



Submission cover sheet

Inquiry into E-PET-078-25 and PET-041-26: Make career guidance a right for every ACT Year 7–10 public school student

Submission number: 002

Submitter: Alison MacFarlane

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Good afternoon,

I am writing as a qualified Career Practitioner working in one of the ACT Colleges.

We have a population of around a thousand students and only one Careers Practitioner.

This is absolutely absurd as this is the point at which students are making their transition decisions – whether directly into the work force, to an ASbA or Apprenticeship or on to further study. This is evidence of grossly under staffing such an essential role – you could even argue that we are one of the most important contacts for young people at this stage in their life.

But career education and guidance is also essential before this point – opening eyes to possibilities, breaking down the barriers that exist in students finding their goals and reaching their potential. It gives purpose and direction to their schooling, their subject choices and their future pathways. Best practice says that this should begin in early primary school yet even our high schools have very few, if any, resources to careers education. At best they may have a teacher who is given a line allowance to organise work experience. This is not enough!

Career practitioners are not teachers picking up an extra duty. They are trained professionals who are members of professional bodies and who actively keep up to date in changes in work force opportunities, needs and pathways. They are essential in ensuring that the young people of Australia have a sense of positivity and purpose beyond school and they go on to make positive contribution to our economy and society.

I strongly believe that the role of a Careers Practitioner is one of the most valuable in a school. Every student who speaks with us is filled with hope and purpose. Even, or maybe even especially, those who have not had a positive experience at school, who fail academically or whose home life is impossible, walk away with skills and a sense of direction to equip them for a life beyond school.

In addition to ensuring that all students have fair access to a professional Careers Practitioner, the ACT should introduce a ratio of students per full time Careers Practitioner in schools.

I look forward to seeing your vision on this matter.

Kind Regards.

Alison

Alison McFarlane | Transitions and Career Practitioner

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