



# Ready 2Work

Building resilience,  
adapting to change



## CEAV CAREER COUNSELLING AUSTRALIA

CEAV Career Counselling Australia (CCCA) is a division of The Australian Centre for Career Education. It delivers career counselling services, benchmarking audits and assessments, and projects that increase employment outcomes for our community's most disadvantaged job seekers through its Ready2Work Program.



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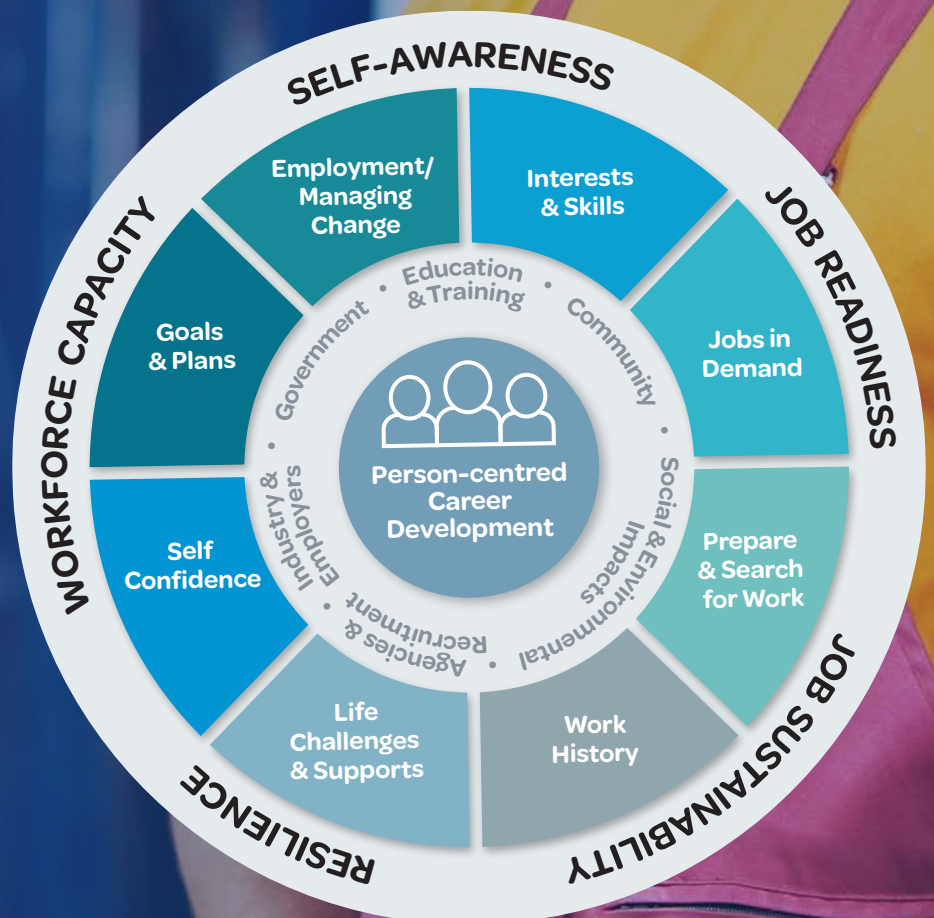




## OUR SUPPORT

In 2020 our CCCA division supported 676 people to prepare for employment. 87% were disadvantaged job seekers who experienced a range of barriers that impacted their employment success including:

- disability
- mental health issues
- refugees, asylum seekers and people with ESL
- youth and young people disengaged from education or employment
- indigenous communities
- people over 55
- long term unemployed.



## CAREER DEVELOPMENT SUPPORTS EMPLOYMENT

In many western countries career counselling is integral to workforce capacity to ensure the right mix and number of people, with the right skills and knowledge, are available to meet current and future demand. As such it informs policy and government investment in long term employment outcomes.

In Australia, professional career development is seen as valuable for workforce capacity and has been well adopted within the educational framework to prepare youth for employment. In this capacity, the Australian Centre for Career Education delivers career support to year 9 students in Victorian Government schools and has at least one member working in 550 member schools.

However, career counselling is not yet as well integrated into employment or job seeking in Australia. This means the fundamental professional skills, tools and standards of career development may not be included in the supports that jobseekers receive. It also means that Australia's most vulnerable jobseekers can receive their employment support from a wide range of organisations and services that employ people with varied professional qualifications.

This disconnection is in part due to the focus of not-for-profits and governments in addressing high impact issues such as: jobs, unemployment, complex mental health concerns, refugee and asylum seeker unemployment and disability employment. These issues with their own language and focus mean that it can be difficult for policy makers and the community to connect terms like 'career counselling' or 'career development' to more than youth career planning.

For these reasons, the CCCA is re-launching its services for vulnerable jobseekers under the banner of the Ready2Work program. Ready2Work represents the division's mission to reduce poverty and inequity by ensuring the community's most vulnerable jobseekers gain and sustain long term employment. It also reflects the real scope of career development – that is to help individuals establish goals and develop the skills, confidence and resilience to gain and sustain employment across their lifespan.

Ready2Work delivers high quality career counselling to vulnerable jobseekers that addresses their barriers to successful sustainable employment. It offers capacity building and skill development while helping jobseekers identify their employment goals. Ready2Work also supports vulnerable jobseekers by linking them to wrap around support services so they can continue to work towards further education or employment.





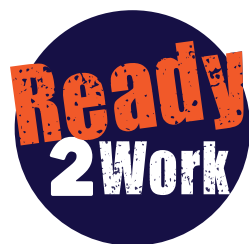
## RESEARCH

The Australian Centre for Career Education also uses the vocational assessment online tool, the Employment Readiness Scale™ (ERS) in employment projects. The centre has validated that the ERS significantly improves employment outcomes for people of all ages and different abilities.

The Ready2Work team use both Morrisby and the ERS in their work with vulnerable clients. In recent projects run by the team, the ERS has helped 50% of vulnerable jobseekers to find employment.

The ERS supports the career counselling process by assessing individuals' level of work readiness to determine their needs, support appropriate program planning and provide outcome reporting. The ERS is currently the only known standardised and outcome-validated measurement of employment readiness. It has been used by 250,000 people world-wide and internationally validated for 3-years. It has proven to predict 80% of the time individuals gaining employment when assessed as 'work ready.'

The recent Inquiry into Sustainable Employment for Disadvantaged Jobseekers recommended that the ERS or similar measurement tool be used to assess job service effectiveness. The report identified that outcome-based funding models for employment services may discourage providers from investing the necessary time and effort in disadvantaged jobseekers who are difficult to place into employment.







*The Australian Centre for Career Education partners with international organisations and providers of vocational and employment applications. Recent work with Morrisby resulted in a home profiling kit for students during COVID-19 lockdown (Morrisby@Home) and two new profiling pathways for:*

- *young people disengaged from education*
- *young people with varying abilities and needs.*









## CASE STUDY - CITY OF GREATER DANDENONG

CCCA was contracted as a consultant to the City of Greater Dandenong to provide professional consulting and job/career support services within the council's Community Revitalisation Project. The aim of the Project was to address the skill shortage in the City of Greater Dandenong, the high unemployment rate and the impact that structured career interventions would have on employment.

### Project Aims

1. Significant improvement in work readiness: improvement of > 10% for at least 80% of job seekers engaged in the program.
2. Target 20% to be engaged in education, volunteering or employment.
3. Reporting of work readiness and preferred sector of employment reporting:  
The City of Greater Dandenong received a work readiness status report for each jobseeker.

### Project Overview

The initial project ran for 18 months from 2018 and received a 6-month extension which has been completed. Due to the success of both components, a further project has been initiated for 6-months.

- Initial project participants: 46
- Project extension participants: 36 continuing plus 34 new referrals
- Participants at the completion of the project extension: 70
- ERS participant completion: 58 completed ERS retakes



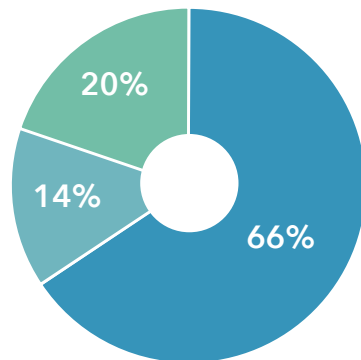


## Project Outcomes (including project extension)

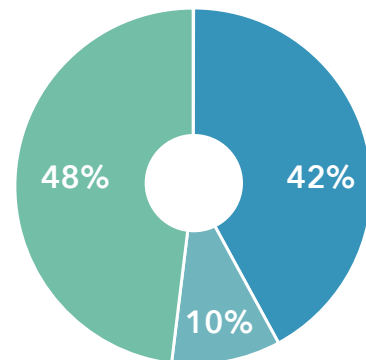
### Improvements in Work Readiness

There has been a significant improvement in jobseekers work readiness of 28% for all jobseekers engaged in the City of Greater Dandenong Community Revitalisation Project. 24% moved from Not Ready to Fully Ready and 4% moved from Minimally Ready to Fully Ready.

#### Commencement of Program



#### End of Program

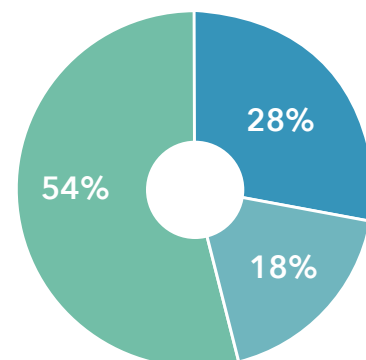
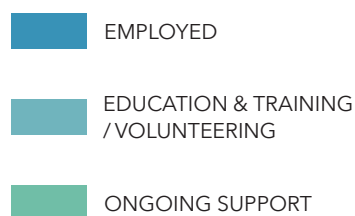


Graph 1: Work Readiness at commencement and at end of program

*\* Jobseekers Not Ready and Minimally Ready decreased as they moved to fully Ready*

### Employment and Study Outcomes

Outcomes for jobseekers indicated high levels of re-engagement with employment 28%, education and training/volunteering 18%. 54% of jobseekers require ongoing support to move towards fully ready and increase their chances of securing employment.

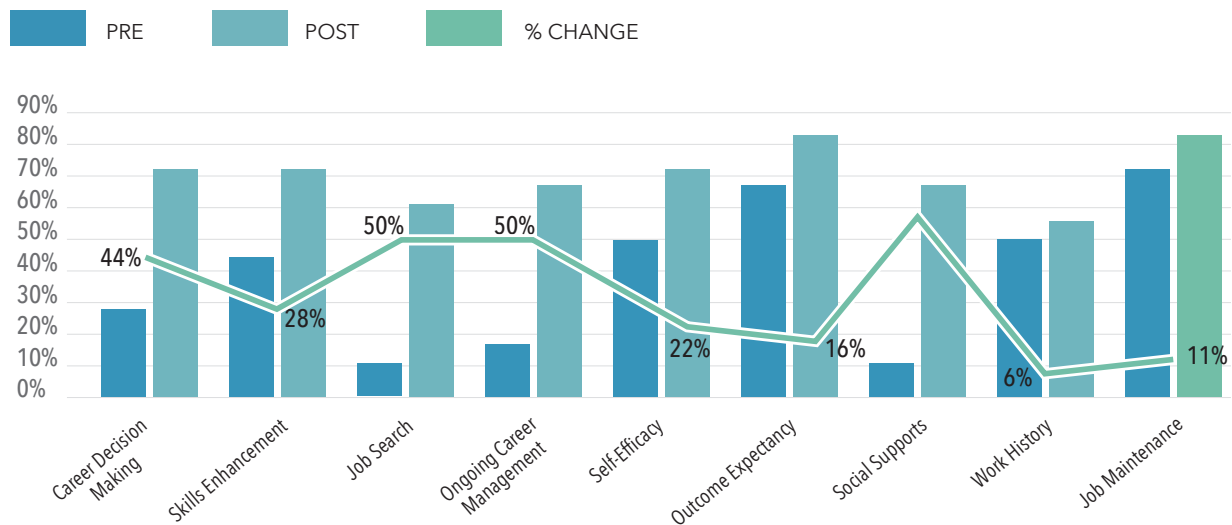


Graph 2: Employment and study outcomes

**Ready  
2Work**



### Pre & Post ERS results with % change for NOT READY clients

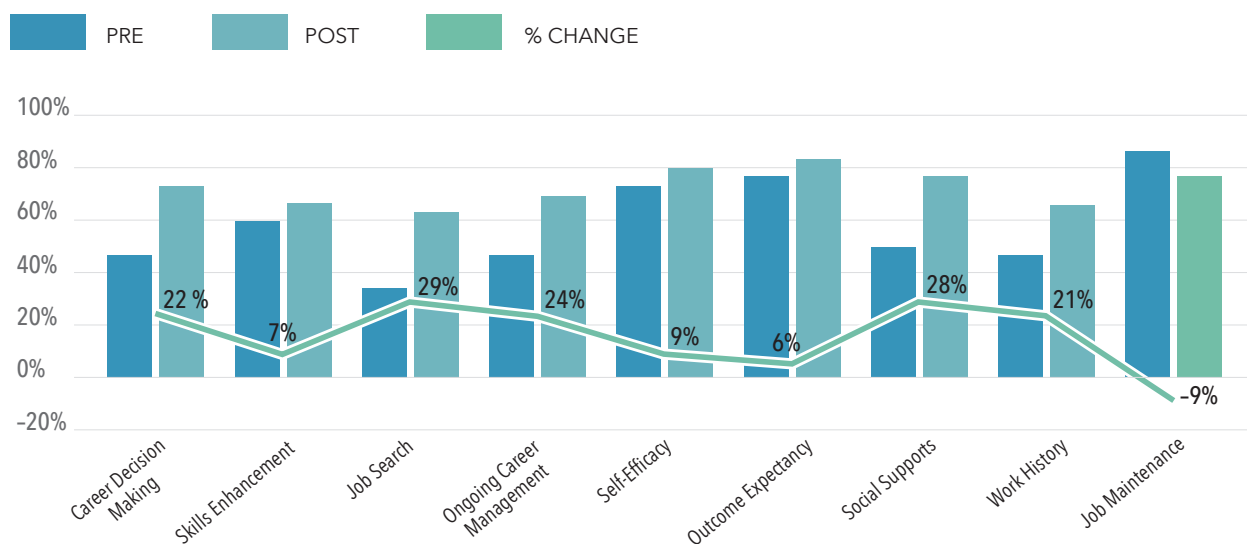


**Graph 3: Pre & Post ERS results change for NOT READY clients**

There has been significant change for those jobseekers who were NOT WORK READY at commencement in the following factors: Improvements in; Social Supports 56%, Job Search 50%, Ongoing Career Management 50%, Career Decision Making 44%, Skills Enhancement 28%, Self-Efficacy 22%, Outcome Expectancy 16%, Job Maintenance 11%, and Work History 6%.

*Changes greater than 10% are considered significant*

### Improved Employment Factors and Soft Skills for all clients Pre & Post ERS results with % change



**Graph 4: Pre & Post ERS results change for all clients**

There has been significant improvement for jobseekers engaged in the project despite the impact of COVID-19 in the following areas: Improvements in; Job Search 29%, Social Supports 28%, Ongoing Career Management 24%, Career Decision Making 22%, Work History 21%.

*Changes greater than 10% are considered significant*



## Project Results

Participants in both the project and extension

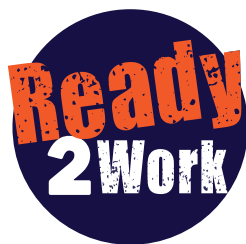


*Note: International use and validation of the ERS tool has shown that a 10% positive change in work readiness is considered significant.*

## Additional Project Benefits

- The Asylum Seeker Resource Centre (Footscray) and Chisholm Student Services and Engagement are using the ERS with their clients.
- The Asylum Seeker Resource Centre (Dandenong), Chisholm Skills and Jobs Centre (Dandenong) and Doveton College (Young Mums' Group) participated in a subsequent project to use the ERS with clients as a result of the outcomes of the City of Greater Dandenong project.
- Increased self-referrals from positive word-of-mouth promotion have taken place.
- Community engagement has increased with self-referral from women in the Sudanese community and recommendations from one of the Sudanese Community Leaders.

It is important to note that similar results were achieved in projects with the City of Moonee Valley and the City of Hume, in other non-council projects, and with individual job seekers.



## CASE STUDIES – READY2WORK CLIENTS

You supported me to prepare for work and connected me to other support services. I attended six face to face career guidance sessions and was able to identify my level of work readiness by doing a self-assessment with the Employment Readiness Scale.

After identifying my potential and gaps, we focused on strengthening these areas. We developed an action plan and I began preparing my Resume, Cover Letter and was referred to a program to improve my interview skills. In addition, I was referred to services to provide me with a suit for interviews. Without your effort made my dream cannot be true. You motivated me in all directions so I had the skills to secure a job in my area of interest.



*When I contacted you, I had applied for Centrelink and I had no income. Now I am earning a living and can support my family.*

*– Iyasu*

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I would like to share my experience with CCCA. In the beginning, it was hard for me to share the challenges that I was facing to gain employment. The career counsellor was very patient and has taught me to be strong and brave. They helped me to understand the work ready skills I needed in order to change my life and become work ready and navigate these challenges.

I started to share my story and they helped me to make changes day by day in my life, giving me ideas and showing me how I can become stronger and more self-sufficient. Helping me to improve my English, how to describe my skills in an interview and how to present myself.



*I gained a Food Handling certificate, this has allowed me to secure a job. In the future, I would like to study Cert III Aged Care. I would like to thank CCCA for supporting me through my hard times.*

*– Sitha*





## ABOUT THE CENTRE FOR CAREER EDUCATION

The Australian Centre for Career Education is a national association and thought leader advocating for quality career development and positive employment outcomes in Australia. It provides career development accredited training, professional development, and quality career counselling for all Australians.

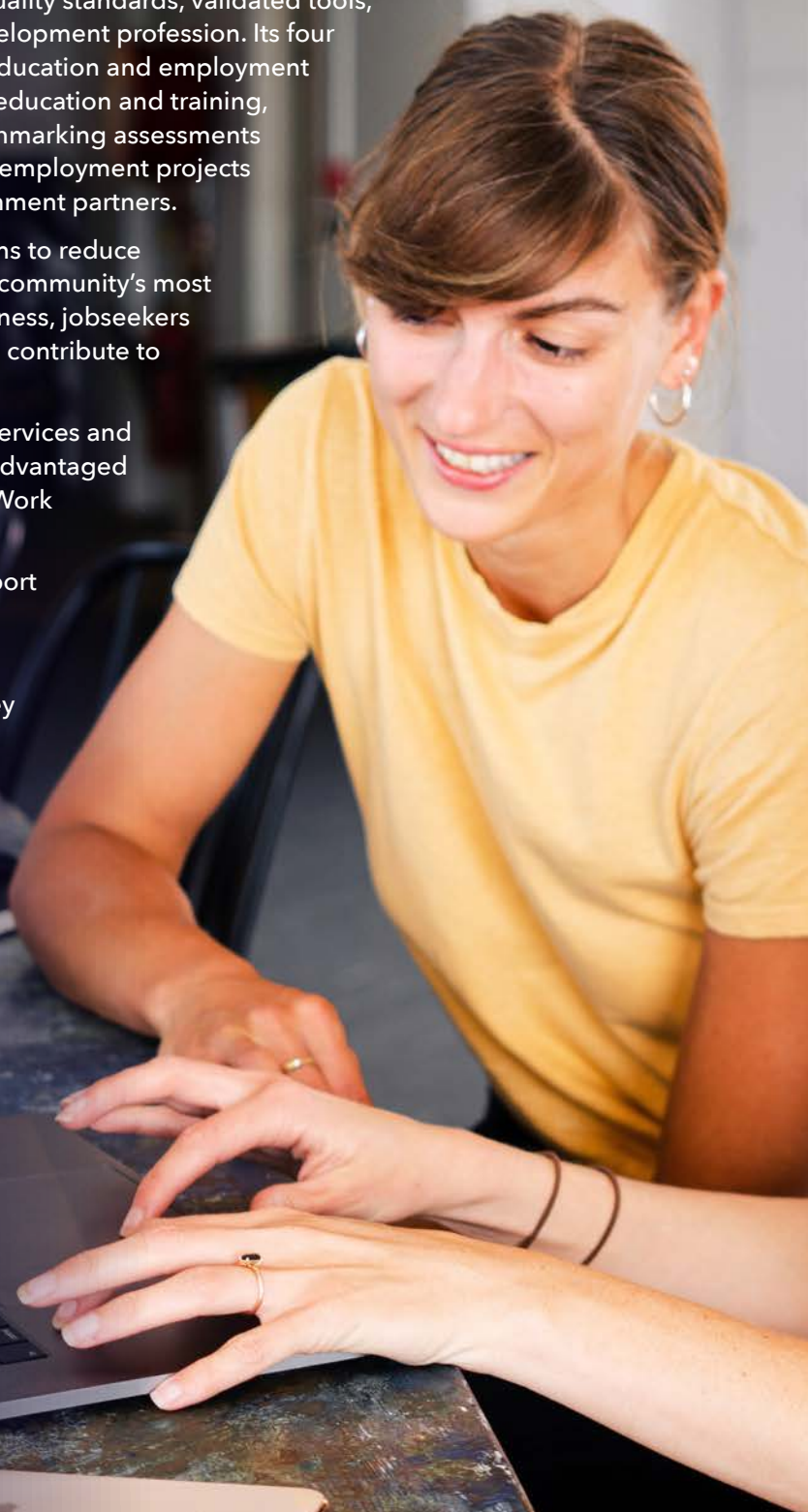
The organisation remains at the forefront of international career development research and experience to embed the best quality standards, validated tools, and innovative practices within the career development profession. Its four divisions provide a wide range of services in education and employment including: membership services, professional education and training, career and employment resources, R&D, benchmarking assessments and audits of careers services, and career and employment projects run in conjunction with community and government partners.

The Australian Centre for Career Education aims to reduce employment inequity and poverty among the community's most vulnerable jobseekers. By improving job readiness, jobseekers can achieve gain and sustain employment and contribute to improving Australia's workforce capacity.

The CCCA division offers professional career services and its Ready2Work charity program supports disadvantaged jobseekers. Every dollar gifted to the Ready2Work program goes towards providing:

- vocational assessment and counselling support
- goal setting
- resumes and cover letter skill development
- clothing for interviews and emergency money
- asylum seeker education costs
- capacity and skill building
- interview skills training and role plays
- referrals to wrap around support networks.

In conjunction with strong networks in education, skills training, industry, and employment and community services, CCCA helps disadvantaged jobseekers access wrap around support and connects them with industry employers for work experience and employment.





## Building resilience, adapting to change

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The Australian Centre for Career Education is a National Member Association of the Career Industry Council of Australia (CICA). Its accredited training is endorsed by CICA and its professional career counsellors adhere to the industry's professional standards for career development practitioners.

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