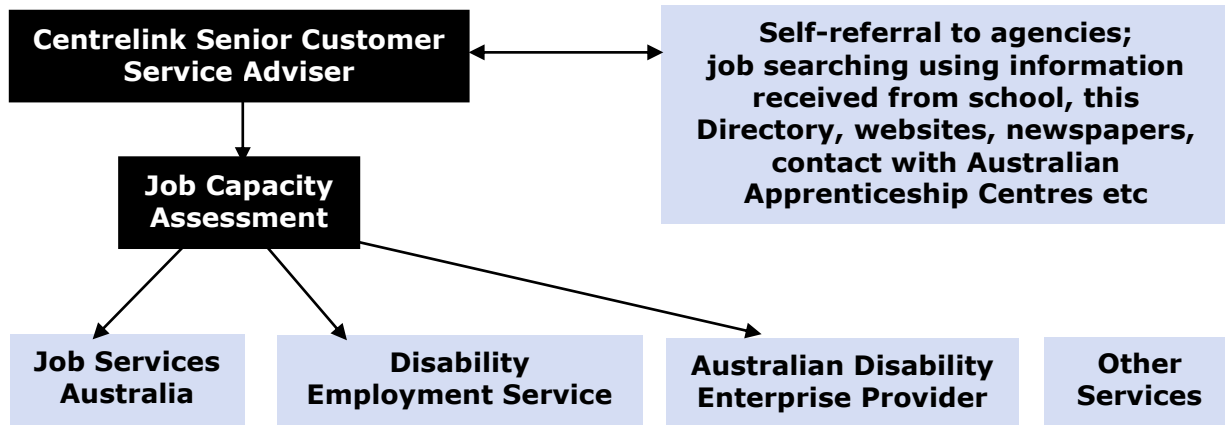




## Factsheet No. 7

### Steps to Finding Employment



### Employment

There are many services and agencies to assist people with a disability decide on careers options and to seek and maintain employment. While people with a disability can access services that are available to all Australian citizens and permanent residents, there are also services that are designed specifically for people with a disability.

Help is available to you at every stage of the employment process, from preparing to look for work, searching for a job and, if needed, ongoing support in the workplace once you've found a job.

### JobAccess - Information Service

JobAccess is an initiative of the Australian Government to support the employment of people with disability. JobAccess is a one-stop information shop for all matters relating to the

employment of people with a disability. It provides a free, confidential, national online service and telephone line providing information and expert advice to:

- job seekers with a disability
- workers with a disability
- employers and co-workers of an individual with a disability
- employment service providers

The JobAccess website has step-by-step guides and checklists on recruitment, job searching, adjusting a workplace, employer incentives, understanding rights and responsibilities at work and much more. The website also contains case studies and success stories as well as information on the full range of services and incentives available for people with disability and for current and potential employers. If you have a question about employment, why not give the JobAccess Advisers a call. The JobAccess Advisers are a team of professionals who provide free, confidential and expert advice on the employment of people with disability

## **JobAccess Adviser**

PO Box 510, SUBIACO WA 6904

Online Enquiry Form available

Phone: 1800 464 800

Fax: 08 9388 7799

TTY: 1800 464 800

[www.jobaccess.gov.au](http://www.jobaccess.gov.au)

## **An Overview**

The Australian Government is responsible for the funding and management of employment support services for people with a disability. The government agencies that play a role include:

- **Centrelink** is the agency that acts as a gateway for people with a disability seeking employment
- **Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations** (DEEWR) fund the following services:
  - ~ Job Services Australia
  - ~ Disability Employment Services
- **Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs** (FaHCSIA) fund:
  - ~ Australian Disability Enterprises (formerly Business Services and sometimes referred to as disability supported employment or sheltered workshops)

As a general rule, you can only be registered with one Australian Government funded disability employment service at a time.

## **Centrelink**

Centrelink delivers a range of services to the Australian community and is the gateway for people seeking access to Australian Government income support.

Centrelink is also responsible for the registration and referral of job seekers to employment and related services. Centrelink has trained Senior Customer Service Advisers and other staff that can help individuals with a disability find the service that best suits their needs.

## **Important Information for Disability Support Pensioners wanting to find work**

If you are on a Disability Support Pension you do not have an obligation to look for work in order to receive your Disability Support Pension.

If you would like to look for work and require assistance from an Australian Government funded Employment Services such as a Disability Employment Service, you will be volunteering for employment services.

If you have not had a Job Capacity Assessment in the last two years you will be required to have a Job Capacity Assessment to be able to access such employment services. This assessment will work out your work capacity. The Assessment will also recommend an employment service for you. This has to be done to make sure that you go to the service that can help you most.

It is important that you understand that the Job Capacity Assessment will start a review of your entitlement to Disability Support Pension. The assessment outcome may be that you'll be better supported by another type of payment from Centrelink such as the Youth Allowance or Newstart Allowance.

If you want to have a Job Capacity Assessment, Centrelink will give you a Treating Doctor's Report form for your doctor to complete. This is so that the Job Capacity Assessor has the most up to date medical information about you.

When Centrelink gets your Treating Doctor's Report, an appointment for you to have a Job Capacity Assessment will be made.

## Step-By-Step: Accessing Employment Services

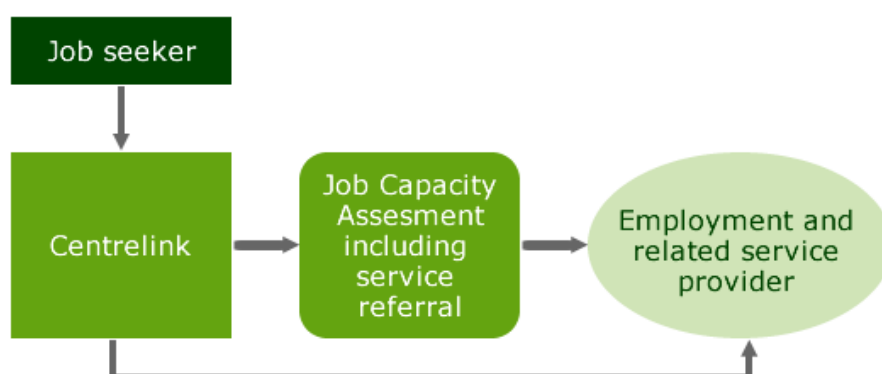
It is important that you receive the services that best meet your individual needs. The following step by step guide tells you how to register with the right type of employment service provider.

### Step 1 – Your first point of contact

If you are looking for work you should contact Centrelink Employment Services on **13 2850** or visit your nearest Centrelink Customer Service Centre. Centrelink will be able to register you as looking for work even if you have not yet completed the registration process. In addition, Centrelink may complete a Job Seeker Classification Instrument with you and if required, organise a Job Capacity Assessment to determine which service best meets your needs.

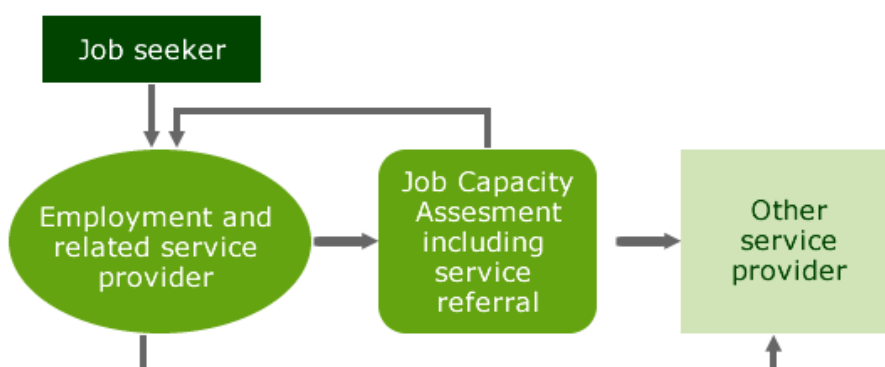
### Step 2 – Do you require a Job Capacity Assessment?

If you do need a Job Capacity Assessment, Centrelink will be able to organise for you to see a Job Capacity Assessment provider. Centrelink will also provide you with information about the purpose of the assessment and when to attend. If you do not need a Job Capacity Assessment, Centrelink will be able to directly refer you to the most appropriate employment or employment related service for assistance.



### Step 3 – Contacting a local Disability Employment Service member or Job Services Australia provider directly

You may also choose to contact a local Disability Employment Service member directly for assistance. These services will be able to determine whether you are eligible for their assistance and in some cases this may mean attending a Job Capacity Assessment. If that service is not the best service for you, they will organise a referral to a more appropriate service.



### Step 4 – Volunteering for employment assistance

Job seekers without job search obligations, such as Disability Support Pension recipients, are able to volunteer for employment services and other programs of assistance. A Job Capacity Assessment will determine the most appropriate employment service or program of assistance based on individual needs.

From [www.jobaccess.gov.au](http://www.jobaccess.gov.au)

## Job Capacity Assessment

The Australian Government's Welfare to Work reforms in 2006 changed the referral process for job seekers accessing specialist disability employment assistance programs such as Disability Employment Services.

Job seekers wishing to receive support from a specialist employment service (such as a Disability Employment Service) are now required to have a Job Capacity Assessment (JCA).

### What is a Job Capacity Assessment?

A Job Capacity Assessment is an appointment with a skilled assessor who will assess your capacity to work, taking into consideration your individual circumstances. The assessment will help identify and refer you to the employment service that best suits your needs.

### Why do I need a Job Capacity Assessment?

A Job Capacity Assessment is required if:

- you have barriers to work and wish to receive certain income support payments, such as Newstart Allowance or the Disability Support Pension
- you need help to find and maintain a job or have part time or no capacity to work
- you wish to receive support from a specialist disability employment service.

### How do I set up a Job Capacity Assessment?

Generally, Centrelink or an employment support provider can refer you for a Job Capacity Assessment. An appointment time will be scheduled for you.

### What happens at the assessment?

Your assessor will talk to you about any barriers you may have to find and keep

a job. Your assessor will also discuss possible referral options to an employment or related service with you. In most cases, the assessment will involve a face-to-face discussion between you and the assessor. All face-to-face assessments will take place at the assessor's office which may not be at your local Centrelink office.

A friend, relative or advocate can attend the appointment with you and, if you prefer, you can ask for a male or female assessor to conduct the assessment. You will need to advise the person who is making your Job Capacity Assessment appointment if you have a preference about the gender of your assessor.

### How long will the assessment take?

There is no set time period for completing the assessment as this will vary according to your individual needs. However, on average an assessment may take between one and two hours.

### What should I take to the appointment?

Your Job Capacity Assessor will consider all information and evidence that you bring to the assessment and will take this into account when preparing their report. It is important that you bring medical evidence about your disability to your assessment. Examples of the types of information or evidence about your disability that you should bring to your Job Capacity Assessment include (but are not limited to):

- Treating Doctor's Report (Centrelink form SA012)
- Centrelink Medical Certificate
- Standard GP Medical Certificate
- Specialist Medical Report
- Special School Report
- Psychologist Report /psychometric test results
- Prescription/sample medication
- Hospital/outpatients reports
- Reports from community services, (e.g. Drug and Alcohol support services)

Your Job Capacity Assessor will consider all information and evidence that you bring to the assessment and will take this into account when preparing their report.

Medical evidence is important to the Job Capacity Assessment. If you do not provide medical evidence you may:

- have your appointment rescheduled or cancelled until evidence is provided
- be unable to access the most appropriate service or have access delayed
- not have your medical condition taken into account when your participation requirements are determined
- be unable to access some income support payments and social security concessions
- be ineligible for Disability Employment Services.

### **What if I need an interpreter or have special requirements?**

If required, your assessment provider can arrange a qualified interpreter, including an AUSLAN sign language interpreter, to assist at your assessment. You will need to advise the person who is making your Job Capacity Assessment appointment if you require an interpreter or have any special requirements.

### **What happens after the assessment?**

Wherever possible, you will be referred to an employment or related service to help you find and maintain work. In most cases, referral details will be provided to you at the completion of your assessment.

Your Job Capacity assessor will prepare a report about your work capacity. This report will be provided to Centrelink and, where applicable, a decision will be made about the type of income support for which you are eligible. The report will also inform Centrelink and/or your employment or related service provider

about your ability to look for work, and any appropriate support or services that you require.

Any income support decision will be made by Centrelink, not the assessor.

### **How do I obtain a copy of my Job Capacity Assessment?**

You may make a request to Centrelink under the Freedom of Information Act 1982 to obtain or inspect your Job Capacity Assessment report.

### **Additional Information**

For additional information about Job Capacity Assessments, please contact the Job Capacity Assessment Hotline on 1300 136 526

Email: [feedback@jca.gov.au](mailto:feedback@jca.gov.au)

Website: [www.jca.gov.au](http://www.jca.gov.au)

If you have concerns about how your Job Capacity Assessment was conducted you should firstly speak to the Job Capacity Assessor who conducted your assessment.

If you do not wish to raise a complaint directly with the Job Capacity Assessor or their organisation, you can call and lodge a Job Capacity Assessment complaint with:

- Centrelink's FreeCall™ Customer Relations Line on 1800 050 004 or
- Centrelink's TTY Customer Relations service on 1800 000 567 (only for people who are deaf or have a hearing or speech impairment and have access to use a TTY phone)

If you are not satisfied with Centrelink's decision or the actions of your Job Capacity Assessor, you may complain to the Commonwealth Ombudsman:

Commonwealth Ombudsman  
GPO Box 442, Canberra ACT 2601

Phone: 1300 362 072

Online complaint form at  
[www.ombudsman.gov.au](http://www.ombudsman.gov.au)

## Job Services Australia

Job Services Australia is primarily aimed at providing assistance to job seekers who are job ready and who do not need ongoing support or rehabilitation services to find or keep a job. For general information about Job Services Australia, go to [www.workplace.gov.au](http://www.workplace.gov.au)

### Job Search Support

Job Services Australia agencies provide Job Search Support. This aims to help job seekers find work as quickly as possible and begins when a job seeker registers with Centrelink. These services continue to be provided while the job seeker remains unemployed.

During Job Search Support, the Job Services Australia member advises the job seeker on job search techniques, career options and employment program as may be appropriate. Each job seeker is assisted in lodging their vocational profile (resume) on Australian JobSearch, the national vacancy database, for subsequent automatic matching against suitable job vacancies.

### Kiosks and Internet Website

All job seekers can access details of job leads through their personal page (created by their provider) on the "Australian JobSearch" website using touch-screen kiosks located in Job Services Australia and Centrelink sites and a telephone service for the cost of a local call. Job seekers can also use their personal page on the internet or be notified of job leads by email or SMS.

### Job Seeker Account

Job Services Australia providers also have access to the Job Seeker Account, a pool of funds that is used to purchase employment related assistance for eligible job seekers. It is up to each member to determine the level and type of assistance to provide in

accordance with guidelines. For example, the Job Seeker Account may be used to purchase employment related training, work clothes and equipment required to accept a job offer, wage subsidies and interpreter services.

### What is the difference between Job Services Australia Providers and Disability Employment Services?

Job Services Australia is primarily aimed at providing assistance to job seekers who are **job ready and who do not need ongoing support or rehabilitation services** to find or keep a job.

A Job Services Australia provider may provide **limited short-term assistance** to help a job seeker retain a job once it has been secured.

Job seekers requiring:

- ongoing support to maintain their employment
- assistance to maintain learned tasks
- assistance to concentrate or remain on task
- assistance with personal care in the workplace

**would not be suited** to Job Services Australia but may be assessed as eligible to receive support from a Disability Employment Service provider.

## Disability Employment Service

The Disability Employment Service (DES) is a network of specialist employment services supporting people with a disability who require ongoing support to find and maintain employment or to become self-employed in the open labour market.

### What do Disability Employment Service Members do?

Disability Employment Service members provide a range of services including:

- Capacity building with jobseekers to enhance their employment prospects
- Individual vocational guidance, planning and support
- Individualised job search strategies - including one-to-one job negotiation with employers, job creation, résumé development, job application assistance and interview skills training
- A focus on connecting the jobseeker to the job that best matches their skills, interests and capacity in order to ensure strong job retention rates
- Work trials or work experience to test the reality of the person's preferred job
- Support in managing disability-related issues before and after starting work
- On-the-job support to assist in settling into a new job - including training, co-worker education and regular workplace visits
- Off-site support for those who do not require on-the-job support or for those who do not disclose their disability - for example workplace strategies for people with a psychiatric disability and regular off-site visits or contacts
- Job in jeopardy support for workers who are at risk of job loss as a result of their disability.

Disability Employment Service members also provide a range of services to employers including:

- Recruitment and selection assistance
- On-the-job training with new employees
- Technical assistance with workplace adjustments
- Job creation and design services assisting employers to think creatively about the ways jobs are structured
- Information about available government programs or funding including:

- ~ Disabled Australian Apprentice Wage Subsidy Scheme
- ~ Workplace Modifications
- ~ Wage Subsidies

~ Supported Wage System, that is productivity based wages

- Long term follow-up and back-up support
- Re-training of employees should they move from one duty to another or if a new skill is required
- Advice and training to co-workers about issues related to employing people with disabilities
- Job in jeopardy support for employers whose workers risk loss of a job as a result of their disability.

### **Who is eligible to access Disability Employment Services?**

Eligibility for Disability Employment Services is determined through a Job Capacity Assessment. As a general guide, a person is eligible for a Disability Employment Service if they:

- have a permanent, or likely to be permanent disability that is verified by medical evidence; **and**
- have a reduced capacity for communication, learning or mobility, **and**
- results in the person requiring ongoing support services.

The person must also:

- have a future capacity for work of 8 or more hours a week with the assistance of this program (note that clients with less than 8 hours future work capacity in an unsupported environment could still be eligible for this assistance if they could achieve work capacity of 8 hours or more per week with ongoing support);
- require specialist disability assistance to build capacity to ensure that they are able to work to their assessed future work capacity following assistance from the service; and/or
- require more than 6 months of assistance after placement in a job in order to keep that job

## How do I access the Disability Employment Service?

There are two main ways to access the Disability Employment Service:

- **By contacting a local Disability Employment Service directly**

If you decide to contact a Disability Employment Service member directly, they will refer you to a Job Capacity Assessor or to Centrelink to work out the right services for you. If the Disability Employment Service is not the best service for you, the Job Capacity Assessor will connect you with a more appropriate service.

OR

- **Through a referral from Centrelink**

If you are looking for work your first point of contact is usually Centrelink who will register you as "looking for work" if you haven't already been registered. Centrelink may arrange an assessment of your work capacity to work out what type of employment service will help you best and then connect you with that service. Contact Centrelink on 13 28 50 or visit your nearest Customer Service Centre to register.

### Additional Information

If you are not satisfied with the service you are receiving from a Disability Employment Service member, you should first raise this with your Disability Employment Service member—ask to speak to the manager or supervisor.

If you do not wish to raise a complaint directly with the Disability Employment Service member, you can call and lodge a complaint with the **Complaints Resolution and Referral Service (CRRS)**

CRRS is an independent body responsible for resolving complaints through investigation and/or conciliation. They will try to resolve

your concerns quickly, fairly and sensitively. An interpreter or TTY access can be arranged on request.

Free call: 1800 88 00 52

TTY: 1800 301 130

National Relay Service: 1800 555 677

Telephone Interpreter Service:

13 14 50, Fax: (02) 9318 1372

## Australian Disability Enterprises

Australian Disability Enterprises (previously known as Australian Disability Enterprises or sheltered workshops) are funded by the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA).

Australian Disability Enterprises provide a range of employment options to:

- people for whom competitive employment at an award wage in the open labour market is unlikely
- people who, because of their disability, need substantial ongoing support to obtain or retain paid employment.

Support is generally provided for more than 24 months and can be ongoing for as long as the job seeker remains employed by the service. Funding levels are determined by the individual support requirements of each worker. If a person is assessed as needing constant and ongoing support (i.e. they would be unable to work in open labour market unless one-to-one or very high levels of support and assistance is provided) then Australian Disability Enterprises may be an option.

### What type of work and training is available in Australian Disability Enterprises?

Australian Disability Enterprises have a dual focus - they provide employment for people with a disability and operate as a commercial business. There are a variety of Australian Disability Enterprises operating in the ACT, providing a variety of tasks and learning opportunities for their

employees in a wide range of commercial and industrial operations. These include:

- Cleaning services - domestic and commercial cleaning, car washing and detailing, litter pick-ups and property maintenance
- Packaging and Assembly - collating, packing, assembly and shrink wrapping of products
- Horticulture - plant nurseries, gardening and garden/ground maintenance, including the use of equipment such as mowers, brush cutters, chainsaws and vacuum/blowers as well as tasks such as weeding, raking, planting, irrigation work and landscaping
- Hospitality - preparation and presentation/serving of foods in conference centres, canteens, cafes and coffee shops
- Printing and Distribution Services - including photocopying, mail-outs, assisting with print runs, and screen printing
- Recycling and renewing.

### **Who is eligible to work in an Australian Disability Enterprise?**

If you have a Disability Support Pension and are able to work for at least 8 hours a week (with support), you are eligible to work in an Australian Disability Enterprise and can register directly with them. You do not need to complete a Job Capacity Assessment.

Other job seekers may be referred to a Australian Disability Enterprise after undertaking a Job Capacity Assessment, if it is considered the most suitable employment option.

Eligibility alone does not guarantee acceptance into a Australian Disability Enterprise as there are only a limited number of funded places.

When determining the suitability of this service for an individual, other factors that are taken into consideration may include the desire of the individual to be employed and the capacity of the Australian Disability Enterprise to

accommodate an individual employee's needs while meeting the Service's dual objective to run a commercially viable business.

## **Voluntary Work/Work Experience**

Voluntary work and work experience can be a good way to help you:

- find out what type of work or course suits you
- gain experience while you study, are seeking paid employment or exploring a career change
- gain experience working for causes that you are interested in, or
- assist in creating change in areas that are important to you.

Voluntary work can assist you to build new skills, meet new people and add variety to your work experience. Furthermore it provides you with an opportunity to understand what supports and accommodations may be required to support you in an employment setting.

## **Australian Apprenticeships**

Australian Apprenticeships combine practical work with quality structured training to give a nationally recognised qualification and on-the-job experience. Built on the model of apprenticeships and traineeships, Australian Apprenticeships are a great way to build your career. No matter what industry you are interested in, Australian Apprenticeships provide an attractive work/training option.

## **Group Training Organisations**

Group Training is an arrangement where Australian Apprentices are employed by a Group Training Organisation and hired out to other businesses, called host employers, while they are undertaking their training. The Group Training Organisation is responsible for the wages, conditions, training and employment of the apprentice.

## Workplace Modifications Scheme

People with disability may not need any workplace modifications or adjustments to be able to do their job. Some people with disability may only need minor adjustments to the workplace that can be easily made and at minimal or no cost. Others may need special equipment or modifications to the physical environment to assist them in their work.

The Scheme pays for the costs involved in modifying the workplace or purchasing special equipment for new employees with disability. It is also available to existing employees if they have a change in duties, career progression, change in disability or a new modification becomes available that would increase their productivity.

Contact JobAccess Advisers on **1800 464 800** to see if you are eligible for assistance under the Scheme.

## Web Resources

Whilst it may be difficult for some people to regularly access email and the internet, it is certainly worth the effort to link into this 'pool' of comprehensive information if you can. If you can't access computers at school or home, try your local library.

The following websites will prove useful in your search for employment:

- **Australian Job Search Site** - updated daily, useful information about resume preparation and more <http://jobsearch.gov.au/>
- **JobAccess Website** - one-stop shop for people with a disability, employers, co-workers and service providers to get advice and resources for employing people with a disability <http://www.jobaccess.gov.au>
- **Workplace.gov.au** - Disadvantaged Job Seekers page - links to a large range of programs to assist people with a disability

<http://www.workplace.gov.au/workplace/Individual/DisadvantagedJobseekers>

- **Job Services Australia** <http://www.jobnetwork.gov.au> and Finding a Job Services Australia provider <http://jobsearch.gov.au/Provider/ProviderSearch.aspx>
- **The Source** - a comprehensive youth website with links for jobseekers and much more <http://www.thesource.gov.au>
- **Job Outlook website** - find out about job prospects, earnings, other useful occupational information <http://jobsearch.gov.au/JobOutlook>
- **My Future - Australian Careers Information Service** <http://www.myfuture.edu.au>
- **HunterJobs** <http://www.hunterjobs.com.au>
- **Disability WORKS Australia** <http://www.dwa.org.au>
- **National Disability Co-ordination Officer Website** great resource <http://www.newcastle.edu.au/ndco>
- **Year 12 - What Next?** <http://www.year12whatnext.gov.au>
- **Job Guide** circulated yearly <http://www.jobguide.dest.gov.au>
- **My Career** <http://www.mycareer.com.au>
- **Seek** <http://seek.com.au>
- **CareerOne** <http://www.careerone.com.au>
- **Australia's Careers Online** <http://www.careersonline.com.au>
- **Australian Employers Network on Disability** takes a leadership role in advancing employment for people with disability <http://www.emad.asn.au>

- **The University of Newcastle Careers Services webpage** - provides links to other job search, company, and international sites <http://www.newcastle.edu.au/service/careers/links/index.html>
- **ACE National Network** - Providing employment information to people with a disability across Australia <http://www.acenational.org.au>
- **Education to Employment Package** - provides information for university and TAFE students with a disability who have finished their studies and who are looking for work, and for employers <http://www.uws.edu.au/rdlo/employment>
- **Making It Happen** - a resource for students with a disability considering post-school options [http://www.unisa.edu.au/regdisability/word/making\\_it\\_happen.doc](http://www.unisa.edu.au/regdisability/word/making_it_happen.doc) and other useful publications from the NDCO South Australia Website [http://www.unisa.edu.au/regdisability/RDLO\\_publication.htm](http://www.unisa.edu.au/regdisability/RDLO_publication.htm)
- **Government website to assist people find jobs in the NSW Public Sector** - applying for positions, adjustments, lists of employment agencies and more <http://www.eeo.nsw.gov.au/disability/disability.htm>
- **Group Training Australia** - <http://www.gtaltd.com.au>
- **Australian Apprenticeships Website** - <http://www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au> go to disability specific information at <https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/industryprograms>

## Related Websites:

- **Choosing Your Path: Disclosure It's a Personal Decision** - great website for people with a disability, employers and educators that explores when to disclose about your disability <http://www.uws.edu.au/rdlo/disclosure>



- **Disability Advocacy NSW (DA)** - (02) 4927 0111 <http://www.da.org.au>
- **EmployAble** - three publications for NSW Public Sector staff on employing job seekers with a disability <http://www.eeo.nsw.gov.au/disability>
- **Australian Disability Clearinghouse on Education and Training (ADCET)** <http://www.adcet.edu.au> - an excellent website