

Review of Career, Information, Advice, Guidance and Education (CIAGE) Discussion Paper

The Inclusive Education Action Group's response is focussed particularly on the needs of that target group named in the review as Special Education Needs students.

[He Moana Puke Puke e Ekengia te Waka](#)

Where there is genuine vision people excel and learn

The Inclusive Education Action Group (IEAG) is a group of parents, teachers, disabled people, principals, teacher educators and researchers who are committed to ensuring that all disabled children, young people and adults participate fully in their local, regular educational setting. We want schools to be inclusive and places where all children and young people, including those with disabilities:

- experience a strong sense of belonging;
- have a positive self- and group-identity;
- are valued by teachers and students;
- participate fully in the curriculum and in the life of the school;
- learn well;
- have friends;
- are well prepared to make the transition into a full and active adult life; and
- are fully participating members of inclusive communities.

Inclusion is not 'main dumping', and IEAG advocates for changes in the education system so that it has the resources, understandings, values and commitment to teach all children well in non-discriminatory settings. Inclusion cannot happen alongside 'special education', because 'special education' involves a particular way of thinking about disabled students that separates and differentiates them from their peer group. It involves belief systems and structures in any school that identify students as separate and 'special'. Therefore inclusion must replace the present dual system of regular and special education with a system in which all students' needs can be met in inclusive environments.

IEAG's purpose and work is supported by the research on inclusion that shows that inclusive education results in students who are better educated and better able to participate and contribute as members of society, and can be both cost-efficient and cost effective. ¹

We believe that:

- All children and young people have the right to learn together, so that they can develop relationships, skills and knowledge for everyday life.
- NO disabled person should be denied the right to participate fully in education with others of their age. The role of education is to support people to be and become participating citizens in a civil democratic society.

These 'inclusive education rights' are enshrined in the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child* and the *UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities*. New Zealand is a signatory to both of these Conventions.

IEAG has around 250 members throughout New Zealand.

Our membership includes:

- Parents of disabled children or people with disabilities (37%);
- Education sector workers (24%) comprising of school principals, special education staff, therapists, and educational psychologists;
- Disability sector workers (20%),
- Researchers and academics (11%)
- And others (6%).

Career Education: Key Questions

1. What are the barriers that prevent some schools from delivering effective career education?

A significant barrier to effective career education for students with special education needs is attitude and expectation. When there is no expectation that students will have a career at all then an attitude of "why bother" with career education will obviously affect what is offered to students and their learning. CIAGE is a part of the education needed for al students to be able to participate fully in the community and workplace. Students and adults with disabilities have clearly stated their goal for paid work. The school has an obligation (NAGS) to provide all students with career education.

3. Who should deliver career education - teachers, a specialist teacher, an in-house career adviser or by contracting expertise from outside the school?

Quality career education is embedded into the school curriculum and comes from an holistic perspective. It should be delivered by professional career educators within the school especially if it is to meet the needs of students with disabilities.

4. How do we ensure career education is delivered in ways that meet the needs of diverse groups, and in particular, priority groups?

Provide the right environment for learning; good collaboration involving all of those who have a stake in the students education including families.

Use the Index of Inclusion to assist the school to gauge the level of inclusion and how diverse groups are able to participate. The index also provides a framework to assist the school to implement changes to effectively include diverse groups as a part of the whole school community. The Index of Inclusion has been used by ERO and this could be continued with regard to delivery of CIAGE.

Good outcomes from CIAGE have a huge effect on the ability of young people to be fully prepared for adult life. That is a primary purpose of education for all students.

5. How can schools and tertiary providers link effectively with parents, families and whanau?

Collaborative approach and using wrap around services when this is needed.

Professional development for staff in career education and school leadership.

6. How do we know that every learner is developing the career management competencies to an appropriate level?

When transition plans are in place and career goals and benchmarks are reviewed regularly (from year 7 onwards) we can have a clear picture of progress and the development of competencies.

The question of what level is appropriate for students with special education needs must be approached with caution. Limited expectations and restricting students' choices is possible when advisers have little experience working with this group. It is a reality that students with disabilities have experienced significant restrictions on their education choices. As students have more opportunity through inclusive education and changing attitudes at school and in the workplace many have achieved their goals for sustained paid employment. With a positive approach to CIAGE, outcomes would continue to improve.

7. What responsibility should tertiary providers have for learners who are continuing to develop career management competencies at enrolment?

When students have an ongoing transition plan, CIAGE in the tertiary setting should continue to implement and develop that plan. The holistic approach and 1 to1 support should continue.

8. What options could be available for those who are already at risk of disengaging from education and work, or who have already disengaged?

Individual, wrap around support packages with a clear connection to the personal goals of the student and their families.

Career Information: Key Questions.

1. How do learners access career information now and who or what are their main sources?

Students with special education needs do not normally receive CIAGE from professional careers teachers or advisors. Because these students are generally in learning groups outside the regular classes they do not access the curriculum in the same way as the rest of the year group and in practice do not have the professional careers staff of the school working with them.

Information comes from Special Needs staff and from Work Experience programmes (when that is possible) supported by ORS Funding.

These students are not seen as being on a learning pathway towards having a career, and in particular there is not an expectation that they will move from education into sustained paid employment.

The discussion paper has said “Careers may include full-time and part-time work or study, and any combination of paid work, [time spent caring for others and voluntary work](#).” While these unpaid activities are of value intrinsically and for personal growth they are **not** what the target groups are looking for as a career for their adult years. People with intellectual disabilities have made it clear that they are looking for sustained paid employment and it is widely acknowledged that without this, those who are dependent entirely on welfare payments are unable to afford anything more than the most basic level of comfort in their lives. Sustained paid employment is their desired goal. It would be unfortunate if this review failed to grasp the challenge to work with all students including those with intellectual disability to reach that goal.

A whole school approach with leadership, values and culture supporting a career pathway for ALL students is needed. There are some pockets of good practise providing information and support with good outcomes but they are the exception. They can, however, inform those who need to improve on current practise.

2. What types of information are most useful for learners with special needs?

The provider of information must be from within the school and be a qualified career advisor. In other words the information to students with disabilities needs to be from the same staff as those who work with other students.

The information provided needs to match student goals. If paid work is the student’s goal then the information needs to support their pathway to paid work.

Information needs to be relevant to the interests, skills and values of the student.

Opportunities for further training, education and work need to be realistically identified.

All students need information about decision making strategies.

3. How can we make the most effective use of information produced by tertiary providers, employers and business organisations?

Collect statistics on success in achieving career goals following tertiary study in order to find out what courses do lead to paid employment. (In the review paper there is very little data relevant to students with special education needs. This is conspicuous when data for other priority target groups is available).

Survey employers and business organisations to find out what their needs are.

4. What would be the best way to provide career information to those who are risk of disengaging?

All students develop a career portfolio from year 10 and continuing through tertiary education and into paid work.

Students are supported with a personal package of career services that is professional and provides learning on a one to one basis as well as group learning.

5. What information is not currently available or not easily available, or not available in the right format which could help young people at key transition points to make more informed decisions about education, training and careers?

Tertiary Institutions need to provide information to individuals personally and in writing so that students know what support is available for the range of courses and that the institution is inclusive of diversity including disability. Information about which tertiary courses have good employment outcomes for students with special needs would be helpful.

Tertiary Education Commission could provide more information to assist students with special education needs.

NZQA could make printed material (hard copy) information available regarding NCEA Supported Learning Standards. These should be provided to students and their families along with all other information packs about NCEA qualifications.

Career Advice. Key Questions

1. How can we encourage more consistent delivery of high quality advice across the schooling and tertiary sectors?

It is necessary first of all to recognise that all students including students with special education needs should be given access to careers advice.

This starts for all students at year 7. Students with special education needs should access sustainable career guidance in an inclusive setting delivered by qualified professionals.

Professional development is needed for careers advisors as well as the wider school leadership so that schools can provide high quality advice to students with special needs. The career advice needs of these students are not currently being met and it is likely that this will be a new area of work for many currently in the field.

These students would have a career transition plan in place that includes self awareness, decision making strategies, information about relevant further education and jobs including a range of work experience.

Recognise that special education teachers are not careers advisors and that others are responsible for the career needs of students.

Advice needs to be relevant to the student's goals and delivered in a personal setting. Web based advice is only one small part of the careers advice package.

Careers NZ have worked in a few secondary schools. They should have capacity to provide professional leadership in this area. They could provide examples of (their) best practice.

2. How can we ensure career advice is well informed by employer perspectives in local areas?

Qualified career advisors can liaise closely with the business community to create opportunities for students. They can access information on employment statistics and trends.

Encourage organisations in each local community to collaborate so that employment and career development of youth becomes a whole community issue. Communities where local people have co-operated to significantly reduce unemployment for their local young people have established very effective understanding of employer perspectives. We can learn from what they have done.

While these local community initiatives have been extremely effective there is likely still to be a need to include young people with special needs as a priority in these settings also.

There may also be a need to work with employers to change the perspectives that they currently have. The small number of government funded workplaces making use of the mainstreaming opportunities to employ young people with disabilities is probably indicative of the inability of employers to see how these students can contribute to the work output of the organisation as well as bringing a valuable experience of diversity to the workplace. Until employers can more readily see how they can include people with disabilities there will continue to be few jobs available. If paid work is not available then the success of CIAGE is limited.

3. How can we involve parents, families and whanau in a way that: meets the needs of a diverse range of groups helps young people, especially those from priority groups, to make choices that are effective and appropriate for them.

Respond to parents questions and requests re CIAGE with information provided in a variety of ways including 1 to 1 discussion, group and whanau settings and written information.

Exercise caution in determining what is deemed appropriate (the question refers to “choices that are appropriate for them”) for a student. Especially as limited expectations of teachers and advisers has been identified as a factor in restricting the ability of learners to make good education choices. Students with special needs have had limited opportunity for employment and further education and it would be unprofessional to advise that choices and goals are inappropriate simply because teachers and advisers have limited expectations of the student or success has been limited and uncommon previously.

Examples of effective work in schools through local initiatives (Christchurch) and through the involvement of Careers NZ with secondary schools and tertiary institutions need to be included in professional development for staff.

Career Guidance: Key Questions

1. How can we ensure career guidance in schools and tertiary settings is available for those learners who most need this support?

The NAGS require “schools to provide appropriate career education for all students in year 7 and above, with a particular emphasis on specific career guidance for those students who have been identified by the school as being at risk of leaving school unprepared for the transition to the workplace or further education/training”.

This is a requirement for schools and schools need to demonstrate that they are doing this.

If there is a need for professional leadership and development in the schools to address a school culture that is not inclusive and does not see students with special education needs as people who are able and willing to become members of the paid workforce then ERO and the MOE would support the school as it does in other areas where the NAGS are not being met.

Best practise examples are available and could be promoted by the MOE and in professional leadership and development forums. The discussion document tells that that there are schools and tertiary providers who provide excellent CIAGE for their students. Career NZ will have information available from the work it has done in secondary schools.

Best practise is described in the discussion paper; “an integral part of what the school does, ..deeply committed to enabling all students to make effective well considered transitions, ..leadership from principals, ..embedded career education, ..specialised intervention drawing on a body of professional theory and practice, ..ongoing as young people develop their competency”. (Pages 10 and 17)

MOE will seek reporting and accountability data from schools. This information will be supported by information from ERO.

If schools were to follow the guidelines to support those who most need it, then that would be a significant shift from the present as students with special education needs are not, in a real sense, presently a part of the schools professional careers advice and guidance programmes.

Expand the Youth Guarantee scheme to include all students ensuring that students with a disability have the opportunity to be included in training pathways presently not available to them.

Career goals and benchmarks are written into transition plans from year 7 onwards.

Tertiary providers include career management and development opportunities and work experience as a part of the curriculum. Transition plans are maintained and implemented at tertiary institutions.

Tertiary staff will have the opportunity to work outside the classroom and with the business community. For students to be learning from their workplace experiences the staff must have time to work off-campus with students and employers in the workplace.

Inclusion is a priority in secondary and tertiary settings if career guidance, as described in the discussion document, is to become a reality for students with disabilities and special needs.

2. How do we differentiate between those who need career guidance and those with multiple needs who need broader and more intensive guidance?

All students are assessed to indicate the level of need for career management, self awareness, knowledge of career and training information and decision making skills. Where a higher level of need is indicated, provide more support in the way of individual transition plans, learning support and opportunities for skill development. Provision is made for an extended period of support and for more intensive support if that is needed.

Professional development for staff needs to include training to recognise the abilities and competencies of students with special education needs as well as the ability to identify and effectively respond to areas of need.

As working with students with special education needs and disabilities will be something where many careers staff have limited experience, it will be important that checks are in place to ensure that these students are not simply shifted to another agency because of the professional development challenges to the staff. Most of these students can be effectively supported by the school CIAGE systems.

3 How do we ensure that career guidance services meet the needs of our diverse learner population, in particular students with special education needs?

Outcome information for each of the priority groups should be required from CIAGE by all schools.

Individual CIAGE plans are recorded and regularly discussed with students, their families and staff. Outcomes are routinely recorded and the information made available.

Support is available to implement the transition plan and the opportunities needed for skill development and work experience are available.

Work needs to be done with business and employers (including Government funded employers) to increase opportunities for students with special needs to implement the CIAGE transition plans and to achieve sustained paid employment.

CIAGE is available to these students in an inclusive learning environment.

4. How can individual learners and/or educational institutions know they are accessing high quality career guidance?

Secondary and tertiary institutions have funding available to employ qualified careers advisors (membership of a professional body) for all students including students with special education needs.

The school is able to demonstrate that students are achieving the goals identified through the CIAGE process.

Schools can demonstrate that they are providing sustainable and inclusive CIAGE for students with special education needs.