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|------------------------------|-------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Student Counsellor</b>    |             | <b>Western Australia</b> |
| ASCO Code: 2513-19           | June 2007   |                          |
| <b>Labour market rating:</b> | No Shortage |                          |
| <b>Comment</b>               |             |                          |

### **Occupational demand**

Western Australia's economy is forecast to experience continued low rates of unemployment and high participation rates, with anticipated economic growth of six per cent for the remainder of 2007. Since 2000-01, WA has experienced a 39 per cent increase in real economic terms. This economic growth has been accompanied by significant population growth and increased numbers of students in WA's primary and secondary schools and TAFE colleges. Demand for student counsellors has increased commensurately and also in conjunction with programmes designed to encourage school students to complete their secondary education and training.

Student counsellors include: guidance officers who assist students to develop their personal, social, educational and career planning skills; career advisers who help students make career planning decisions; and school psychologists who develop psychological techniques to foster development and skills of individuals and groups in educational settings. School psychologists may also make educational and psychological assessments of students.

### **Occupational supply**

Guidance officers complete an undergraduate degree or postgraduate diploma in psychology or educational counselling. Student counsellors need not be qualified teachers, although many are. Psychology and social welfare graduates, as well as other people with suitable welfare and social services experience and who communicate effectively with students can be recruited as student counsellors or school chaplains. All of the five universities in WA offer relevant courses that attract adequate student enrolments.

### **Employer and industry comments/current labour market**

A small sample of non-government schools surveyed in 2007 indicated they have no difficulty filling vacancies for student counsellors with trained psychologists and that they also tend to retain their student counsellors. Alternatively, some schools refer mental health and personal issues concerning students to school chaplains or outsource them to schools counselling services. Their teachers provide career information and planning counselling to students.

### **Labour market outlook**

There is growing demand for student counsellors in response to population growth, educational and social issues, and encouragement for school students to complete their education and training. Schools currently experience little difficulty finding and retaining their student counsellors or referring to outsourced schools counselling services. There is unlikely to be any change over the next six to twelve months and the labour market for student counsellor is assessed as no shortage.