

OCCUPATIONAL QUALIFICATION STANDARD

Career Specialist, EstQF Level 7

An occupational qualification standard is a document describing the relevant occupational activity and competence necessary for practising a specific occupation, i.e. skills, knowledge and attitudes necessary to work successfully. Occupational qualification standards are used to design curricula and award accreditations.

Occupational title	Level of Estonian Qualifications Framework (EstQF)
Career Specialist, EstQF Level 7	7

Part A DESCRIPTION OF WORK

A.1 Description of work
<p>Career Specialist, Level 7, helps people in setting career-related goals, developing skills, and making decisions. As a specialist in the field of career services, they support people in selecting and implementing qualification, work-related roles, and learning opportunities. Career Specialists work in (career) counselling centres, educational institutions, and other organizations in the public, private, and third sectors. Their clients can be any age and at any stage in their lives, for example, they can be school pupils, third level students, working adults, unemployed. They also deal with parents, educators, employers etc.</p> <p>In addition to client work, a Level 7 Career Specialist designs, analyses, and develops field-specific services. The cooperates both at national and international level, develop curricula, support and train other career specialists and career guidance providers. The Level 7 career specialist creates and updates the information and resources needed for the role.</p> <p>Level 7 Career Specialist evaluates the quality of services and develops the field of career services. They inform the public about career development trends, impact as well as available career services.</p> <p>The work of a career specialist can be intense and mentally demanding. It requires understanding as well as the ability to deal appropriately with a range of potentially complex needs and issues which a client may present with. Following ethical principles and confidentiality requirements play an essential role.</p> <p>Career Specialist may work in the areas of career counselling, career information provision, career education, and career management in organisations. There is also a Level 6 career specialist.</p>
A.2 Tasks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A.2.1 Promoting Services A.2.2 Networking for Service Provision A.2.3 Service Development A.2.4 Guidance A.2.5 Training
Elective areas of work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A.2.6 Career Counselling A.2.7 Career Information Provision A.2.8 Implementation of Career Education A.2.9 Career Management in an Organization
A.3 Professional preparation
<p>The Level 7 career specialist has a higher education degree (preferably at the master's level), has undergone continuous professional development related to the competences of a career specialist and has relevant work experience.</p>

A.4 Most common occupational titles

Career Specialist, Lead Career Specialist, Career Information Specialist, Career Counsellor, Career Consultant, Career Coordinator, Career Education Teacher, Talent Manager, Career Coach.

Part B COMPETENCY REQUIREMENTS

B.1 Structure of occupation

The qualification consists of general skills, mandatory competencies, and elective competencies. When applying for the profession, individuals must demonstrate general skills, all mandatory competencies B.3.1-B.3.5, and at least one elective competency from B.3.6-B.3.9.

B.2 General skills of Career Specialist, EstQF Level 7

Performance Indicators:

1. Analyses oneself and one's work, using feedback and plans professional development; develops necessary job skills by continually updating knowledge, staying informed about recent trends in lifelong learning, labour market, and career services domains.
2. Sets clear work objectives, plans activities to achieve them, responds flexibly to possible changes; uses time effectively, plans and organizes resources for task completion, adheres to deadlines; works systematically and methodically; follows work-related regulations, data protection and confidentiality requirements.
3. Monitors, evaluates, and values physical, mental, and emotional health, takes actions to maintain balance, optimizes personal time and energy expenditure; seeks professional assistance if necessary when problems arise, participates in coaching and/or supervision; acknowledges colleagues' progress and recognizes them.
4. Relies on relevant information sources and evidence-based information; communicates information in a structured and logical manner according to the client's understanding; analyses and interprets qualitative and quantitative data using appropriate methods.
5. Relies on labour market and education information, and their connections, local and national services, basics of economics, and laws regulating education and employment relationships.
6. Understands the principles and practices of career management in organizations and various fields, applying them in client work.
7. Applies counselling psychology principles in professional activities, using appropriate counselling theories and methods; uses evidence-based career theories (including career counselling and information dissemination theories) and methods.
8. Considers client specifics in their work, based on developmental and personality psychology and the psychology of individual differences; identifies psychological traits causing client maladjustment; critically assesses competence to work with clients with special needs.
9. Demonstrates interest and understanding of others, uses various communication techniques based on communication psychology principles; expresses oneself clearly and comprehensibly; follows principles of equal treatment, considering (socio)cultural differences; handles conflicts and maintains self-control in challenging situations.
10. Adapts to the team, perceives and fulfils their role in the team, follows common agreements.
11. Follows professional code of ethics (Appendix 1).
12. Uses the Estonian language with proficiency level C1 in communication and understanding skills and level B2 in writing skills (Appendix 2 - Language Proficiency Assessment Scale); uses at least one foreign language at level B2, supporting the professional development of a career specialist.
13. Utilizes e-guidance methodologies, techniques, and tools both individually and in groups.
14. Uses a computer according to the DigComp Self-Assessment Scale at the level of an independent user, including content creation skills at the basic user level (Appendix 3).

B.3 Competences

MANDATORY COMPETENCES

B.3.1 Promotion of Services	EstQF Level 6
<p>Performance Indicators:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Plans public awareness activities within the scope of responsibilities; explains the nature and necessity of career development to the public, using appropriate channels and forms for target groups and interest groups, including presenting career services at events related to the field (e.g., fairs, information days). 2. Develops and compiles informational materials, considering communication principles; references sources correctly and observes copyright. 	
B.3.2 Networking for Service	EstQF Level 7
<p>Performance Indicators:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Defines the necessary collaboration network; engages with diverse stakeholders in the field; collects and analyses feedback from the network to enhance professional activities. 2. Leads networks and workgroups at the regional level; participates in activities at regional, national, and international level, expressing opinions and making proposals in career services. 	
B.3.3 Service development	EstQF Level 7
<p>Performance Indicators:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Keeps systematic records of provided services; collects and analyses feedback on services from clients, partners, and interest groups, using various methods; adjusts activities based on received feedback. 2. Evaluates the quality and effectiveness of services at the group, unit, or organizational level; identifies areas for improvement, initiates development activities. 3. Designs the customer journey, develops new and enhances existing services and solutions based on service design principles, the needs of the target audience, and the results of research-based studies. 4. Manages projects and workgroups, expert groups, and/or commissions related to service development, analysing opportunities and needs. 5. Creates and develops informational and methodological materials, including those intended for the use of other career specialists, based on the specifics and needs of the target audience. 6. Manages working groups for creating information and methodological materials. 7. Advances career guidance by contributing to projects, working groups, expert panels, and/or commissions; makes proposals for enhancements and/or changes to framework documents supporting the development of the field. 	
B.3.4 Guidance	EstQF Level 7
<p>Performance Indicators:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Organizes guidance, including creating an action plan based on work objectives, the abilities of the person being guided, and existing skills. 2. Guides and advises colleagues, offering support in resolving arising problems and questions; helps them in analysing their actions, guiding them to explore various solutions; helps improve the quality of their work by teaching necessary and useful techniques, providing advice for better coping with tasks. 3. Monitors the progress, quality of work, and adherence to established requirements; analyses and assesses, together with the person being guided, their coping with work tasks and attitude toward work. 4. Provides clear and timely feedback to the person being guided on their activities, notices progress, and acknowledges it. 5. Creates guidance materials. 	
B.3.5 Training	EstQF Level 7
<p>Performance Indicators:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identifies the training needs of participants, considering the individual characteristics of learners/groups, taking into account prior learning and work experience, involving learners; analyses training needs for the planning of the training programme. 2. Formulates the objectives and learning outcomes of the training, develops the training plan, considering the individual characteristics of learners; designs training based on the training plan and the individual characteristics of learners, selecting appropriate educational materials for the implementation of the training, and ensuring their timely availability, planning the learning environment and teaching and assessment methods based on the training plan; analyses, adapts, and improves the training plan, considering the needs of the target audience. 	

3. Conducts training based on the planned objectives and the learning or work environment, safety requirements, and the individual characteristics of learners; uses appropriate teaching and assessment methods; guides the learning process, making necessary adjustments to it based on learners' progress.
4. Monitors the development of group processes and applies various techniques to create a cooperative learning environment, including conflict prevention and constructive conflict resolution methods; provides support to learners in acquiring learning skills, guiding independent learning; analyses the training process and, accordingly, makes proposals for improving training.
5. Gathers feedback from learners, co-trainers, and other stakeholders, choosing the most suitable methods for this purpose; based on feedback, makes changes to their training process; analyses training activities and effectiveness for their professional development, planning for future activities, and developing training activities.

OPTIONAL COMPETENCES

When applying for the qualification, at least one of the elective competencies from B.3.6 to B.3.9 must be demonstrated.

B.3.6 Career counselling	EstQF Level 6
<p>Performance Indicators:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establishes contact with the client, familiarizes themselves with the client's needs and current situation; agrees with the client on a time-bound, measurable, and achievable counselling goal; develops a counselling plan and discusses with the client an action plan for achieving the agreed counselling goal, based on the client's needs. 2. Guides the client's further actions based on the agreed action plan, relying on the principles of career development and counselling processes. 3. Uses evidence-based assessment tools in evaluating the client, relying on basic knowledge of psychometrics. 4. Depending on the goal, collaborates with the client to map their situation and activity options, considering supportive or inhibiting factors. 5. Informs the client about key career information sources, including international ones, or performs information search together with the client based on their needs. 6. Collaborates with the client in creating their career plan, relying on education and labour market information, their interconnections, and the principles of lifelong learning. 7. Identifies the needs of the target group/counselling group members, considering their career management skills; guides group members to formulate a common and, if necessary, individual goal; depending on the goal of session and the needs of the group, defines the topics to be covered, plans necessary activities, selects appropriate tools and materials. 8. Creates a motivating counselling environment; facilitates group work and guides group processes, considering the principles of teamwork and individual needs of group members; provides feedback to group members during the session. 9. Based on the counselling objectives, evaluates outcomes together with the client/group and plans further actions. 10. Analyses the counselling process and feedback from the participants, reflects on their work, using the results for planning self-development and improving services. 	
B.3.7 Career Information Provision	EstQF Level 6
<p>Performance Indicators:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establishes contact with the client, familiarizes themselves with the client's situation and identifies information needs, information search skills, and readiness for independent information search; agrees with the client on a time-bound, measurable, and achievable counselling/guidance goal; defines suitable information sources, uses information search strategies; assesses the relevance of information sources. 2. Informs the client about labour market and education information resources, including international mobility opportunities, based on the client's needs; guides the client in career information search, use of information sources, creating connections between information found from different sources, and developing information search skills; guides the client in participating in the application process. 3. Identifies the information needs of the group, taking into account the career management skills of the members; depending on the goal of group activities and the needs of the group, defines the topics to be covered, plans necessary activities, selects appropriate form and methods, and prepares materials. 	

<p>4. Specifies the goal at the group meeting; creates an environment supportive of the development of career-related decision-making skills, digital and information literacy; facilitates group work, adjusting methods as needed; considers the principles of teamwork and individual needs of participants.</p> <p>5. Gathers and systematizes information about education and labour market, mediates relevant information to target groups for the provision of career services and career development.</p>	
B.3.8 Implementation of Career Education	EstQF Level 6
<p>Performance Indicators:</p> <p>1. Coordinates and develops the provision of career services in an educational institution, based on the needs of students, the national and school curricula; leads working groups and develops cooperation with both internal and external stakeholders.</p> <p>2. Involves teachers and other school staff in planning and implementation of career education; supports colleagues in the implementation of career education, addressing career development topics in various subjects and activities, and in preparing work plans.</p> <p>3. Disseminates career information and guides learners in acquiring career management skills, involving parents as needed and based on the forms of career education and the curriculum; refers the student and/or parent to the relevant specialist when necessary.</p> <p>4. Gathers and analyses feedback from internal and external stakeholders regarding the quality of career education; analyses the overall situation of career education at the school and reflects on their work, using results for improving career education within school and planning self-development.</p>	
B.3.9 Career Management in an Organization	EstQF Level 7
<p>Performance Indicators:</p> <p>1. Develops the organization's career management strategy, considering other organizational strategies; manages the implementation of talent management strategy, considering business needs and organizational goals.</p> <p>2. Develops and enhances the career management system and process, including the development of various solutions (e.g., web-based and self-study) for offering career services, including counselling, within the organization; organizes the dissemination of relevant information to all leaders and employees.</p> <p>3. Establishes, manages, and develops a network of counsellors both within and outside the organization.</p> <p>4. Guides and develops counsellors; ensures that counsellors are aware of personnel processes related to career management and the counsellor's role.</p> <p>5. Advises leaders, creates solutions, and supports the systematic development of leaders on talent and career management topics.</p>	

Part C GENERAL INFORMATION AND ANNEXES

C.1 Information concerning compilation and certification of occupational qualification standard and reference to classification of occupations	
1. ID of occupational qualification standard in register of occupational qualifications	21-06042023-3.2/6k
2. Occupational qualification standard compiled by:	Piret Jamnes, Fontes Karin Kuimet, PARE Aira Lepik, Tallinna Ülikool / Tallinn University Merit Luik, Karjäärinõustajate Ühing / Association of Estonian Career Counsellors Kristina Orion, Töötukassa / Unemployment Insurance Fund Margit Rammo, HARNO / Education and Youth Board Lana Randaru, Töötukassa / Unemployment Insurance Fund Signe Reppo, Tartu Ülikool / University of Tartu
3. Occupational qualification standard approved by:	Education
4. No. of decision of Sectoral Council	33

5. Date of decision of Sectoral Council	06.04.2023
6. Occupational qualification standard valid until	05.04.2028
7. Occupational qualification standard version no.	6
8. Reference to International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO 08)	2423 Personnel and Careers Professionals
9. Reference to European Qualifications Framework (EQF)	7
C.2 Occupational title in foreign language	
English:	Career Specialist, EstQF Level 7
C.3 Annexes	
Lisa 1 Career Counselling Code of Ethics	
Lisa 2 Language skills level descriptions	
Lisa 3 Scale of self-assessment in digital competence	