

# Real choices! Real jobs!



## A Guide to Transitioning from School to Supported Employment

STUDENT'S GUIDE



## **Real choices! Real jobs!**

### **A Guide to Transitioning from School to Supported Employment.**

#### **Student's Guide.**

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Further information and copies of this guide are available from the Brite web site at: [www.briteind.com.au](http://www.briteind.com.au).

# Contents

What is this guide?.....	2
Who is this guide for?.....	3
Why is this guide important?.....	4
Thinking positively .....	5
Who can help? .....	6
What is supported employment? .....	7
Types of work available .....	8
What’s good about supported employment? .....	9
Getting started.....	10
Work Experience .....	11
James’ story .....	12
Getting a job.....	13
Step 1 Make contact.....	14
Step 2 Visit the workplace .....	16
Step 3 Job application .....	17
Step 4 Job interview.....	18
Step 5 Job offer .....	22
Jessica’s story .....	23
Starting work.....	24
Employment conditions .....	25
Employment Assistance Plans .....	26
Daniel’s story .....	27
Disability Services Standards.....	28
Work words .....	30
Further information .....	32

## What is this guide?

This guide is for students thinking about moving from school to supported employment.

This guide is one of three in a series of guides published by the Victorian Department of Education and Training.

The two other guides in the series are a detailed print version for parents, carers, teachers and careers teachers and a plain English audio version for students with a disability.

You can view or download each product in the series from [www.briteind.com.au](http://www.briteind.com.au).

You can also get information about **other** things you can do after leaving school in a guide called 'Moving on to your future'. It's an easy to read guide, which has lots of information for students with a disability who live in or around the Hume area. This guide can be downloaded from the internet at [www.bds.org.au](http://www.bds.org.au).



## **Who is this guide for?**

This guide is for you, the student, to help you to make up your mind about what to do after leaving school

It contains information about how to find a job in supported employment and what to expect when you get a job.

All school leavers with a disability can benefit from reading this guide.

It can be of most help for those students with a disability between the ages of 16 and 18 who are still at school.

## Why is this guide important?

Transition (that is, getting ready to leave school and planning what happens next) can be a tough time for you and your family.

Leaving school means you will no longer be with the same friends every day or be able to do the same things as you used to at school. It can be a time of great confusion.

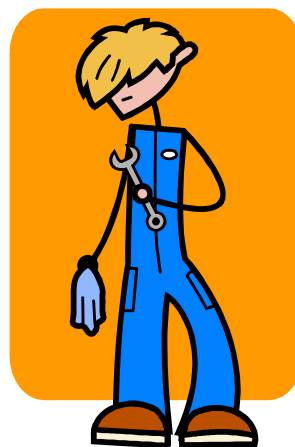
Naturally families and students want to feel comfortable and have a smooth transition from school to work.

Good planning at transition time and knowing what you need to do is really important. It increases your chances of getting a job that you like if that is what you want to do.

Many people with a disability do not find a job. Others find a job but feel that their skills are not being used properly. Don't let this happen to you.

This is something for everyone to think about (you, schools, services and families).

This guide will help you and your family to plan for a transition from school.



## Thinking positively

Some people in the community still have much lower expectations for people with disabilities than those without a disability.

You can prove them wrong!

Many people with a disability enjoy a long working life.

You need to know that young people with a disability have pretty much the same issues as young people without a disability, that is, that some problems happen because they are still young and need some help in life.

All students find leaving school and finding a job very hard.

Sometimes people with a disability, like all young people, need to think about a lot of things when leaving school, not just about jobs or more schooling but whether to stay at home or move out. This can also be a tough time for parents and carers too.

While things usually settle down, it takes time and lots of help to get things right. This guide will give you things to think about if you want to work...



## Who can help?

Many people are available to help you and your family.

If you have any questions then talk to:

- Your teacher
- Your careers teacher or transition teacher
- Counselling staff and course advisers at TAFE
- Government careers assistance
- The Department of Human Services
- Your family or carer

### Work words

As you are read this guide, you might come across new words.

It is important to know the meaning of these words so that you understand what you are reading.

At the end of this guide is a list of words and their meanings.





## What is supported employment?

Supported employment is for people with a disability who want to work but need support.

The organisations that offer supported employment are called Business Services.

Business Services employ trainers and support workers to help you to learn the things you need to do your job.

The government pays for the jobs and most of the people who work in a business service have a disability.

There are two ways to get a job in supported employment:

- Referral by Centrelink or a Job Capacity Assessor
- Contacting the Business Service directly



## Types of work available

Business Services offer real choices and real jobs.

You can work in a factory packing boxes, warehousing jobs, gardening and other jobs.



# What's good about supported employment?

Working in supported employment is good because:

- You have a real job just like other adults in the community
- You earn a real wage that you can spend on what is important to you
- You get the same employment conditions as people without a disability
- You make new friends that you see each time you go to work
- You get specialist disability support to help you
- You can learn new skills and new jobs
- You can get involved in the workplace such as Occupational Health and Safety Committee or Employee Representative Committee
- You can get help to find work in open employment if that is what you want to do



## Getting started

So, you're interested in applying for a job in a Business Service.....

You have to think about .....

- The sort of things you are good at
- The sort of things you enjoy
- The sort of things you don't enjoy
- What the employer expects from you
- What you can expect in a Business Service
- Working conditions
- Understanding important words that are used in Business Services
- Looking for work

Remember to talk to lots of people and ask lots of questions.

## Work Experience

Most Business Services offer work experience programs.

Work experience means spending a few days at a Business Service either by yourself or with a group of students.

When you do work experience you can:

- Learn about the workplace
- Learn a job
- Meet the workers
- Meet the support staff
- Ask lots of questions
- Find out about the working conditions

Work experience is a good way of finding out whether you are interested in working in supported employment or not.

If you are interested in doing work experience ask your teacher to organise it for you.



## James' story

James is leaving special school at the end of this year.

James is excited about the future but his mother is very worried because James has Prader Willi Syndrome and needs extra special support.

Currently he is doing work experience at a Business Service. A teacher supports him while he's at work making sure that he gets there on time and helping him to make new friends.

There is a lot for James to learn and he is enjoying it very much.

James' mother is very pleased to find out that a Business Service in the local area can help with Prader Willi Syndrome.

It's all so new for James.

James' mother is helping him to apply to do a special program so that he can learn some work and life skills before he applies for a job at the Business Service.

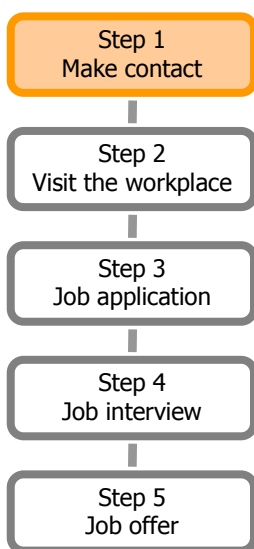


## Getting a job

Getting a job involves successfully completing the following five steps:



# Step 1 Make contact



When you decide that supported employment is what you want to do it is time to make contact with a Business Service.

There are two ways to make contact with a Business Service:

- Referral by Centrelink or a Job Capacity Assessor
- Contacting the Business Service directly

Here's a list of the Business Services' in and around the Hume region that offer supported employment. Feel free to call them and talk to them about the service they offer and whether they have any jobs available.

## **Brite Services**

Cnr Belfast & Dallas Drive,  
Broadmeadows, 3047  
Phone 9309 5111

## **Brunswick Industries**

3-7 Syme Street  
Brunswick, 3056  
Phone 9387 1433

## **Hi-City Industries**

98 Oriel Road  
Heidelberg West, 3081  
Phone 9497 3555

## **VATMI Industries**

12 Keon Parade  
Keon Park, 3073  
Phone 9416 8338

## **Creative Opportunities**

10 Tinning Street  
Brunswick, 3056  
Phone 9386 7611

## **Dual Ware Industries**

305 Victoria Street  
Brunswick, 3056  
Phone 9666 4504

## **Ability Press**

2 Robinson Road  
Reservoir, 3073  
Phone 9666 4504

## **BEA Windows**

858 Sydney Road  
Brunswick 3056  
Phone 9384 0400

## **Woorinyan Incorporated**

7 Aylward Avenue  
Thomastown 3074  
Phone: 9432 0530



Once you've decided to make contact call the Business Service and ask them for a copy of their entry procedure and their eligibility criteria.

### **Entry procedure**

The entry procedure explains the steps a Business Service follows when someone like you asks them for a job.

Each Business Service has their own way of doing things which may be a bit different from the steps explained in this guide.

So if you want to know more about the steps a Business Service follows – ask them!

### **Eligibility criteria**

Eligibility criteria are the rules you must meet before you can get a job at a Business Service.

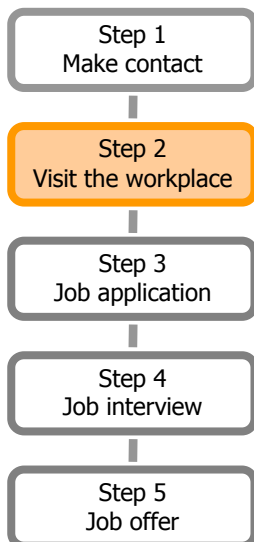
Each Business Service has their own eligibility criteria.

All Business Services need you to have Centrelink Endorsement.

Centrelink endorsement means being assessed by a Job Capacity Assessment Provider to be eligible to apply for work at a Business Service.

The assessment can be organised through Centrelink or the Business Service.

## Step 2 Visit the workplace



Make an appointment to visit the workplace.

During the visit you will meet the staff and see the workplace.

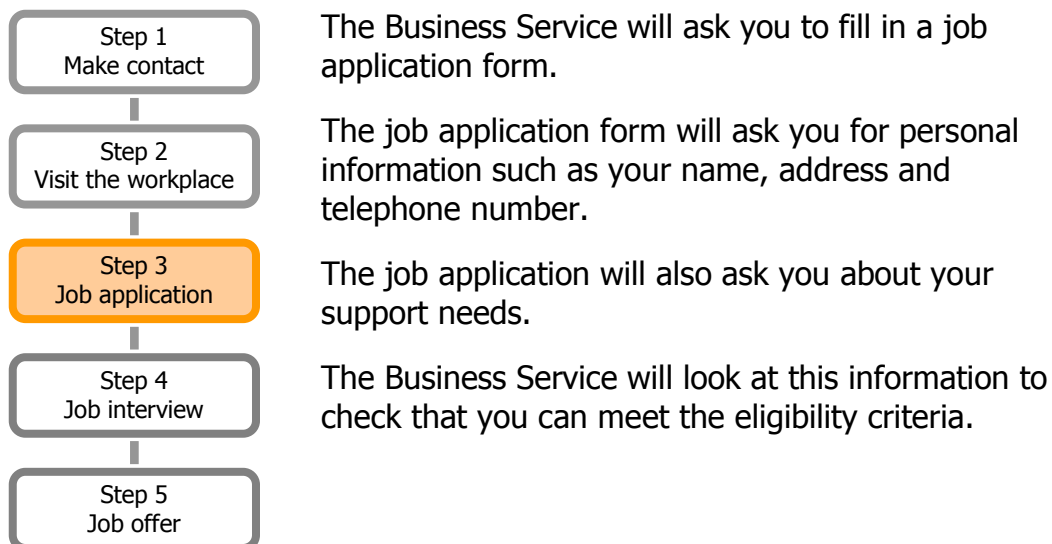


Remember to ask lots of questions.

Here are some questions you might want to ask:

- How do people who work here normally get to and from work? Train? Bus? Tram? Taxi?
- What sorts of jobs do people do here?
- How will I learn how to do a job?
- Can I choose where I want to work?
- Can I choose what time I start and what time I finish?
- How do people get paid?
- Do you have a social club? What do they do?

## Step 3 Job application



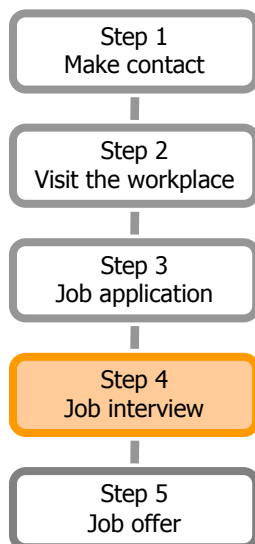
### Waiting list

Sometimes a Business Service has enough workers and there are no jobs available.

Don't give up!

Ask to put your name on the waiting list and find out how long the waiting list is.

## Step 4 Job interview



The Business Service will invite you to a job interview.

A job interview is a meeting where you meet with staff from the Business Service to talk about getting a job.

Staff will ask you about yourself and what you want to do at work. You can also ask the staff lots of questions. A lot of information is shared at an interview.

Remember to take a family member, carer or advocate with you if you want to.

Here are some ideas of what to do before the job interview, at the job interview and after the job interview.

### Before the job interview

Many people feel nervous before an interview so don't be surprised if you do too.

Preparing for the interview will help you to feel more confident.

Here are some things that you can do:

- Find out about the Business Service, its products, its services
- Think of some questions to ask at the job interview
- Practice being at an interview with someone
- Be sure you know how you are going to get to the interview on time

## At the job interview

There might be two or three staff talking to you at the job interview.

They know that people get nervous at interviews and will help you to relax.



## Questions that the employers might ask include:

- How did you find out about our Business Service?
- Can you tell us about yourself?
- Why do you want to work here?
- What do you know about our Business Service?
- What are you good at?
- What sort of work do you want to do?
- What days and hours do you want to work?
- What help do you think you might need at work?

## Questions you might like to ask the employer

The staff will also ask you if you have any questions.

Be ready to ask questions because then the staff will know that you are interested in the job.

You may want to know about:

- What the job is all about?
- Where you will be working?
- How many days and what hours are being offered?
- What support is available for your special needs?
- What your pay and work conditions will be?
- What training is available?
- What is the next step?
- How long will you need to wait to find out whether your application is successful?
- Information about public transport

## After the job interview

At the end of the job interview, let the staff know that you are very interested in the job and thank them for their time.

If you have not heard from the Business Service after two weeks, it is a good idea to contact them and ask if a decision on your application has been made.

If your application is not successful, ask why.

## **Tips for doing your best**

Be at least 10 minutes early. This will give you a chance to get to know the surroundings and relax.

Be well prepared. Take all the documents you need to the job interview.

Be polite. Have a good attitude whenever you speak or answer questions. Remember to look interested, smile and shake hands when you meet the staff who will interview you

Be careful. Take time to think a question through and then answer in a way that is clear and makes sense

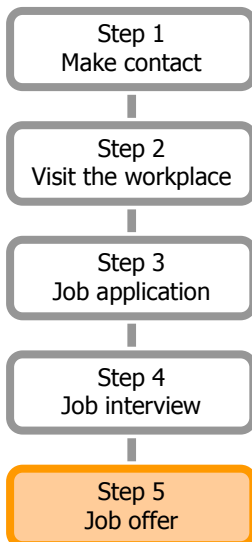
Be positive: Show the staff that you want to do the job and do it well and that you are looking forward to fitting into the Business Service

Don't be scared to ask questions yourself.

Be calm. Try not to get yourself all worked up. Answer questions in a calm and polite manner

If you are feeling very nervous don't be too scared to say "I'm really nervous". The staff know that going to a job interview makes people nervous and they can help you to relax.

## Step 5 Job offer



If the Business Service decides to employ you they will make a job offer. This is a letter inviting you to work at the Business Service and describing the working conditions.

Remember to ask if you have any questions about the job offer or are still unsure about the service they provide.

When you are sure that you want the job, sign the letter and return it to the Business Service.

Congratulations! You are now officially employed!





## Jessica's story



Jessica really loves going to school.

She is in her first year of transition at special school and feels very comfortable. She knows everyone and really loves her teacher.

Jessica is very worried about leaving school and going to a new place.

She thinks about whether she will be safe, whether she'll be able to make new friends and whether she will have enough interesting things to do.

Jessica's mother is also very worried and is doing her best to help her daughter find out about the sorts of things she could do.

Her mother helped her to find out about supported employment and they looked at some photos of people in a Business Service. They noticed that there were many jobs to choose from. Some jobs looked very easy while other jobs seemed more difficult. People in the photos looked busy, confident and happy with what they were doing.

Jessica and her mother decided to learn more about supported employment and booked an appointment for a workplace visit.

## Starting work

Starting a new job can be very exciting and for many of us it can also be a bit frightening. Asking a parent or carer to come with you on the first day is a good idea.

You might worry about whether you can do the job and fit into the workplace.

Staff at the Business Service will help you to settle in. They'll describe the rules of the workplace, show you where the eating area and the bathroom area are and introduce you to the people you will be working with.

This part of starting work is called induction.

An important part of any induction is learning the safety rules. This includes what to do if you think something is unsafe and where to go in an emergency.

You will also start to learn how to do the job. Don't worry if it all seems to be a bit confusing at first. In time and with support you'll get the hang of it.

Remember: If you need help – ask someone!

Often after a few months of work staff will sit down with you and ask you whether you want to stay.

Remember that it is your choice to work and it's OK to change your mind.

## Employment conditions

You will be paid under an award, an enterprise agreement or an employment contract and get the same employment conditions as people working in open employment.

Employment conditions include pay rate, hours of work, overtime, holidays, sick leave, superannuation and other penalty provisions.

### Productivity based wages

You are paid a productivity based wage.

How much you get paid depends on how well you know your job and how quickly you can do your job without making mistakes.

The Business Service works out how much to pay you using a Wage Assessment Tool.

You will be assessed every year and if you are not happy with the assessment you can appeal.



## Employment Assistance Plans

Not long after you start working a staff member will meet with you to develop an Employment Assistance Plan.

The staff member will talk to you about what you want to do in the workplace. Perhaps you want to learn to do your job better or learn to do a different job. Learning new skills improves the chances of getting a promotion and earning more money. What you want to do is called your employment goal.

When you have decided what you want to do the staff member will talk to you about how they can help you to reach your employment goal. This might mean more training and support. These are called strategies. Strategies help you to achieve your employment goal.

At the end of the meeting you will be asked to sign the Employment Assistance Plan which contains your employment goal and the strategies.

Staff are responsible for making sure that the Employment Assistance Plan is followed.

## Daniel's story

Daniel is in his last year at a special school.

With the help of his parents and his teacher he's had a think about the sorts of things he wants to do next year.

He knows that he is not interested in arts and crafts. He also knows that he wants to go somewhere and be with people his own age.

He's thinking about a TAFE course where he could learn more work and life skills. His mother already has all the brochures and has spoken with the TAFE.

After that he's not so sure.

His mother had seen people walking to work at a Business Service near home and they seemed older than Daniel.

Daniel asks his mother to find out more about supported employment.



# Disability Services Standards

All Business Services must follow a set of 12 rules called the Disability Services Standards.

The rules make sure you treated fairly and are well supported when you work for a Business Service.

## **Standard 1: Service Access**

Fair rules so everyone gets help when they need it.

## **Standard 2: Individual Needs**

Getting the help you need using an Employment Assistance Plan.

## **Standard 3: Decision Making and Choice**

Having a say in the workplace about the service you receive and the way the Business Service operates.

## **Standard 4: Privacy, Dignity and Confidentiality**

Keeping information about you private and treating you with respect.

## **Standard 5: Participation and Integration**

Helping you to be a part of the community.

### **Standard 6: Valued Status**

Helping you to be respected in the community through having a job and learning new skills.

### **Standard 7: Complaints and Disputes**

Helping you to make a complaint if you are not happy with something and getting it fixed.

### **Standard 8: Service Management**

Running the service well.

### **Standard 9: Employment Conditions**

Giving you the same rights at work as everyone else including your pay, holiday pay, sick leave your right to work in a safe place.

### **Standard 10: Service Recipient Training and Support**

Helping you to learn the skills to do your job.

### **Standard 11: Staff Recruitment, Employment and Training**

Having staff to help you.

### **Standard 12: Protection of Human Rights and Freedom from Abuse**

Making sure you are safe and respected.

## Work words

<b>Agreement or Award</b>	A document that explains the employment conditions in a workplace.
<b>Award rate</b>	The lowest rate of pay that can be paid for a job.
<b>Centrelink</b>	A service run by the government responsible for all forms of government payments such as the Disability Support Pension.
<b>Centrelink Endorsement</b>	The OK from Centrelink that you can apply for work at a Business Service.
<b>Disability Employment Services</b>	Services funded by the government that can help you to find a job in open employment.
<b>Disability Service Standards</b>	12 rules Business Services must follow.
<b>Disability Support Pension</b>	A payment that Centrelink can make to people with a disability.
<b>Discrimination</b>	When you or someone else are treated unfairly because of politics, race, religion, gender or disability.
<b>Eligibility Criteria</b>	The rules you must meet to work in a Business Service
<b>Employee Representative Committee</b>	A group of employees at a Business Service who meet to make decisions.
<b>Employment Assistance Plans</b>	A plan showing your employment goals and how you are going to reach your employment goals.
<b>Employment conditions</b>	Employment conditions are your pay, holiday pay, sick leave, your right to work in a safe place.
<b>FaCSIA</b>	Department of Families and Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.
<b>On the job training</b>	Training that takes place when you are doing your job.
<b>Open Employment</b>	Employment without special disability support.
<b>Post School Options</b>	What to do after leaving school such as employment, study or lifestyle programs.



<b>Probationary period</b>	A period of time during which you work and decide if you want to stay.
<b>Productivity Based Wage Assessment</b>	How a Business Service works out how much to pay you.
<b>Productivity based wages</b>	The amount you get paid which depends on how well you know your job and how quickly you can work without making mistakes.
<b>Resume</b>	A history of the things you have done and the things you can do.
<b>Support staff</b>	Staff who help you in a Business Service.
<b>Supported employee</b>	A person with a disability who works in a Business Service. Sometimes also called an employee, a worker, a client or a service recipient.
<b>Supported employment</b>	Services funded by the government that employ people with a disability and provide support. These workplaces are called Business Services.
<b>Training</b>	Teaching in the workplace.
<b>Transition</b>	Moving from an important part of your life to the next such as from special school to supported employment.
<b>Wages</b>	What you get paid.
<b>Work experience</b>	Spending a few days in a workplace while you are still at school.
<b>Workplace behaviour</b>	How you learn to behave at work such as working safely, starting on time and working well with others.

## Further information

<b>Centrelink</b>	13 27 17 <a href="http://www.centrelink.gov.au">www.centrelink.gov.au</a>
<b>Department of Families and Community Services and Indigenous Affairs</b>	1300 653 227 <a href="http://www.facs.gov.au/disability">www.facs.gov.au/disability</a>
<b>Disability Symposium 2005. The Way Forward. Australia 2005</b>	<a href="http://www.dsc.wa.gov.au/cproot/1693/3/DisabilitySymposium2005.doc">www.dsc.wa.gov.au/cproot/1693/3/DisabilitySymposium2005.doc</a>
<b>Disability Online</b>	<a href="http://www.disability.vic.gov.au">www.disability.vic.gov.au</a>
<b>Local Learning and Employment Networks</b>	<a href="http://www.llens.vic.gov.au">www.llens.vic.gov.au</a>