

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

A career specialist, Level 7, helps people with their career development and career decision making. A career specialist supports people in making choices about their career, work, training and education throughout their lives. Career specialists work in counselling centres, educational institutions and other organizations in public, private and other 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.

In addition to working with clients, the Level 7 career specialist analyses and develops field-specific services and develops standards that enable them to monitor the quality of the service provided. He /she cooperates both at national and international level, develops curricula, supports and trains other career specialists and career services providers. The Level 7 career specialist creates and updates the information and resources needed for the role He/she conducts field-specific research including collecting and analysing feedback from service users and relevant stakeholders in order to develop and improve service provision.

The career specialist informs the public about career development trends, impact as well as available career services.

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.

A career specialist, Level 7, can work in the field of career counselling and/or career information provision. The career information specialist supports clients to:

- Identify and explore information relevant to their needs
- Develop information research skills
- Utilise relevant information pertaining to education, the labour market or occupations to develop a personalised career plan.

The career counsellor supports their clients in developing career management skills by helping them to:

- increase their self-awareness
- increase their knowledge about educational and labour market opportunities
- set goals
- devise a plan to achieve them.

There is also a Level 6 career specialist. Their main tasks include the provision of career information and/or career counselling; Level 6 career specialists also prepare information and resources, collect and analyse feedback from service users and stakeholders and inform the public about career services.

A.2 Tasks

A.2.1 Promoting services

1. Raising awareness of career planning and informing the public about available services.
2. Preparing and distributing information material.

A.2.2 Networking to provide services

1. Developing a cooperation network.
2. Participating in a cooperation network.

A.2.3 Service development

1. Developing the field of career services.
2. Developing career services.
3. Preparing/ developing resources.
4. Providing an overview of the service, as well as providing feedback.
5. Evaluating the quality of service provided and developing the service, in response.

A.2.4 Instruction and training

1. Providing instruction.
2. Delivering training.

Elective areas of work

A.2.5 Career counselling

1. Establishing contact, defining the issue, and developing an action plan for individual client counselling.
2. Finding solutions to the client's issues, evaluating, and developing a career plan.
3. Planning activities for group counselling.
4. Facilitating group counselling.
5. Evaluating counselling outcomes, giving mutual feedback, preparing summar(y)ies and conducting case analysis.

A.2.6 Career information provision

1. Establishing contact and defining client's needs.
2. Advising and supporting the client in developing the necessary skills to search for jobs, make educational choices and locate, evaluate, and use information effectively.
3. Developing a plan for group activities.
4. Conducting group activities that facilitate the development of the necessary skills to search for jobs, make educational choices and locate, evaluate, and use information effectively.
5. Managing and delivering career information.

A.3 Work environment and specific nature of work

Career specialists work in premises suitable for working with clients. The work may include providing services to clients on-site, attending fairs, visiting employers and other partners. The work is mentally demanding.

A.4 Tools

The main tools used by career specialists are information and communication technology (ICT) tools, office supplies and equipment, information, resources/materials.

A.5 Personal qualities required for work: abilities and characteristics

In the work of a career specialist, the following characteristics are important: openness, positive attitude, empathy, communication skills, creativity, analytical skills, critical and conceptual thinking, the ability to be systematic and precise, resilience.

A.6 Professional preparation

The Level 7 career specialist has a higher education degree, has undergone continuous professional development related to the competences of a career specialist and has work experience in the field of career counselling or career information provision.

A.7 Most common occupational titles

Career specialist, career information specialist, information specialist, career counsellor, career consultant, career coordinator.

Part B **COMPETENCY REQUIREMENTS**

B.1 Structure of occupation

When applying for this profession, competencies of B.2.1 - B.2.4, B.2.7 (transversal competences) and at least one of the elective competencies of B.2.5 and B.2.6. must be proven.

B.2 Competences

MANDATORY COMPETENCES

B.2.1 The promotion of services	EstQF Level 6
Performance indicators: 1. plans activities to inform the public about the available services; Explains to the public the nature and necessity of career development using appropriate channels and means of communication for different target groups and stakeholders. This includes introducing career services at field-related events such as fairs, info days, etc.; communicating with the media (where appropriate); 2. develops and prepares information material, considering the principles of communication and based on evidence-based approaches; refers to sources appropriately and respects copyright; distributes information materials using appropriate channels and forms of communication for the target group.	
B.2.2 Networking to provide services	EstQF Level 7
Performance indicators: 1. develops a network for cooperation necessary for the work; cooperates with different stakeholders in the field; creates new forms of cooperation; develops cooperation networks to support service provision by taking into account the specific features and needs of the target group; collects and analyses the network's feedback to better organize/ further develop its work; 2. participates in the activities of networks and working groups at national or international level by expressing opinions and making suggestions in the field of career services.	
B.2.3 Service development	EstQF Level 7
Performance indicators: 1. develops the field of career services by contributing to projects, working groups, expert groups and/or committees; makes suggestions for improvements and/or amendments in the relevant legislation or other framework documents; 2. develops new and improves existing services by considering the needs of the target group; leads projects and working groups, expert groups and/or committees regarding service development; conducts research/surveys and analyses the results based on science-based methodologies; 3. prepares and updates information and resources/materials by taking into account the specific needs of the target group, the feedback received from clients and the setting for the service provision; leads task groups that prepare information and resources; 4. maintains regular and accurate records of services; analyses and evaluates the data describing service provision and the feedback received from clients / cooperation partners / stakeholders; identifies areas that need to be improved, initiates activities to develop services. 5. evaluates and analyses the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of the service, based on feedback from clients and other relevant stakeholders; prepares suggestions for improving the quality of service and for amending legislation governing the service provision, or other framework documents.	
B.2.4 The provision of instruction and training	EstQF Level 7
Performance indicators: 1. advises other career specialists and interns and/or supervises career-related theses and reviews them; mentors colleagues (from the same or another organization); leads the peer group consultation based on the needs of the peer group; 2. participates in the development of training plans and/or curricula in the field of career services; trains career specialists and other professionals in the field of career services by taking into account the principles of adult education and guidance.	

OPTIONAL COMPETENCES

At least one of the elective competencies of B.2.5 and B.2.6 must be demonstrated when applying for the profession.

B.2.5 Career counselling	EstQF Level 6
Performance indicators:	

1. establishes contact with the client, gets acquainted with the client's needs and current situation; establishes measurable, achievable and time-bound goals, in consultation with the client; prepares a plan for the counselling process based on the client's needs and coordinates an action plan with the client to achieve the agreed goals; supports the client's next steps according to the client's needs and as agreed in the action plan, based on the principles of career planning and counselling process planning; uses evidence-based psychodiagnostic assessments based on the fundamentals of psychodiagnostic knowledge;
2. advises the client of the main sources of career information or researches options together with the client according to the client's needs; depending on the goal of counselling, in cooperation with the client, maps possible solutions and options for ways forward based on the information of the client's current situation; taking into account factors that support, limit or hinder achieving the goals; in cooperation with the client, draws up a career plan based on the labour market information and how it is related to education / lifelong learning;
3. identifies the needs of the participants of the target group / counselling group, this includes analysing the career development skills of the clients; defining the topics to be addressed, planning the necessary activities and preparing materials, depending on the aim of the group counselling and the needs of the group;
4. defines together with the group the aim of group counselling; creates a motivating counselling environment; guides the group activities and manages the group processes by taking into account the principles of group work and the individual needs of the members of the group;
5. evaluates together with the client/group the counselling outcomes by analysing feedback based on the aims of counselling and, if necessary, establishes with the client/group a further action plan; summarizes the case and evaluates counselling process with critical self-reflection, using the input for planning professional development and to improve the counselling practice.

B.2.6 Career information provision

EstQF Level 6

Performance indicators:

1. establishes contact with the client by using appropriate communication techniques and channels; gets acquainted with the client's situation and defines client's (information) needs; establishes measurable, achievable and time-bound goals, in consultation with the client; assesses the client's information research skills and readiness to conduct career information research independently; identifies appropriate sources of information, uses information search strategies; evaluates the relevance of information sources, organizes the information sources;
2. informs the client about labour market and educational information resources based on the client's needs; supports the client in seeking career information and in preparing the application documents and getting ready for the application process; supports the client in locating and utilising relevant information sources and supports the development of the necessary skills to conduct independent career information research;
3. identifies the information needs of the target group, including, if possible, by analysing the career development skills of the group members; depending on the purpose of the group activity and the needs of the group, defines the topics to be addressed, plans the necessary activities, selects the appropriate form and methods and prepares the materials;
4. defines the aim of the activity upon meeting with the group; creates a learning environment that supports the development of skills needed to search for jobs, enables the client to make informed educational choices and helps the client to locate, evaluate, and use information effectively; guides the group work and adjusts the group activities / methods in the process as needed; considers the principles of group work and the individual needs of the members of the group;
5. gathers and organizes the information regarding professions, education and different fields by making it available to the target group; provides relevant information for career services and for career planning to stakeholders within and outside their organization.

RECURRING COMPETENCES

B.2.7 Recurring competences of Career Specialist, EstQF Level 7

EstQF Level 7

Performance indicators:

1. engages in self-reflection and analyses their work based on feedback, plans his/her professional development; develops the skills and knowledge needed for the job, including keeping up-to-date with the newest trends on lifelong learning and career services and changes in the field; participates in peer group consultation and/or supervision;
2. sets clear goals for work and plans activities to achieve them, responds flexibly to potential changes; manages time efficiently, plans and organizes resources when performing tasks, meets deadlines; works systematically and methodically; complies with work-related regulations (legislation, occupational safety, etc.);

3. monitors, assesses and values own physical, mental and emotional health, works toward maintaining balance by optimizing the use of time and energy; in case of problems, seeks help from colleagues, mentors, employer, specialists, etc., acknowledges the progress made by colleagues and recognizes their achievements;

4. relies on relevant information sources in its work; analyses and interprets qualitative and quantitative data by using appropriate methods; presents the information to the client in a structured and logical manner taking into account the appropriate level and style of communication;

5. in his/her work, relies on labour market information and how it relates to education and training opportunities, is aware of local and national services, the principles of the economy and the legislation governing education and employment relationships; takes into account the principles and practices of career management in the organization;

6. takes into account the principles of counselling psychology in his/her work and applies appropriate counselling theories and methods; uses evidence-based career counselling and career guidance theories and methods in the counselling process.

7. takes into account the characteristics of the client(s) in his/her work based on the principles of developmental psychology and personality psychology and the psychology of individual differences; recognizes the psychological properties that lead to client's maladaptive behaviours; critically assesses his/her role and competences to work with clients with special needs;

8. expresses interest and understanding in others, appropriately uses different communication techniques based on the principles of communication psychology; expresses him/herself clearly and understandably; is guided by the principles of equal treatment; manages conflicts and maintains self- control even in difficult situations;

9. adapts to the team, is aware of his/her role in the team, respects agreements; resolves conflicts where necessary; leads the team; chooses the appropriate communication for the target group; presents information in a clear, logical and comprehensible manner to the team;

10. follows the professional ethics in their work (see the Code of Ethics for The Association of Estonian Career Counsellors);

11. Has C1 level Estonian when it comes to verbal communication and comprehension, and has B2 level Estonian when it comes to writing (see Appendix 1 Assessment scale of language proficiency); speaks at least one foreign language that supports the professional self-development of a career specialist, and is able to communicate in this language;

12. Has the relevant ICT skills necessary to fulfil the duties of their role effectively. Uses computers in their work according to the base modules of computer use Computer Basics, Internet Basics, Word processing, Spreadsheets and standard modules Presentation, Web Design, IT safety and Online Collaboration (see Appendix 3 Computer skills); uses modern digital solutions.

Evaluation method(s):

The recurring competencies are evaluated during the evaluation process of other competencies in the professional standard.

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	21-09112022-3.4/5k
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2. Occupational qualification standard compiled by:	Anne-Mari Ernesaks, Eesti Karjäärinõustajate Ühing Piret Jamnes, Fontes PMP OÜ Aira Lepik, Tallinna Ülikooli digitehnoloogiaste instituut Kadi Liik, Tallinna Ülikooli loodus- ja terviseteaduste instituut Kristina Orion, SA Innove hariduse tugiteenuste agentuur, karjääriteenuste keskus Triin Peterson, SA Innove Põhja-Eesti Rajaleidja keskus Küllil Post, Eesti Töötukassa Aiki Pärle, Eesti Karjäärinõustajate Ühing Lana Randaru, Eesti Töötukassa Signe Reppo, Tartu Ülikooli psühholoogia instituut
3. Occupational qualification standard approved by:	Education
4. No. of decision of Sectoral Council	32
5. Date of decision of Sectoral Council	09.11.2022
6. Occupational qualification standard valid until	05.04.2023
7. Occupational qualification standard version no.	5
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 Language skills level descriptions	
Lisa 2 Computer Skills	