour market, and social issues	Professional Behaviour	Information/resources Technology	2. Labour market and information and resources 4. Technology and career development 6. Employability skills	Information and resources	8. Knowledge of updated information on educational, training, employment trends, labor market, and social issues
C9 Social and cross-cultural sensitiveness	Interpersonal Competence	Diverse populations	3. Working with diverse populations	Professional knowledge and practice	9. Skills to cooperate effectively in a team of professionals
C10 Skills to cooperate effectively in a team of professionals	Professional Behaviour Interpersonal Competence	Coaching, consultation and performance improvement	7. Consultation/supervision 12. Promotion and public relations	Organisation, management and consultation	10. Knowledge of lifelong career development process
C11 Demonstrate knowledge of lifelong career development process	Career Development Knowledge	Career development theory	4. Technology and career development 6. Employability skills	Professional knowledge and practice	

(Adapted from McMahon, Wright, & McClenaghan, 2004)

Appendix 4: Timeline developed by a Forum participant

