

Position Description

Title	Intake and Assessment Practitioner – Navigator Program
Business unit	Children, Youth and Families
Location	160 Whitehorse Road, Blackburn, VIC 3130 and other locations as required
Employment type	Part time Ongoing
Reports to	Team Leader – Navigator Program

About Uniting

Uniting Vic.Tas is the community services organisation of the Uniting Church. We’ve been supporting people and families for over 100 years. We work alongside people of all ages in local communities in Victoria and Tasmania. Our services reach to Albury-Wodonga in the north, Mallacoota in East Gippsland, the Wimmera region in the west, and across Tasmania.

We empower children, young people and families to learn and thrive. We’re there for people experiencing homelessness, drug and alcohol addiction or mental illness. We support people with disability to live the life they choose. We assist older people to maintain their independence and enjoy life. We provide opportunities to access training and meaningful employment. We’re proud to welcome and support asylum seekers to our community. We work to empower people with the information, skills and tools they need to live a healthy, happy life.

As an organisation, we work in solidarity with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as Australia’s First Peoples and as the traditional owners and custodians of this land.

We celebrate diversity and value the lived experience of people of every ethnicity, faith, age, disability, culture, language, gender identity, sex and sexual orientation. We welcome lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, gender diverse and non-binary, intersex, and queer (LGBTIQ+) people at our services. We pledge to provide inclusive and non-discriminatory services.

Our purpose: To inspire people, enliven communities and confront injustice

Our values: We are imaginative, respectful, compassionate and bold

1. Position purpose

The Navigator Program is a school re-engagement service for young people aged 12-17 years who are experiencing chronic and significant school disengagement. Young people referred to the program present with complex barriers to educational engagement and have not responded to school-based interventions.

Drawing on the breadth of Uniting Vic.Tas’ resources, together with our partners: Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency (VACCA) our program utilises a trauma informed, culturally safe, assertive case management model to respond to challenges experienced by young people aged 12 – 17 years with the goal of re-engaging disengaged learners in education.

The Intake and Assessment Practitioner supports the initial intake phase of the program and is responsible for triaging referrals as they are received from the Department of Education (DE). The Intake and Assessment Practitioner will initiate contact with the young person and/or their family/caregivers/care team, discuss the young person’s circumstances, and confirm their eligibility for the service. The Intake and Assessment Practitioner will also engage with the young person to

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complete a comprehensive intake assessment that identifies the young person's needs and supports to better understand any barriers that need to be addressed.

Once the intake assessment has been completed, the Intake and Assessment Practitioner will collaborate with the Uniting Navigator Team Leader, other relevant staff, and DE to determine appropriate service planning for the young person and complete referrals and/or transfers to other program areas as required.

2. Scope

Budget: nil

People: nil

3. Relationships

Internal

- Navigator Team Leader
- Navigator Case Managers
- Senior Manager – Children, Youth & Families
- Other Uniting Staff Members

External

- VACCA
- Department of Education, Navigator Coordinator and other staff members.
- Primary & Secondary Schools and other Education Organisations
- Local Community Services Organisations

4. Key responsibility areas

Service delivery

- Accepting, triaging, and processing up to 35 referrals at a time.
- Create a safe and welcoming presence and be able utilise several creative engagement strategies with students who have high needs and challenging behaviours (12 – 17 years)
- Initiating contact with the young person and/or their family, as well as the referrer, school, or other stakeholders.
- Undertaking an initial outreach visit to the young person and their family.
- Undertake ongoing risk and needs based assessments utilising the Best Interest Case Practice model and other relevant intervention and assessment models and tools.
- Explain the purpose of the Navigator program and work with the young person and their family to gain informed consent to participate in the program.
- Maintaining fortnightly phone/SMS/email contact with the young person and/or their family while completing the intake phase.
- Establish and/or support a multidisciplinary care team to meet the needs of the young person and to ensure that they have access to adequate supports to address any identified barriers.
- Develop and maintain relationships with Schools, education providers and other key stakeholders.
- Advocating for the rights of the young person, and their family, to ensure fair and equal access to inclusive education.
- Collaborating with other Uniting Navigator staff, Uniting Management, and Principal Practitioners to address any identified barriers and to support Trauma Informed Practice.
- Ensuring adherence to the Navigator Program Guidelines

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- Ensuring accurate and timely completion of case notes, file & communication documentation and DE Navigator Data Management System data entry
- Support the young person and their family to identify barriers to education.
- Undertake comprehensive assessments and analysis of the students psycho-social situation and barriers to educational re-engagement.
- Work respectfully with young people and their families with reference to social, political, familial and cultural restraints that impact their daily lives.
- Work flexibly and collaboratively with The Department of Education, Schools, VACCA and other agencies while reviewing needs and risks, developing and implementing an integrated service response.
- Participation in relevant meetings such as Care Team and Student Support Group meetings.
- Liaise with the broader community to facilitate linkage and ongoing supports to young people to maximise their life opportunities and develop further opportunities to build connections and program options.
- Provide support for disadvantaged young people to develop work readiness and to access education, training and employment by assisting young people's knowledge of and access to a range of support options, including housing, drug and alcohol and mental health services, and other community supports
- Use strategies to engage and support students who have not responded to traditional interventions.
- Other projects and duties, as required.
- Work flexible hours

Administration

- Ensure that all relevant administrative procedures are followed
- Maintain adequate case records both on Uniting and DE systems, prepare progress reports, reports for case planning and case conference meetings as required and on identified templates from DE and Uniting
- Report on student progress as necessary
- Ensure that statistical data is collected and recorded.

Program development

- Positively promote the program, and other programs within Inner Eastern Melbourne to young people, the community, schools, training organisations, and employers
- Liaise and maintain respectful and productive relationships with other stakeholders including DE, schools and other agencies including case managers, care providers, teachers and other professionals involved with students regarding Individual Education Plans, attendance, behavioural issues and student wellbeing
- Work collaboratively with all service providers involved with each young person within the program
- Develop working relationships and maintain links with other Uniting program areas
- Participate and contribute to team meetings, and organisational meetings as required.

Organisational responsibilities

- Ensure familiarity and compliance with all governance, policies and procedures.
- Adhere to all legislation, program requirements and relevant procedures relating to service provision
- Undertake mandatory training within the required timelines. Participate in other training and development opportunities to ensure all necessary qualifications, skills, certificates and clearances are obtained to meet the position requirements.
- Contribute as an effective team member to enable identified projects, objectives and work outcomes to be achieved
- Provide quality customer service and assistance at a high professional standard to a range of stakeholders including, but not limited to, the community and Uniting staff

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- Build and maintain positive working relationships within Uniting and with stakeholders, demonstrating commitment to diversity and a positive work culture
- Use Uniting's administrative and computer systems in line with policies, procedures and divisional work practices
- Work productively with information while observing the principles of confidentiality and professional practice as outlined in the Code of Conduct
- Exercise good judgement, discretion and problem solving skills
- Achieve objectives and work outcomes within established timelines by setting priorities, planning, organising and communicating workloads effectively

Personal accountability

- Compliance with Uniting's values, code of conduct, policies and procedures and relevant government legislation and standards where relevant
- Cooperate with strategies to actively ensure the safety, protection and well-being of children who come into association with us
- Ensure appropriate use of resources
- Work collaboratively with Uniting (Victoria Tasmania) employees and external stakeholders in accordance with Uniting's values and professional standards of behaviour
- Actively participate in initiatives to maintain, build upon and promote a positive and collaborative workplace
- Identify opportunities to integrate and work collaboratively across teams
- Take reasonable care for your own health and safety, and health and safety of others (to the extent required)
- Promote a positive safety culture by contributing to health and safety consultation and communication
- Promptly respond to and report health and safety hazards, incidents and near misses to line management
- Attend mandatory training sessions (i.e. equal employment opportunity, health, and safety) and mandatory training specific to position
- Declare anything that you become aware of through the course of your engagement which may impede your suitability to work with children and/or young people
- Declare any potential or actual conflict of interest that you become aware of through the course of your engagement:
 - Based on a relationship with a current member of Uniting's workforce
 - Based on my ongoing work with another organisation

5. Performance indicators

- Quality and performance of programs and services
- Workforce performance and development
- Stakeholder engagement
- Risk management

6. Person specification

Qualifications

- Relevant tertiary qualification in Social Work, Psychology, Child Development/Community Welfare, or other equivalent.
- Current Victoria Driver's license required.

Experience

Essential:

- Demonstrated experience working with young people and their families who are impacted by poor mental health, drug and alcohol misuse and family violence.
- An understanding of the Child Protection and Out of Home Care systems.

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- Demonstrated experience in risk assessment of families and adolescents.
- Demonstrated experience in working with schools and vocational training providers
- Demonstrated understanding of child and adolescent developmental needs
- Capacity and experience in planning and implementing appropriate interventions
- Demonstrated knowledge of practices to engage and assure the cultural safety of clients from a diverse range of backgrounds, including those from an Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander, CALD background, or the LGBTIQ+ community.
- Proven capacity to liaise appropriately with consultants and other professionals

Desirable:

- Experience in building networking opportunities and representing organisational values in the community and professional settings
- High level ability to actively engage with disengaged learners and families through the process of assessment and short term intervention.

Core selection criteria

- **Values alignment:** ability to demonstrate and authentically promote Uniting's values.
- Demonstrated ability to provide safe environments for children and young people and protect them from abuse and neglect.
- **Communication:** open, honest, articulate and flexible approach to communication with the ability to actively listen; and highly developed written communication skills with a demonstrated ability to complete case notes and reports in a professional and timely manner
- **Interpersonal focus:** strong interest in people, respect for others, and ability to suspend judgement
- **Cooperative:** demonstrates team behaviours striving for co-operative and professional relationships
- **Conscientious:** responsible, dependable, organised and persistent
- **Open to experience:** high level of self-awareness, with the ability to admit mistakes as an opportunity for reflection, learning and development
- **Professionalism:** professional, confident, focused, clear about purpose and able to set appropriate personal boundaries
- **Analytical skills:** demonstrated analytical skills with the ability to make assessments and recommendations objectively and accurately using a strength based approach
- **Problem solving:** proven creative and innovative approach to problem solving
- **Negotiation skills:** highly developed negotiation skills and ability to liaise with education providers and other services
- **Computer skills:** proficient with computer applications, typing and databases

7. We are a child safe organisation

Uniting is a child safe organisation and is committed in everyday practice to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all children, at all times. As a child safe organisation, employment with Uniting is subject to a satisfactory national international where relevant) police check and relevant Working With Children Check (and NDIS Worker Screening Check where relevant) to your State prior to commencement of any paid or unpaid work and/or participation in any service or undertaking. (and

This position description is subject to review and may change in accordance with Uniting's operational, service and consumer requirements.
