

REPORT 1

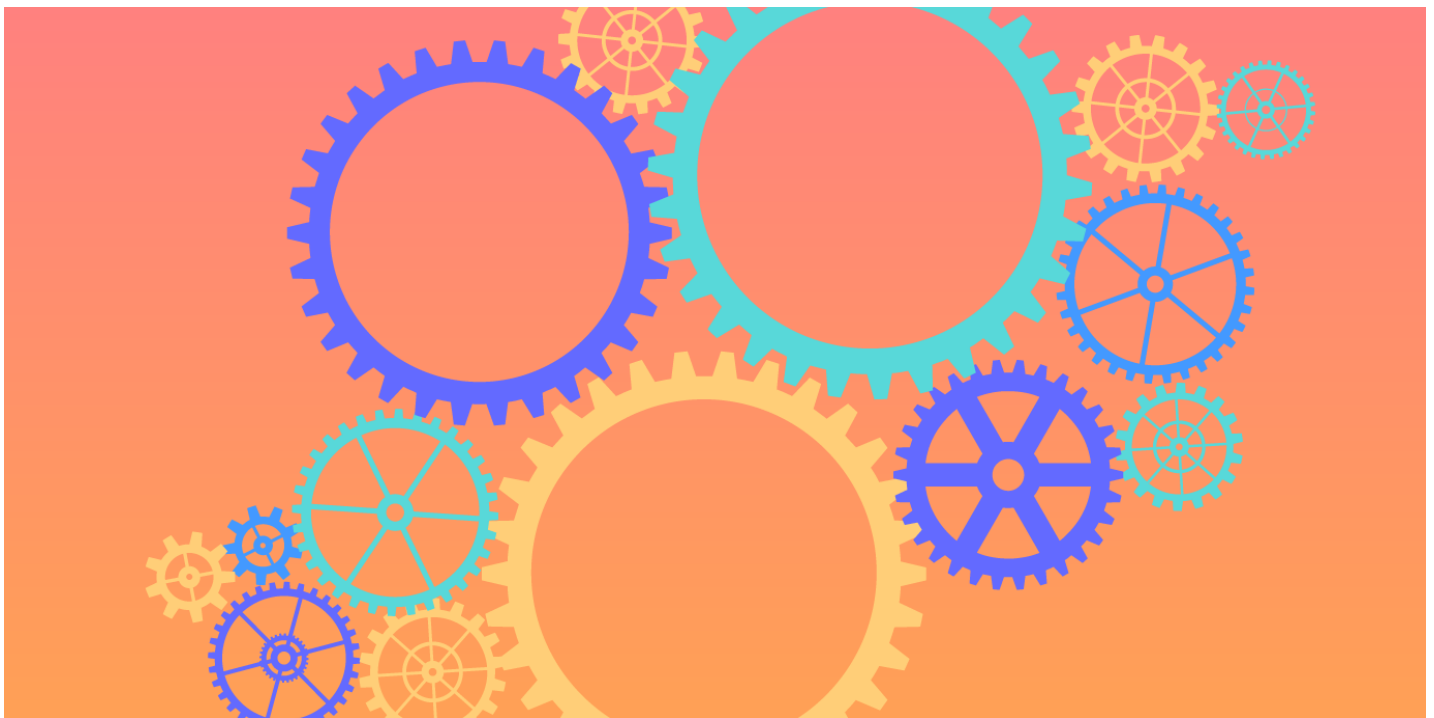
Benchmarking National and International Career Guidance Practice



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Report 1

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List of Abbreviations

ACFTA: Africa Continental Free Trade Agreement

ASPYEE: African Skills Portal for Youth Employment and Entrepreneurship

AU: African Union

AUDA: African Union Development Agency

DHET: Department of Higher Education and Training

DEL: Department of Employment and Labour

ESSA: Employment Services of South Africa

ETDP: Education, Training and Development Practices SETA

EC: European Commission

EU: European Union

ILO: International Labour Organisation

LAP: Labour Action Programmes

LO: Life orientation

NEPAD: New Partnership for Africa's Development

OECD: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

RPL: Recognition of Prior Learning

REB: Rwanda Education Board

SASSETA: Security Sector Education and Training Authority SETA

SETA: Sector Education and Training Authority

TVET: Technical and Vocational Education and Training

UIF: Unemployment Insurance Fund

W&RSETA: Wholesale and Retail SETA

Terminology

Benchmark	A standard by which performance may be measured and by which we can make comparisons in determining what constitutes good career guidance.
Career	The sequence and variety of work roles, which one undertakes throughout a lifetime to actualise one's potential. (Source: Hong Kong Education Bureau).
Career Education	The providing of information particular to a career. Career education is not the same as career guidance but rather a sub-component of career guidance.
Career Counselling	An intensive interactive verbal communication process through which a qualified career counsellor discusses career and study options with another individual or group.
Career Development	A lifelong process of planning one's work future and acquiring the necessary skills to progress.
Career Guidance	Services intended to assist people, of any age and at any point throughout their lives to make educational, training, and occupational choices and to manage their careers.
Career Information	Information relating to careers, study options, financial aid, study skills, employment opportunities, and any other related information that assists an individual to make an accurate career choice.
Career Path	A structured, goal-oriented approach to achieve one's career plan.
Career Planning	A scenario planning and goal setting activity that sets out specific tasks to be achieved as part of a process to advance one's career.
Decent Work	Decent work is described as, "opportunities for women and men to obtain decent and productive work in conditions of freedom, equity, security, and human dignity". Decent Work has subsequently become the organising framework for ILO activities.
Job	A set of tasks and duties performed or meant to be performed, by one person including for an employer or in self-employment (ISCO 2018).
Occupation	A set of jobs whose main tasks and duties are characterised by a high degree of similarity. Occupations are organised into groups according to skill level and skill specialisation (ISCO 2018).

1. Overview

Report 1 is a deliverable of phase 2 of the W&RSETA Career Guidance and Development Strategy design (CGO/2019/0003). Report 1 provides a review of national and international best practices in career guidance. The report makes recommendations that will contribute to the design of the W&RSETA Integrated Career Guidance and Development (CGD) strategy for the W&RSETA.

This report is guided by an established theory of career development namely, the Life Stage model¹, which follows that career guidance services must be responsive to the needs of individuals at various stages of their career development. In this report, we look at how career guidance services can be adapted to respond more appropriately to the needs across the life stages based on best practice looking at examples in South Africa and internationally.

There is growing recognition worldwide that career guidance plays a central role in informing labour markets and advising education systems to meet their goals². In this report, we will review examples of career guidance best practice in education, post-school education and training, and within an employment setting, relevant to South Africa.

For this report, we define benchmarking as, "the process of identifying the highest standards of excellence for products, services, or processes, and then making the improvements necessary to reach those standards, commonly called 'best practices'"³.

The use of benchmarks has been widely adopted to underpin quality management systems and models of organisational excellence worldwide. From this perspective, benchmarking is seen as part of the continuous improvement cycle of measuring and comparing and identifying opportunities for improvements.

For this report, career guidance refers to, "services intended to assist people, of any age and at any point throughout their lives to make educational, training and occupational choices and to manage their careers"⁴. This aligns with the life stage approach adopted as a model used in the design of the strategy for the W&RSETA.

In this report we have considered benchmarking and best practice examples nationally and internationally guided by career development theory:

- Examples of best practice in education and training in South Africa are highlighted and compared to international best practice examples.

¹ Super, D. E. (1980). A life-span, life-space approach to career development. Journal of vocational behavior, 16(3), 282-298. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/0001879180900561>

² Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2003) Education Policy Analysis. https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/education-policy-analysis-2003_epa-2003-en

³ Bhutta and Huq (1999). https://www.academia.edu/19328997/Benchmarking_best_practices_an_integrated_approach

⁴ Career Guidance and Public Policy - OECD (2004). https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/beyond-rhetoric_9789264199446-en

- International examples of best practice for OECD countries are highlighted and paralleled to policy and practices in South Africa and Africa.
- Where possible, attention is focused on best practice which is directly relevant to the wholesale and retail sector.
- The foremost question to be addressed in this report is, 'how we can learn from best practice so that career guidance is delivered more effectively'. We start by looking at the context of career guidance in South Africa.

2. Context of Career Guidance in South Africa

According to Hooley (2019)⁵, career guidance models or practices should always be done with careful attention to the cultural and political context from which the policy is borrowed.

Although South Africa is classified as an upper-middle-income country, most of the country's citizens live in poverty or they are vulnerable to poverty. Inequality is also widespread in the country because of the distribution of wealth and income is amongst the most unequal in the world⁶. Therefore, reducing inequality is essential in South Africa, because of the country's history of inequality and discrimination.

Employment and decent work remain a priority in South Africa, as this is one way of improving the living standards of citizens in the country and reducing poverty⁷. The Wholesale and Retail sector is a critical player in the employment landscape in South Africa. A significant number of people are employed in the wholesale and retail industries in South Africa, indicating that the sector contributes to the provision of employment and the reduction of poverty goals (and to some extent, inequality) in the country.

To ensure that the jobs are created and contribute to the decent work agenda, career guidance is very important in all sectors, and the wholesale and retail sector is no exception. According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO), decent work is work that provides an adequate income, security in the workplace, and better prospects for personal development⁸.

⁵ Hooley, T. (2019). International approaches to quality in career guidance. <https://www.kompetansensorge.no/globalassets/karriere/international-approaches-to-quality-in-career-guidance.pdf>

⁶ Woolard, I. (2002). An overview of poverty and inequality in South Africa https://www.researchgate.net/publication/252240690_An_overview_of_poverty_and_inequality_in_South_Africa

⁷ National Development Plan 2030 (2011): <https://www.gov.za/issues/national-development-plan-2030>

⁸ ILO (1999). Decent Work Indicators Guidelines for Producers and Users of Statistical and Legal Framework Indicators. https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---integration/documents/publication/wcms_229374.pdf

To meet the criteria for decent work, the Wholesale and Retail sector needs to ensure that the jobs which are created in this sector provide a fair income, security in the workplace and social protection for families (for example unemployment insurance), better prospects for personal development (clear promotion prospects), freedom for people to express their concerns and organize. This is commonly achieved by belonging to labour movements or unions, and by participating in the decisions that affect their lives.

The provision of career guidance and career development can also enhance the prospects of personal development. Research conducted in the retail sector has shown that when employees have a clear career path, they stay longer in the same workplace and look for opportunities to advance in the organisation where they are employed⁹. This research indicates that if employees are aware of personal development opportunities, they will not easily change employment.

The provision of decent work in the wholesale and retail sector is substantiated by the fact that in 2008, 63% of the jobs in the sector were formal, but later declined to 54%. This is in line with the broader South African economy, where jobs are affected by the economic decline, and where some people are forced to take on informal employment¹⁰ (Wholesale and Retail SETA, 2014). According to the Wholesale and Retail SETA, although the number of jobs declined, the jobs remaining became more secure and the working conditions improved for employees. This is a clear indication of the sector's contribution to the decent work agenda.

The African Union¹¹, also emphasises the issue of the employment of people, which can indirectly be influenced by career guidance. In this regard, the AU states that the continent needs to address the issue of unemployment on a permanent and long-term basis. This should preferably be done through private/public partnerships, the development of legislative frameworks to promote legal environments and, to fund youth employment and, by engagement in the green economy, to develop green jobs for youth and women. Career guidance has the potential to play a critical role in all these strategies.

Career guidance services can best respond to the needs across the lifespan based on the best practice being followed at each stage of career development. For this reason, we have structured the report to follow the life stages model starting at, school level, then into post-school education and training, then finally into the workplace. Reference is made to career guidance offered by public employment services of the Department of Employment and Labour and examples of services offered by other providers of career-related services to job seekers, those changing jobs as well as service to the unemployed.

⁹ Suryanarayana, M.V. and Kumar, P.V. (2018). Career growth in retailing – employees' perspective. Proceedings of Second National Conference on Emerging Trends in Computer Applications and Management.

https://www.academia.edu/11323138/CAREER_GROWTH_IN_RETAILING_EMPLOYEES_PERSPECTIVE

¹⁰ W&RSETA. (2014). Sector Skills Plan Update 2014-2015. http://wrlc.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/WRSETA-Sector-Skills-Plan-Update-2014-15_Final-Report_30092014.pdf

¹¹ African Union. Africa Careers Network. Source: www.africacareersnetwork.force.com

3. Career Guidance in Schools

Career guidance is seen as an essential part of schooling in preparing young people for their future. One of the critical transition points is when learners have to make subject choices in high school, or when they have to choose a field of study.

In this report, we differentiate between the concept of career education, which is seen as a programme of learning (part of the curriculum) and, career guidance which is regarded as a service at a particular life stage that assists an individual to make specific life-stage-appropriate career-related decisions¹².

In South Africa, the new CAPS curriculum¹³ was introduced progressively between 2012 and 2014 incorporated a programme of career education as a key deliverable within the subject, Life Orientation under the topic, "Careers and Career Choices". Career guidance is included in the curriculum from as early as grade 7 and is delivered by Life Orientation teachers in schools.

While this is a positive step in terms of providing career education, there are indications that Life Orientation does not carry the same status as the other subjects, and as such does not receive the same attention when it comes to the training of teachers or in the provision of teaching resources.

Regionally, on the African continent career guidance is beginning to take shape. Countries such as South Africa, Botswana, Namibia, Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda and Ghana have specific career guidance policies in place to support career guidance delivery in schools. Many of these policies are newly established and implementation is in various phases of roll-out. South Africa and Namibia are the most advanced in terms of implementation. These countries both have career guidance entrenched in their school curriculum with suitable resources to support the delivery of the subject. Namibia uses many of the South African career Guidance resources as many of their citizen's study in South Africa. The issues that hinder career guidance delivery in Africa has a lot to do with an absence of skills and resources.

The East Africa Career Development Association (EACDA) who promotes career guidance delivery in the East Africa region has sponsored career resources to the Rwanda Education Board (REB) who are in the early stages of introducing career guidance into the school curriculum. In efforts to promote career guidance on the continent, PACE Career Centre has developed online career guidance resources for 14 countries in Africa¹⁴. These are free career guidance resources that are specific to the particular country and are available to all citizens in the country where the systems are available. The 14 countries are Botswana, Eswatini,

¹² Akkork (2015). <http://vet.ge/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Career-Guidance-Handbook-ENG.pdf>

¹³ National Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS).

<https://www.education.gov.za/Curriculum/NationalCurriculumStatementsGradesR-12.aspx>

¹⁴ PACE Career Centre (2018). Continental Career Guidance Initiative. <https://www.gostudy.africa>.

Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia, Rwanda, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. Even these systems, however, are only available to schools and learners with connectivity. Africa presently remains very much a paper intensive environment. South Africa within the regional (continental) context should be seen as leaders in best practice in career guidance.

Regarding international research, the following information is available for OECD countries on the implementation of career guidance in schools¹⁵.

- In Norway, career guidance was initially offered in schools. However, with the rise of unemployment in the 1980s, the school services were withdrawn. This service instead formed part of the general placement services, offered in the form of an in-house web-based staff training programme as part of the Norwegian government's e-Norway strategy, which places considerable emphasis on electronic information rather than print information. Career guidance then proved to be one of the most popular options, but the training in Norway is fairly basic, and the opportunities for staff to use such skills are limited.
- In England, the schools' responsibility is to provide access to independent and impartial information, advice and guidance. This led to competing organisations and service providers saturating the market with their products. Some local authorities and schools also joined together to secure services from a single company through a guidance contract (Euro Guidance), but in other areas schools were left to source these services for themselves.
- In Germany, the provision of guidance services in schools is decided by each school; these services include advice and counselling on educational choices, advice on learning difficulties, psychological counselling and assessment. This guidance is provided by social workers, trained teachers, school psychologists and vocational guidance practitioners.
- The Australians have a federal system so state policies regarding the structure of guidance services in schools vary considerably. In practice, most decisions relating to the provision of these services are taken at the individual school level and schools have considerable flexibility in the way they allocate resources and deliver services within the general government funding allocated to them. For these and other reasons, there is a larger private sector in the guidance field in Australia than in some other OECD countries¹⁶.
- Scotland, Wales and, Northern Ireland have adopted a similar system where charities or private companies receive funding from the central government to deliver career guidance. The independent career providers then send professionals to different schools

¹⁵ Good Career Guidance. International approaches to quality in career guidance. <https://www.euroguidance.eu/>

¹⁶ OECD Australia (2002) <https://www.oecd.org/australia/1948341.pdf>

to advise learners on the choice of careers. This service is also offered to young adults who are leaving school or changing jobs and is also extended to adults (Euro Guidance).

An influential benchmarking study, known as the Gatsby Report¹⁷, looked at career guidance comparisons from multiple schools across countries to determine a benchmark for *good guidance*. Key features of these benchmarks include the idea that schools should ensure that career education takes place *across* the school, i.e. that it *connects with curriculum*, that it *involves employers* and post-secondary learning providers, that it offers young people *real experiences* of the workplace and, that it involves careers professionals and well trained and motivated teachers.

This Gatsby benchmarks align with career guidance practice in European countries¹⁸, in as far as employers are involved in making positive contributions to career guidance. The cooperation of the employer with schools, higher education institutions and, other training providers assists both jobseekers and learners to gain a better understanding of the world of work by providing first-hand information on what to expect in the workplace. This also gives the learner and job seeker access to new information and experiences, which deepen their career aspirations. Employer involvement in career guidance may take different forms, including bringing volunteers to schools, career presentations, workshops on CV writing, role-plays about interviews, job fairs, job shadowing, work placements, mentoring and, entrepreneurship competitions.

A notable development within career education in Europe is the emphasis on entrepreneurship in education. Studies of countries engaging in guidance and entrepreneurship practice and career guidance for entrepreneurship highlight important benefits of this approach¹⁹:

- Entrepreneurship tends to gain political and policy importance in times of unemployment, especially youth unemployment, and is sometimes promoted as the panacea, during times of high unemployment²⁰;
- The International Centre for Career Development and Public Policy (ICCDPP) has identified that in many countries, entrepreneurship in education is a marginalised choice because the general curricula do not address the knowledge, skills and attitudes involved in entrepreneurship;

¹⁷ Gatsby Report (2014). Good Career Guidance. International approaches to quality in career guidance. <https://www.gatsby.org.uk/uploads/education/reports/pdf/gatsby-sir-john-holman-good-career-guidance-2014.pdf>

¹⁸ Cedefop (2016). Labour market information and guidance. Luxembourg: Publications Office. Cedefop research paper; No 55. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2801/72440>

¹⁹ European Union. (2017). Taking the future into their own hands: Youth Work and Entrepreneurial learning. <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/6fbcd174-6b63-11e7-b2f2-01aa75ed71a1>

²⁰ International Centre for Career Development and Public Policy (ICCDPP) (2015). Entrepreneurship and Career Guidance, <https://www.iccdpp.org/entrepreneurship-career-guidance/>

- This is reinforced by careers information systems that emphasise employment over self-employment. The point being made is that career guidance systems and services should lead to study and occupational choices that can lead to starting a business;
- The OECD takes the position that entrepreneurship fits better into a progression model of infusing entrepreneurship into education²¹. Entrepreneurship is not just about starting new organizations, but about helping students to think more creatively and to become opportunity oriented, proactive and innovative, adhering to a wide definition of entrepreneurship relevant to all walks in life.

4. Career Guidance in Tertiary Education & Training Institutions

The Post-School Education and Training (PSET) System comprises all education and training provisioning for those who have completed school, those who did not complete basic schooling, and those who never attended school. These include 26 public HEIs, 50 TVET colleges, 9 CET colleges, and a multitude of private education providers. The Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) manages all post-school education and training in South Africa. Alongside these institutions, are 21 SETAs that are responsible for addressing sectoral economic skills needs and supporting education and training initiatives and programmes aimed at responding to these needs²². Central to the governments National Development Plan 2030 (NDP)²³, is the goal to reduce the high proportion of first-time entrants who drop out of TVET colleges and universities in their first year, as well as to address the low student graduation and pass rates. The cost to the economy and the W&R sector runs into billions and millions of Rands, respectively.

4.1 TVET Colleges

The TVET sector which concentrates on vocational and technical skills training has been prioritised due to the high demand for artisans and skilled workers. The view that TVET colleges lead to workplace skills is central in addressing high levels of youth unemployment. This view is widely supported by regional bodies in Africa such as the African Union (AU). The AU special focus is on skills development amongst the youth and also equipping them with the technical training needed to enter the job market²⁴.

²¹ OECD: Entrepreneurship in Education. https://www.oecd.org/cfe/leed/BGP_Entrepreneurship-in-Education.pdf

²² Department of Higher Education and Training 2020 - 2025 Strategic Plan (2017). <https://www.dhet.gov.za/SiteAssets/DHET%20Strategic%20Plan%202020.pdf>

²³ National Development Plan 2030 (2011): <https://www.gov.za/issues/national-development-plan-2030>

²⁴ African Union Development Agency. African Skills Portal for Youth Employment and Entrepreneurship. <https://www.nepad.org/skillsportalforyouth>

Career guidance services in TVET Colleges are coordinated through student support practitioners; a model of support has been developed to address all areas in a student's life, namely at pre-entry, on-course and, exit support levels. This includes the selection and placement of students and the administration of the financial aid and job placement programmes, amongst other roles²⁵.

Implementation of career guidance in TVET colleges is hampered by an under-supply of career guidance staff and funding challenges²⁶. An intergovernmental partnership programme between the DHET and ETDP SETA resulted in 200 internships for learners to provide career-related information in the 50 public TVET colleges²⁷. Whilst this may have provided a short-term solution to career services in colleges a more sustainable solution for career guidance in TVET Colleges needs to be found.

The provision of relevant and accurate labour market information (LMI) in colleges is important given the high levels of unemployment and the shortage of skilled workers in the work environment. Reports indicate that labour market information (LMI) in the form of sector skills information is not reaching colleges; that TVET colleges are working in isolation to employers: "South African institutions are not producing the skills set that we need as the labour market"²⁸.

The low retention rate of students at TVET Colleges is reflective of a need for career information and planning systems and current enrolment patterns highlight that most students enrol in programmes that do not lead to meaningful opportunities²⁹.

Systemic problems persist and many colleges are not able to integrate occupational programmes into their annual performance plans as the relationship with SETAs is reported to be largely unstructured. Furthermore, the curriculum, in particular, the NATED courses offered at TVET's have not been updated to meet the changing needs of industry.

Various international studies of vocational education from European Union countries reveal that career guidance competencies, roles and functions should be more specialised to cater for Vocational Education and Training (VET) college environments³⁰:

²⁵ DHET. Technical and Vocational Education and Training Colleges' (2020) Student Support Services Annual Plan. <https://www.dhet.gov.za/SiteAssets/Technical%20and%20Vocational%20Education%20and%20Training%20Colleges%202020%20Student%20Support%20Services%20Annual%20Plan.pdf>

²⁶ DHET, Strategic Plan 2020- 2025. <https://www.dhet.gov.za/SiteAssets/DHET%20Strategic%20Plan%202020.pdf>

²⁷ Research Agenda for Career Development (2015). <https://www.dhet.gov.za/Latest%20News/CDS%20Research%20Agenda%20Final%20Draft%20180315-2.pdf>

²⁸ SASSETA (March 2019). Inspiring and Enabling Innovation within TVET Colleges. <https://www.sasseta.org.za/download/92/tvet-colleges-study-final-report-revised/7476/tvet-colleges-study-final-report-revised.pdf>

²⁹ Department of Higher Education and Training 2020 - 2025 Strategic Plan (2017). <https://www.dhet.gov.za/SiteAssets/DHET%20Strategic%20Plan%202020.pdf>

- Career practitioners will need specialised knowledge and skills to address career choices relating to VET education. For example, how does one address the issue of status or a perceived lack of recognition for VET training as opposed to an academic education;
- Career practitioners need specialised knowledge and skills to address the specific needs of learners related to their age or life stage.
- Career practitioners will need a deeper knowledge of career planning skills to help learners to successfully manage transitions from education to the labour market;
- Knowledge and skills to deliver online learning have made use of distance and e-learning methods, to increase access for those unable to attend classes.

4.2 Universities

Universities in South Africa follow the model of their international partners in being more autonomous when managing career guidance services for their students. Whilst most universities offer some form of career services for students entering the institution, there are limited placement prospects for graduates. One of the reasons identified for this is a weak relationship between the state, the university and, the employers³¹. The role of career guidance and graduate placement services is often undertaken by intermediary bodies for example:

- The South African Graduate Employers Association (SAGEA) link students at university and employers by tracking the demand and supply of graduates and setting up and administering graduate recruitment programmes³². SAGEA also conducts post-placement research to track the sectors (industries) that graduates apply to and enter (data specific to the retail industry is compiled).
- An example of best practice in European countries is the European, ICARD project, provided in partnership with, the Queensland University of Technology (QLD QUT) in Australia³³. ICARD European Career Development Programme runs in 4 countries and has been translated into 4 languages. The programme was developed with the recognition that transition from the university to the labour market would be more effective if the students would arrive at the stage of exit with a higher awareness about their actual competences, expectations and plans. The programme is run online and is free of charge to all users³⁴.

³⁰ Cedefop (2009). https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/5193_en.pdf

³¹ White Paper (2014). https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/201409/37229gon11.pdf

³² SAGEA. Interview with CEO (Cathy Sims). Phase 1 of this project (2020). <https://sagea.org.za/>

³³ Individual Career Development in Higher Education (2015). European Career Development Programme for University students. <http://www.icard-project.eu/>

³⁴ Queensland University (2019). Career-Modules. <http://www.career-modules.eu/>

There is an increasing awareness of the need to infuse entrepreneurship into career guidance programmes as part of the career development of students in universities:

- A Cedefop report on³⁵ “Guidance Supporting Europe’s Aspiring Entrepreneurs” reveals that traditional education and training systems in Europe are not supportive of entrepreneurship. The study highlights the fact that attitudes take shape at an early age, as such, education systems should contribute more to the development of an entrepreneurial mindset.
- A comparison of 91 studies from 23 countries³⁶ reveals that entrepreneurship education works effectively under the right circumstances. Students participating in entrepreneurship education are more likely to start their own business and their companies tend to be more innovative and more successful than those led by persons without entrepreneurship education backgrounds. Entrepreneurship education alumni are at lower risk of being unemployed and are more often in steady employment. Compared to their peers, they have better jobs and make more money.

4.3 SETA’s

The responsibilities of SETAs, as set out in the Skills Development Act of 1998³⁷, reflect a broad range of career-related services which include the research and submission of occupational data related to their respective sector. Their role extends to skills development, in particular the coordination of programmes linking the unemployed youth to education and training institutions and industry employers.

In the 2018/19 financial year, the total number of individuals registered for SETA-supported learning programmes (learnerships, internships and, skills programmes) stood at 271 704; there has been an increase of 100.9% between the 2011/12 and 2018/19 financial years, with internships achieving the highest growth³⁸. Research on scarce and critical skills completed by SETA’s within each respective sector is an important source of labour market information for the country.

According to Cedefop (2016), quality labour market information (LMI) and intelligence is an essential source of information for guidance practitioners, teachers and trainers who support young people in choosing their careers. Similarly, labour market information is also important

³⁵ Cedefop (2011) Guidance supporting Europe’s aspiring entrepreneurs.

https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/5514_en.pdf

³⁶ European Commission (2015). Entrepreneurship Education: A road to success.

https://ec.europa.eu/growth/content/entrepreneurship-education-road-success-0_en

³⁷ South African Government. The Skills Development Act of 1998.

https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/201409/a97-98.pdf

³⁸ Department of Higher Education and Training 2020 - 2025 Strategic Plan (2017).

<https://www.dhet.gov.za/SiteAssets/DHET%20Strategic%20Plan%202020.pdf>

for working adults to steer their careers in the right direction and unemployed people to go back into the labour market by choosing how they can be reskilled.

5. Career Guidance in Employment Services

Employment services are services that assist people to find employment³⁹. In South Africa, the Department of Employment and Labour (DEL) is one of the state departments which is tasked with employment and career guidance services in South Africa. Career guidance related services focus mainly on assisting the unemployed through placement services. The services provided by the DEL include, amongst others: The registration of work seekers, vacancies and other placement opportunities and the maintenance of a database of work seekers, reported vacancies and learning opportunities and placement rates on the Employment Services System of South Africa (ESSA System)⁴⁰. Employment services also provide job-hunting enhancement programmes for work seekers to improve their marketability in the labour market, including job preparation for new entrants and special employment programmes for youth, women and people with disabilities. They also provide trained career counsellors and employment services practitioners to offer psychometric assessments and selection services for direct placement in learning and work opportunities.

One of the main advantages the Department of Employment and Labour have is the infrastructure which ensures that all the above services are accessible to all, including rural areas in all provinces through the labour centres and other service delivery facilities. The DEL is well placed to develop and distribute career and labour market information in collaboration with the DHET and other stakeholders.

The following examples of career guidance modes of delivery are being implemented by public employment services in OECD countries⁴¹:

- In Australia, a person who is not a registered job seeker does not qualify for income support. This service is also made available to job seekers of all ages who are receiving income support. The career counselling offered to these participants is done on an individual or group basis;
- In Australia employment services target young people aged 15-19 who have dropped out of full-time education, training or employment, and who are drifting in and out of

³⁹ International Labour Organisation (2018). Employment Services. <https://www.ilo.org/skills/areas/employment-services/lang--en/index.htm>

⁴⁰ South African Government (2019). Labour improves reliability of work seeker database. https://www.gov.za/speeches/labour%E2%80%99s-public-employment-services-1-mar-2019-0000?gclid=EAlaIQobChMI6tXjgbz06gIVg-3tCh0CAgPUeAAAYASAAEgIIUfD_BwE

⁴¹ Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development OECD (2004). Career Guidance and Public Policy: Bridging the Gap. OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264105669-en>.

unemployment, labour-market inactivity and marginal work, or are regarded as being at risk of doing so;

- In Scotland, employment services are managed by, Skills Development Scotland. There is strong political pressure to assist young people who are not in education, employment or, training (NEET) with the focus of career guidance being, reduced unemployment⁴². Youth participation measures look at a young person's education and employment status over time rather than just at a single census point. This has led to the creation of the 16+ Data Hub (A skills development portal which allows for data sharing between different government departments and agencies) to form a more complete picture of the issues experienced by young people in transitioning to the labour market⁴³.
- In Denmark, unemployed persons are allowed to receive benefits like income security payments for five years. However, before the end of one year, they are required to see a guidance counsellor assist them to develop an action plan to find employment.
- Canada decided that services of screening interviews and case management should be outsourced to third-party organisations.
- Finland has retained a separate career guidance service in the public employment service.
- In the United Kingdom (England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales) there are different forms of career guidance; in England, the National Careers Service offers guidance on learning, training and, work for adults. This is done through their digital service and face to face guidance by qualified professionals.
- The Netherlands is another example where centres for work and income have been created for job information and benefit claims.

6. Career Guidance in the Workplace

According to Watson (2013), career guidance and orientation are defined by the OECD and World Bank as "services intended to assist individuals, of any age and any point throughout their lives, to make educational, training and occupational choices and to manage their careers"⁴⁴.

⁴² Hooley, T. (2019). International approaches to quality in career guidance. <https://www.kompetansenorge.no/globalassets/karriere/international-approaches-to-quality-in-career-guidance.pdf>

⁴³ Scotland National Skills Agency (2020). Skills Development Scotland. <https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/>

⁴⁴ OECD (2014). Career Guidance and Public Policy. Bridging the Gap. <http://www.oecd.org/education/innovation-education/34050171.pdf>

Some employees, in some high-income countries, expect the employer to offer them some form of career guidance (Watson, 2013). This is mostly related to the acquisition of new skills and progression within the company. Nevertheless, this provision is mainly limited to multinational companies and specific groups of employees, for example, graduates and managers. The implication of this is that many lower-level employees are excluded. This has resulted in trade unions becoming involved in the plans to support the skills development of their members⁴⁵.

In high-income countries, some companies also utilise the services of private career guidance service providers for employees who are being made redundant (Watson, 2013). Internationally, it is recognised that lifelong learning is a central instrument to develop globally competitive people. This lifelong learning may be formal, non-formal or informal learning⁴⁶ (Plant, 2008). This takes place in educational settings and the workplace, and also in the workers' informal networks.

The OECD (2003) encourages workers to improve their skills through continuous learning or to recommence their learning through access to guidance, counselling and support. Plant (2008), states that information, guidance and, counselling are strategic components of lifelong learning. This means that they can assist adults to learn new skills and change careers. The European Commission (EC, 2001) endorses this view by stating that guidance that is flexible and adaptable is essential as it should meet the needs of the individual learner⁴⁷.

In the European Union, the retail sector accounts for a considerable share of the EU economy. According to the European Commission's Retail monitoring report (2010)⁴⁸, the sector accounts for about 4.2% of the EU's gross domestic product (GDP) and 20% of European small and medium enterprises (SMEs). Over the past decade, employment in the sector increased from 17 million to over 19 million and, in 2010, represent about 9% of total employment in Europe. This makes the sector's one of the main entries for young people into employment.

As previously mentioned, research has shown that when employees are aware of a clear career path in the retail sector that they are working in, they stay longer in the same workplace and look for opportunities to advance in the organization where they are

⁴⁵ OECD (2019). Working it out: Career guidance and employer engagement. OECD Education Working Paper No.175. [http://www.oecd.org/officialdocuments/publicdisplaydocumentpdf/?cote=EDU/WKP\(2018\)11&docLanguage=En](http://www.oecd.org/officialdocuments/publicdisplaydocumentpdf/?cote=EDU/WKP(2018)11&docLanguage=En)

⁴⁶ Plant, PI (2008). On the shop floor: guidance in the workplace. https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-1-4020-6230-8_13

⁴⁷ The European Commission (2001). Making a European Area of Lifelong Learning a Reality. [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/committees/cult/20020122/com\(2001\)678_en.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/committees/cult/20020122/com(2001)678_en.pdf)

⁴⁸ European Commission (2010). Retail market monitoring report: Towards more efficient and fairer retail services in the internal market for 2020. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52010DC0355&from=EN>

employed. This means that if employees are aware of personal development opportunities, they will not easily change employment.

A study by Glassdoor from 2007 to 2016⁴⁹, of more than 5,000 job transitions, supports this view that workers who *don't* see a clear progression from their current role to a better position in their company ultimately turn to opportunities elsewhere. Employers who can boost perceived career opportunities by providing clear paths for employees, moving them through job titles on a regular progression over time, limit this type of harmful stagnation.

7. Quality Assurance of Career Guidance

Hooley (2019), states that evaluating the 'quality' of a career guidance services in a country is extremely difficult since there are so many parts that make up a career guidance system, and ask the questions what do we mean by the word, quality and, how can this be benchmarked⁵⁰? To address these questions, Hooley compared quality assurance systems in six countries (a summary of his findings is presented in Table 1 below).

One of the key features of Hooley's finding is the need to create consistency in professional standards for those providing career guidance services. Countries should, for example, specify an approved list of qualifications that can lead to the professional status of a career practitioner, and should provide opportunities for continuing professional development to ensure that standards of career services are upheld.

This finding concurs with the findings of EU agency, Cedefop (2009)⁵¹ which sees professionalisation of career guidance as a key component in the delivery of high-quality guidance and counselling services in support of lifelong learning, career management and, achievement of personal goals⁵².

In many OECD countries, for example, there are clear standards set for staff offering career guidance:

- In Australia, the requirement for career guidance counsellors is a suitable tertiary qualification, preferably at postgraduate level in career guidance and counselling, and five years' experience in career guidance. Practitioners are also required to be affiliated with a professional career-counselling organisation.

⁴⁹ Glass Door Economic Research (2019). Why Do Employees Stay? A Clear Career Path and Good Pay, for Starters. <https://www.glassdoor.com/research/why-do-employees-stay-a-clear-career-path-and-good-pay-for-starters/>

⁵⁰ Hooley, T. (2019). International approaches to quality in career guidance. <https://www.kompetansenorge.no/globalassets/karriere/international-approaches-to-quality-in-career-guidance.pdf>

⁵¹ Cedefop (2009). Professionalising Career Guidance: https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/5193_en.pdf

⁵² Professionalising Career Guidance (2009) Cedefop: https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/5193_en.pdf

- In South Korea, there are plans to introduce Bachelors and Masters Degrees for guidance counsellors, linked to human resource training and industrial training staff. Career guidance in the education system can only be provided by a dedicated career teacher who has completed an additional career training programme (lasting around 600 hours). In South Korea, there is an annual award process run by the Ministry of Education which recognises best practice in career development. This process is designed to recognise the best schools rather than those that provide a minimum standard of service delivery⁵³.
- In Ireland, almost eighty per cent of career guidance practitioners have undergone some form of guidance training. They can also enrol for a part-time course at university in adult guidance. The employer pays their study fees, and on successful completion of the course, they qualify for a salary raise.
- Quality assurance approaches used by Skills Development Scotland emphasises skills development for young people and has a built-in quality review process. Regular feedback from clients is required in response to its services. The organisation has a dedicated evaluation and research team. User perspectives are gathered through regular evaluation processes embedded into the organisations' operations, for example, online feedback forms with school students, unemployed adults and users of face-to-face and online services. Skills Development Scotland are also able to analyse data that is gathered through the organisations' website, an intergovernmental collaborative approach to data gathering (My World of Work)⁵⁴. Quality assurance approaches used by Skills Development Scotland provides a useful model for South Africa.

The quality assurance role of ensuring the competency and professional identity of career guidance practitioners is performed by professional associations who act in the interests of the member and the profession. In some countries, such as Australia, the professional associations have a long history⁵⁵.

In South Africa, the professional body representing career practitioners is the newly formed, South African Career Development Association (SACDA). At present, the professional standards remain voluntary with limited sanctions for those who choose to stay outside of them. In contrast, career practitioners who are psychologists engaged in career development are regulated by the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA)⁵⁶ and is a pre-requisite for professional practice.

⁵³ Hooley, T. (2019). International approaches to quality in career guidance.

<https://www.kompetansenorge.no/globalassets/karriere/international-approaches-to-quality-in-career-guidance.pdf>

⁵⁴ Scotland National Skills Agency (2020). Skills Development Scotland: My World of Work.

<https://www.myworldofwork.co.uk/>

⁵⁵ Cedefop (2009). Professionalising Career Guidance. https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/5193_en.pdf

⁵⁶ The Health Professions Council of South Africa (2020). <https://www.hpcsa.co.za/>

Another important group engaged in career development is human resource specialists working within organisations. Representative organisations such as the South African Board for People Practices⁵⁷ (SBPP) is a statutory body based on the voluntary membership and professional buy-in of members. Career development work varies from member to member depending on the type of work they do.

In 2015, the DHET commissioned research into developing a Competency Framework for Career Development Practitioners⁵⁸. The standards required for career practitioners were benchmarked against the competencies set in other countries (Australia, Canada, Scotland, Ireland, and the United States of America) which have already developed competency frameworks. The occupation, Career Development Information Officer (OFO Code 242301) is a formally registered occupational qualification (SAQA ID: 96372). This qualification is recognised by the newly formed professional body for career development practitioners in South Africa (SACDA).

A comparison of quality assurance systems in six countries is presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Career Guidance Quality Assurance Systems for 6 Countries⁵⁹

Country	Quality system	Key strengths	Key challenges
Australia	Well established career guidance system. Quality assurance is focused on the development and implementation of professional standards.	The quality system has been driven by the profession and has endured across different policy regimes.	Most of the system is voluntary, and so, there are challenges in ensuring its adoption and consistency across the country.
England	Well established career guidance system. Quality assurance is complex and managed through a range of overlapping mechanisms.	A comprehensive set of quality assurance tools covering all of the domains.	Complex and fragmented, with the potential for both confusion and redundancy.
Germany	Well established career guidance system largely devolved to the country's 16, federal states. In practice, most quality assurance is done at the local level.	A range of quality assurance tools exists at both local and national levels. The Be-Qu Concept provides a clear road map to a national quality system.	A decentralised system makes it difficult to establish a consistent national approach to quality.

⁵⁷ South African Board for People Practices (2020). <https://www.sabpp.co.za/>?

⁵⁸ The Department of Higher Education and Training (2015). Competency Framework for Career Development Practitioners in South Africa. https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/201508/39087gon707.pdf

⁵⁹ Hooley, T. (2019). International approaches to quality in career guidance. <https://www.kompetansenorge.no/globalassets/karriere/international-approaches-to-quality-in-career-guidance.pdf>

The Netherlands	Well established career guidance system. There is a wide range of different quality assurance tools available.	Clear regulation and policy support in the education system. The development of new approaches to the quality assurance of people through the coming together of professional associations	Fragmentation between the education and labour market elements of the career guidance system. Much of the quality assurance is voluntarily leading to challenges with adoption and consistency.
Scotland	Strong career guidance system and quality assurance approach focused on Skills Development. The government is the main delivery agency.	Skills Development Scotland acts as a guarantor of quality in the country and is overseen by an independent inspectorate.	The elements of the system that are outside of Skills Development Scotland is weakly quality assured.
South Korea	Emergent career guidance system. Quality assurance is largely focused on government regulation.	The rapid development of a clear and coherent system for quality assurance in the education system. Ongoing initiatives to improve quality assurance in the labour market.	A largely top-down system, which may have limited sustainability in the case of policy changes.

8. Discussion

In this report, we have looked at career guidance policy and practice from both a local and international perspective, highlighting several examples of best practice at the various stages in the career development process: from school, into further and higher education and then into the workplace. This study in the context of this project is not exhaustive but succeeds in highlighting several important areas for discussion.

The inclusion of Life Orientation as a subject in schools means that career education is now a part of the curriculum. It has however been pointed out that life orientation as a subject, does not enjoy the same status as other subjects in the curriculum. This needs to be addressed as a negative perception of life orientation undermines an important benchmark of good career guidance practice, namely, that career professionals in schools need to be highly motivated and properly trained⁶⁰.

Similarly, the TVET Colleges have been strengthened and expanded in their capacity to deliver career guidance through a student support model. However, it is still not clear whether career guidance is being delivered consistently and to a high standard as part of

⁶⁰ Gatsby Report (2014). Good Career Guidance. International approaches to quality in career guidance.
<https://www.gatsby.org.uk/uploads/education/reports/pdf/gatsby-sir-john-holman-good-career-guidance-2014.pdf>

student placement. By its admission, DHET reports that most students enrol in programmes that do not lead to meaningful opportunities⁶¹, and this reflects inconsistencies within career guidance delivery in certain institutions. This, together with the problems of low retention rates of students highlight a greater need for accurate labour market information (LMI) given the high levels of unemployment and the shortage of skilled workers. Reports indicate that labour market information (LMI) in the form of sector skills information, for example, is not reaching colleges and that TVET colleges are working in isolation to employers. The result is that South African institutions are not producing the skills that are needed in the labour market⁶².

Labour market information is an important source of information for guidance practitioners, teachers and trainers who support young people in choosing their careers⁶³. Similarly, labour market information is also important for working adults to steer their careers in the right direction and unemployed people to go back into the labour market by choosing how they can be reskilled.

The Department of Employment and Labour's (DEL) role overlaps with that of DHET with regards to career guidance and placement of the unemployed (notably youth), yet the systems used by DHET and DEL are not connected. The DEL ESSA system as previously mentioned is used in the registration of work seekers, for identifying vacancies for placement of workers in employment⁶⁴. The DEL also provides psychometric assessments and selection services for placement in learning and work opportunities. This provides an opportunity for cooperation as suggested by best practice mentioned in the report.

Skills Development Scotland, for example, has adopted the My World of Work initiative⁶⁵ which provides support for unemployed youth through a cooperative system of intergovernmental support. The service has a built-in career guidance quality review process that allows data to be collected and analysed for young people across all government departments involved in education, training and social support.

Mention has been made of the importance of career guidance in promoting entrepreneurship due to limited labour market prospects for graduates in South Africa⁶⁶. Career guidance, in

⁶¹ Department of Higher Education and Training (2017). Strategic Plan 2020 - 2025.

<https://www.dhet.gov.za/SiteAssets/DHET%20Strategic%20Plan%202020.pdf>

⁶² SASSETA (2019). Inspiring and Enabling Innovation within TVET Colleges.

<https://www.sasseta.org.za/download/92/tvet-colleges-study-final-report-revised/7476/tvet-colleges-study-final-report-revised.pdf>

⁶³ Cedefop (2016). Labour market information and guidance. Luxembourg: Publications Office. Cedefop research paper; No 55. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2801/72440>

⁶⁴ Department of Employment and labour (2020). ESSA System. <https://essa.labour.gov.za/>

⁶⁵ Scotland National Skills Agency (2020). Skills Development Scotland: My World of Work. <https://www.myworldofwork.co.uk/>

⁶⁶ White Paper (2014) https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/201409/37229gon11.pdf

the traditional sense, was implemented to support access into the formal economy. The European Commission (2019)⁶⁷ states that, in future career guidance will support the development of enterprises. Entrepreneurship, therefore, has to be included in career guidance services. This can be achieved by connecting career guidance services with various platforms to support start-ups or develop the growth of businesses. This interrelatedness between career guidance and entrepreneurship is reinforced by the Labour Action Programmes (LAP)⁶⁸.

Watts (2013) affirms that there are links between career management, entrepreneurship and self-employment. Furthermore, the informal sector is a potential entrepreneurial sector, as it is a way of extending the idea of career guidance and development into the informal economy. This sector is the primary source of income in many middle, and low-income countries, including South Africa.

Ironically, career guidance may emphasise the notion of employment over self-employment. Career guidance systems should provide career and study options that lead to self-employment.

The vision of career guidance as a life-long process is relevant to people of all stages of career development, including those employed with organisations.

It has been mentioned that when employees are aware of a clear career path in the retail sector that they are working in, they stay longer in the same workplace and look for opportunities to advance in the organization where they are employed. This means that if employees are aware of personal development opportunities, they will not easily change employment. Workers who don't see a clear progression from their current role to a better position in their company ultimately turn to opportunities elsewhere⁶⁹. This supports the view that career guidance systems should boost perceived career opportunities by providing clear paths for employees, helping them to move through job titles on a regular progression over time.

Finally, there is a notable absence of career guidance best practice in Africa. A very small number of countries have official policy for career guidance delivery. The absence of skilled practitioners and appropriate resources hinders effective career guidance delivery. South Africa remains the benchmark for career guidance delivery in Africa.

⁶⁷ European Commission (2019). 'How to prevent unemployment in a changing world of work?' <https://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=21830&langId=en>

⁶⁸ Unemployment insurance Fund (2018). Labour Action Programmes (LAP). Strategic Plan 2018/19 - 2022/23. http://pmg-assets.s3.amazonaws.com/UIF_STRATEGIC_PLAN_-_2018_19_-_2022_23_Edited__Corrected.pdf

⁶⁹ Glass Door Economic Research (2019). Why Do Employees Stay? A Clear Career Path and Good Pay, for Starters. <https://www.glassdoor.com/research/why-do-employees-stay-a-clear-career-path-and-good-pay-for-starters/>

9. Recommendations

The benchmarking research was conducted to establish best practices in career guidance internationally, regionally and nationally. The scope of this research is naturally very broad so efforts have been made to contain the research to be relevant to the Wholesale and Retail sector. This review has highlighted several practices that would be beneficial to the design and implementation of the W&RSETA Career Guidance strategy.

1. Research has shown that when employees who have a clear career path stay longer in their place of work rather than look for opportunities elsewhere⁷⁰. It is naturally beneficial to the employer and the sector if employees who have developed skills over time remain in the sector. Career guidance needs to be included in the human resource plans of organisations, to create an enabling environment where all employees are granted equal opportunities to realise their potential. The SETA might consider introducing career pathing systems for levy-paying organisations and career guidance training for HR staff to have a deeper knowledge of career planning practices.
2. According to Cedefop⁷¹ (2016), quality labour market information (LMI) and intelligence is an essential source for guidance practitioners, teachers, and trainers who support young people in choosing their careers. Similarly, labour market information is also important for working adults to steer their careers in the right direction and unemployed people to go back into the labour market by choosing how they can be reskilled. The SETA produces annual sector skills plans together with a host of other labour market information. This information must be made available to career guidance practitioners, teachers, trainers, and of course career decision-makers. Certain types of career information dates annually and so the W&RSETA Career Guidance Platform should include this information. Other forms of information that have a longer life span can be disseminated in the form of career publications, posters, and curriculum resources.
3. Entrepreneurship (especially in times of low employment growth) takes centre stage in labour policy and career guidance practices must accommodate this. Research also highlighted that entrepreneurs with a longer period of exposure to entrepreneur education tend to be more successful entrepreneurs or tend to earn higher salaries if

⁷⁰ Suryanarayana, MV and Kumar, P.V. (2018). Career growth in retailing – employees’ perspective. Proceedings of Second National Conference on Emerging Trends in Computer Applications and Management.

https://www.academia.edu/11323138/CAREER_GROWTH_IN_RETAILING_EMPLOYEES_PERSPECTIVE

⁷¹ Cedefop (2016). Labour market information and guidance. Luxembourg: Publications Office. Cedefop research paper; No 55. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2801/72440>

in employment. The W&RSETA should consider including a dedicated entrepreneurship module into their support materials for the wholesale and retail school curriculum subject if this recommendation finds its way into the strategy. The relationship between career guidance and entrepreneurship requires further discussion. Career guidance and entrepreneurship are inseparable constructs in that the former promotes the latter. The characteristics of successful entrepreneurs is therefore a career guidance question that requires a longitudinal study. The influence of career guidance in the understanding and advancement of entrepreneurship is well documented and to maximise entrepreneurship in the sector it is recommended that the entrepreneurship portfolio be combined with the Career Guidance portfolio.

4. The introduction of technology into the workplace has led to digital or online career guidance methods that assist employers to adjust to the changing world of work. Cedefop explains that online career guidance instruments are more effective when they are used in conjunction with other methods of career guidance, to cater for a diverse workforce⁷². They should also preferably be varied, including telephone, mail, chat, social media and personal contact. The W&RSETA might consider including some personalisation into their career guidance platform.
5. The importance of employers getting more involved in the career education process might encourage the SETA to develop a Role-Model series that includes videos from successful entrepreneurs, managers, and employees on working in the W&R sector. Initiatives such as school talks at Career Dress-Up Day or take a girl-child to work day might also be encouraged.
6. The Employment Services System of South Africa (DEL) contains data on unemployed citizens. The W&R sector offers employment. It would be very useful for the W&RSETA to host Stakeholder workshops with employers during which the benefits of the ESSA system regarding placements for learnerships, temporary employment, and permanent employment, is presented to them.
7. Benchmarking practices are the foundation of ensuring that qualitative standards are being met. Membership with career guidance associations, subscriptions to journals, and participation in regional and international career guidance conferences is crucial to ensuring that the W&RSETA remain at the forefront of career guidance and human capital development practices in the sector.

⁷² Cedefop (2016). Labour market information and guidance. Luxembourg: Publications Office. Cedefop research paper; No 55. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2801/72440>

10. Conclusion

In this report, we have investigated how career guidance services can be adapted to respond more appropriately to the career development needs of people across different life stages. These findings are based on best practice in South Africa and around the world.

A more coherent approach to career guidance delivery that is guided through strategic planning will ensure service quality going forward.

The foremost question addressed in this report is, how can we learn from best practice so that career guidance is delivered more effectively and to ensure that scarce resources are applied more efficiently. There appears to be many areas where changes can be made and where career guidance services can be improved, both at schools and the post-school level.

Career guidance best practices are practices which help individuals of any age, and at any point throughout their lives, be they students, employees or retirees.

The new subjects introduced into the curriculum such as, Wholesale and Retail and Entrepreneurship, provide a unique opportunity for the W&RSETA to make an impact; the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) which is set to begin on 1 July 2020 (AfCFTA, 2019) opens up business opportunities in 55 countries on the continent and serves as a platform which has the potential to advance job creation and career development in the African context, especially in the retail sector. All of these policy changes represent a confluence of opportunities for the W&RSETA to play a more incisive role.

With rising youth unemployment and the impact of COVID-19 still yet to make its worst impact on society, the W&R Sector carries the burden of being one of the most accessible sectors for new entrants into the market, but even more so for those who wish to start businesses.

The knowledge gained from this report will be evaluated and, where feasible, incorporated into the W&RSETA career guidance strategy outlined in Report 5.



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