nfb **National Guidance Forum for Education, Career and Employment**

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Forschungsgruppe Beratungsqualität
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in Bildung, Beruf & Beschäftigung

**The BeQu Concept for Quality Development
in Career Guidance and Counselling:

The BeQu Quality Standards and Competence Profile**

English Version

Berlin/Heidelberg 2014/2016

Imprint and Contact

This brochure contains the translation of the main parts of the following German brochures about the BeQu-Concept – available under www.wbv-open-access.de; www.beratungsqualitaet.net and www.forum-beratung.de:
- Professionell beraten mit dem BeQu-Konzept. Instrumente zur Qualitätsentwicklung der Beratung in Bildung, Beruf und Beschäftigung
- Professionell beraten: Qualitätsstandards für die Beratung in Bildung, Beruf und Beschäftigung
- Professionell beraten: Kompetenzprofil für Beratende in Bildung, Beruf und Beschäftigung
- Professionell beraten: Qualitätsentwicklungsrahmen für die Beratung in Bildung, Beruf und Beschäftigung.

A limited number of these brochures can be obtained from the *publisher (nfb; contact details: see above).*

Website:
A digital version is available for download at: www.forum-beratung.de and www.beratungsqualitaet.net.

Preface

With this publication, we present an English version of the main results of a project aimed at the joint development of quality standards, practitioner competences and a quality development framework for career guidance and counselling in Germany. The project was carried out as a joint venture between the German National Guidance Forum and the Institute for Educational Science/Heidelberg University, sponsored by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) from 2009-2014.
Despite the long tradition and high quality of career guidance and counselling services in Germany, there is no legislation with regard to quality standards and required professional competences for guidance practitioners until the beginning of the 21st century.

However, the need for binding or at least commonly agreed standards increased after the state monopoly for career guidance, held by the public employment service, was disestablished in 1998 and an increasing number of new service providers emerged on the market: public, non-profit and private. The guidance landscape became very heterogeneous and more and more fragmented due to the segmented political responsibilities, which are split up between several governmental authorities on federal as well as on regional and local level.

The *German National Guidance Forum in Education, Career and Employment* (*nfb*) and the *Institute for Educational Science at the Heidelberg University (IBW)* started an "Open Process of Coordination for Quality Development in Career Guidance" and invited experts from different guidance fields as well as stakeholders and policy makers to take part in this process of jointly developing a common understanding of quality in career guidance and commonly agreed standards. Within this five-year process a catalogue of 19 quality standards, a competence profile for guidance practitioners and a quality development framework for service providers were developed and also tested and piloted in 50 guidance organisations.

The full results are published in German and are available online (see imprint).

With this English translation of the main results, i.e. a short introduction into the systemic background and the structure of the standards and competences, the complete catalogue of standards and competences and their operationalisations, we want to present and disseminate the German Quality Standards for Career Guidance and Counselling to a wider international audience and enhance the professional and political discussion about quality and professionalism in guidance.
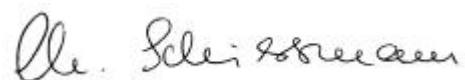
We hope that this piece of work will inspire practitioners, researchers and policy makers in their efforts to improve and further develop guidance and counselling services, and would be happy for any feedback we get!

Berlin, December 2016

On behalf of the Team

Karen Schober
President of the German National Guidance Forum

Prof. Dr. Christiane Schiersmann
Ruprecht-Karls-University, Heidelberg

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Chapter 1

The BeQu Concept: Background and Basic Definitions

1.1 Introduction: Good Guidance

Good Guidance Serves Individuals and Society

Good guidance[1] makes an important contribution to the autonomy with which individuals make their career decisions – no matter whether these are taken during school education, vocational training, or higher education, at career entry or in times of professional re-orientation. Good guidance paves the way for a self-determined life, for success and satisfaction in one's working life.

Furthermore, guidance serves major societal goals like increasing educational participation, securing the growing demand for skilled labour, preventing dropout from education and training, avoiding unemployment, reaching equal opportunity, as well as promoting the social and vocational inclusion of disadvantaged and vulnerable groups.

What Are the Features of Good Guidance?

How can clients, guidance practitioners[2], service providers, policy makers and those responsible for its public administration recognise good guidance? Moreover, how can career guidance and counselling be improved?

To assist practitioners and providers of guidance in the process of developing the quality and professionalism of their services, the National Guidance Forum in Education, Career and Employment (*nfb*) has developed a quality concept in cooperation with the Research Group Quality in Guidance at the Institute of Educational Science of the Heidelberg University (IBW) and numerous other experts. The project was funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF).

The BeQu Concept: Three Tools – One Concept

The BeQu Concept comprises three essential elements of quality development:

> ➢ **Quality Standards for Career Guidance and Counselling**
>
> ➢ **A Competence Profile for Guidance Practitioners**
>
> ➢ **A Quality Development Framework (QDF) for Career Guidance and Counselling**

The three elements of this comprehensive quality concept form part of a professionalization strategy to promote the social and political value attached to professional career guidance and counseling.

The BeQu Concept – A Guiding Framework for Career Guidance and Counselling

The BeQu Concept was developed with a broad involvement of numerous actors and stakeholders from the German guidance community and is now freely available for everyone interested. The more practitioners, service providers, administrators and responsible policy makers acknowledge and use these tools/instruments as a benchmark for professional career guidance and counselling, the more the BeQu Concept will emerge as a guiding framework for guidance practice and policy in Germany.

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[1] When we speak of 'guidance' in this text, we refer to the career guidance and counselling, which is often also labelled as lifelong guidance (and counselling) or vocational and educational guidance.

[2] When we speak of ´guidance practitioners´ in this text we refer to all kinds of professionals in the field of career guidance and counselling in the educational, vocational, or employment sector whatever their title may be: career counsellor, career adviser, employment counsellor, career professional, etc.

1.2. Theoretical Basis – A Systemic Understanding of Career Guidance and Counselling

The systemic context model of career guidance and counselling underlying the BeQu Concept is based on the idea that guidance is not an isolated process between the practitioner and the client. Rather, guidance is embedded in a wider organisational and societal context. Hence, the requirements for quality in guidance do not only refer to the interaction between the client and the guidance practitioner, but to all actors responsible for guidance provision: practitioners, clients, provider organisations, and the society as a whole, including policy makers, legislation, etc. For any quality considerations, whether the focus is on enabling wide access to guidance, on the quality of provider services, or the competence of practitioners, all of these levels need to be taken into consideration.

Figure 1: Systemic Context Model of Career Guidance and Counselling - Quality standards and practitioner competences assigned to the five systemic levels of the model
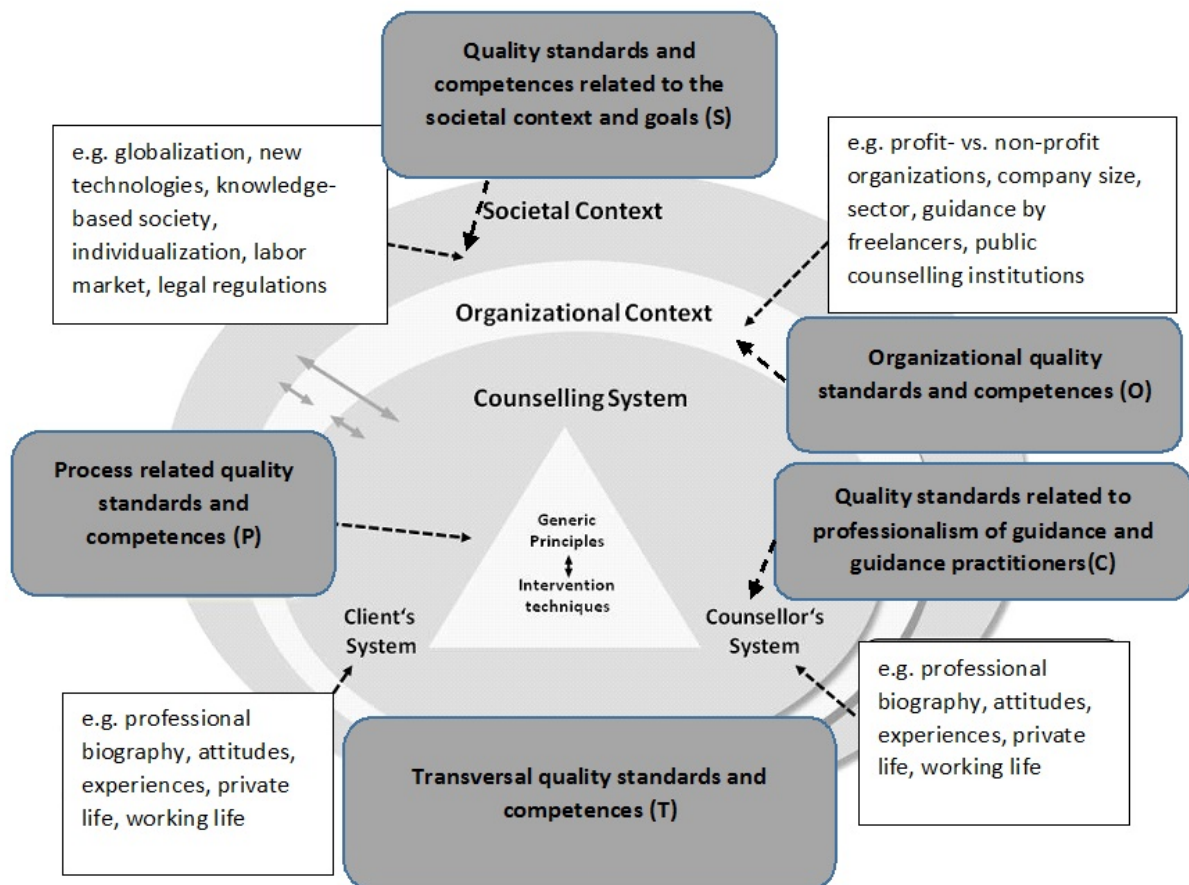
Source: Schiersmann/Weber (Ed.) (2013, p. 30), and *nfb/*Research Group Quality in Guidance (Ed.) (2012, p. 4)

Drawing on the systemic context model of career guidance and counselling, the 19 quality standards were assigned to five dimensions, based on the system levels (see diagram above). Following this systemic approach, a competence profile with 17 practitioner competences based on the quality standards was developed and assigned to the same five categories.

1.3 The BeQu Quality Standards and the Competence Profile at a Glance

The systemic context model provides the reference frame for the requirements for professional guidance as defined by the BeQu Quality Standards and in the BeQu Competence Profile. They have been formulated for use in all sectors of guidance and describe how the involved agents can contribute to the achievement of high-quality career guidance and counselling.

Five Reference Dimensions for Quality Standards and Practitioner Competences	
Transversal Quality Standards and Competences ➢ Client orientation ➢ Voluntariness and open-endedness ➢ Transparency/accessibility of guidance ➢ Ethical principles and professional attitude ➢ Continuous quality development	**Organisational Quality Standards and Competences** ➢ Mission orientation ➢ Clearly defined structures and processes ➢ Organisational and communicational culture ➢ Human and material resources ➢ Cooperation and networking
Process-Oriented Quality Standards and Competences ➢ Structural stability and security ➢ Building of relationships and emotional security ➢ Clarifying the client's concern and establishing a guidance contract ➢ Analysis of client's situation and aims ➢ Resource orientation ➢ Prospective solutions and activities	**Societal Context and Goals** ➢ Consideration of societal circumstances (related to education, vocations and the labour market) ➢ Focus on the acquisition of career management competences (capacity for self-organisation) ➢ Focus on the goals of successful career development and labour market integration ➢ Focusing on the goals of equal opportunity and social inclusion
Competence and Professionalism ➢ Professional action ➢ Orientation towards an acknowledged competence profile	

1.4 The BeQu Quality Standards – addressees and benefits

Career guidance and counselling is realised in shared responsibility between clients on the one side and practitioners, service providers and policy makers on the other side. Therefore, the quality standards do not only address guidance practitioners, but also the executive managers in the provider organisations as well as the responsible policy makers.

Each quality standard (see overview on page 12) is substantiated by several criteria that describe what the involved stakeholders must contribute to fulfil the standards.

Benefits for the different stakeholders:

➢ By referring to the BeQu Quality Standards, **clients** are enabled to better assess the quality of the guidance services. The quality standards assist them in choosing adequate guidance offers (consumer protection).

➢ **Guidance practitioners and providers** can use the BeQu Quality Standards to reflect their work and to examine and improve the quality of their guidance services.

➢ **Policy makers and administrative staff responsible for regulating and funding career guidance and counselling services** can use the BeQu Quality Standards as a basis for assessing service quality and estimating the necessary resources.

1.5 The BeQu Competence Profile for Guidance Practitioners

The competences of guidance practitioners are a central aspect of professionalism and quality in career guidance and counselling. Corresponding with the BeQu Quality Standards, the Competence Profile defines necessary preconditions for fulfilling the specific requirements of career guidance and counselling professionally, drawing on the joint basis of the systemic context model of career guidance and counselling (see page 6).
Each competence is substantiated by several indicators and a description of the corresponding expert knowledge. This way, the competences become observable, ascertainable and measurable.

Benefits for the different stakeholders:

➢ **Guidance practitioners** can better assess their own competences, and thereby develop professionally.

➢ **Guidance providers** can use the Competence Profile as an orientation framework for recruitment and human resource development.

➢ **Providers of education and training** can use it as an orientation framework for the development of their training programmes and curricula.

➢ **Policy makers and funding institutions** can use the Competence Profile to identify the required professional competences for career guidance and counselling and to estimate, which resources are adequate and necessary.

➢ Moreover, the Competence Profile can be used to identify, document and assess **non-formally or informally acquired competences**.

1.6 The Quality Development Framework (QDF)

Quality development in career guidance and counselling always implies organisational development. The Quality Development Framework (QDF) supports the quality assurance and enhancement of guidance service within organisations.
Providers of guidance services can use the QDF

- for a systematic introduction of quality development into daily work,

- to improve existing quality approaches with respect to aspects, which are specific for career guidance and counselling,
- to document and communicate their quality development efforts to funders and responsible policy makers.

Drawing on a phase model, guidance providers autonomously evaluate their strengths, working focuses, and developmental requirements, following the BeQu Quality Standards and Competence Profile. On this basis, the organisation identifies developmental goals and success factors, initiates activities for improvement, reflects and evaluates the results and learning experience.

The QDF enables organisations to activate and integrate both the individual perspectives of staff members and the perspective of the organisation to develop and safeguard solutions for assuring or enhancing the quality of guidance, which suit the organisation.

For a systematic quality development with the QDF, guidance providers can have special QDF representatives trained. If necessary, service providers who use the QDF can also make use of specially trained external facilitators. In the testing phase of the QDF, this has proved useful in many cases.

Figure 2: The BeQu Quality Development Framework QDF (Six-Phase Model)
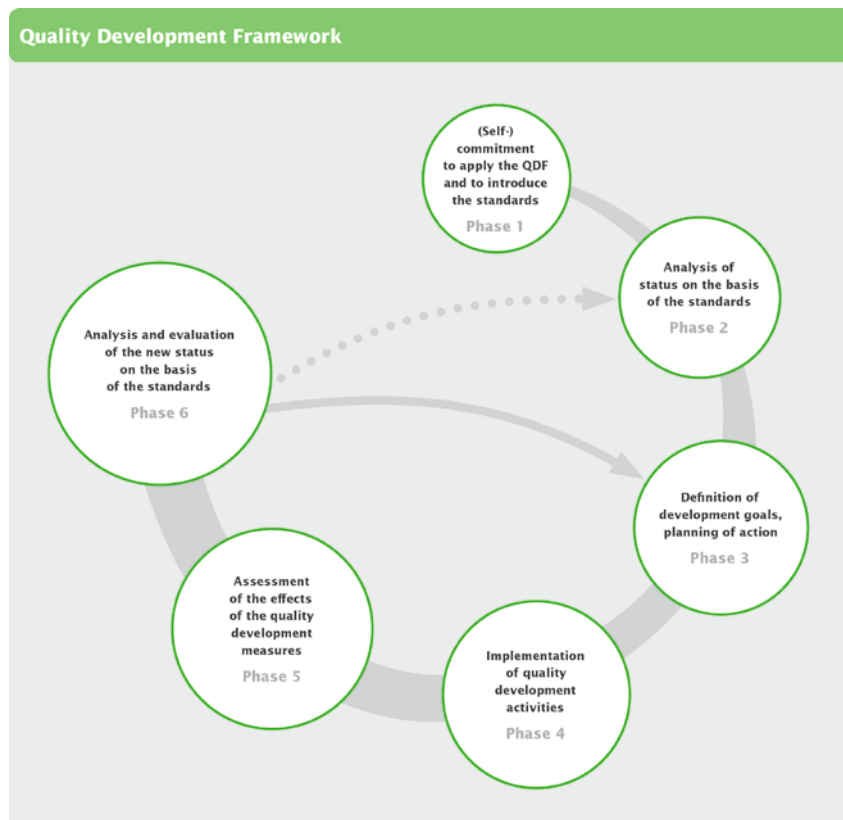
Source: nfb/Research Group Quality in Guidance 2012, p. 9

Chapter 2

The BeQu-Quality Standards for Career Guidance and Counselling

2.1. The Quality Standards: Dimensions and Structure

Based on the systemic context model of career guidance and counselling (see p. 6) 19 quality standards have been defined. They address the directly or indirectly involved and interacting systems: guidance practitioners, clients, organisation and society:

- Quality standards referring to *transversal* principles and values (T-Standards),
- Quality standards referring to the *process of career guidance and counselling* (P-Standards),
- A quality standard referring to the *competence of the guidance practitioners* (C-Standard),
- Quality standards referring to the *organisation offering guidance* (O-Standards),
- Quality standards referring to the *societal context and objectives* (S-Standards).

The **T-Standards** are not assigned to a systemic level. They describe overarching requirements for guidance offers and practices. Among these are the orientation towards the client's interest and towards basic ethical principles of career guidance and counselling, as well as transparency and the permanent effort to achieve quality enhancement.

The **P-Standards** focus on the individual interaction processes between guidance practitioners and clients. They include aspects like establishing a trustful relationship at eye level with clear agreements, strengthening the clients' capacity for self-organisation, and their ability to seek solutions and make decisions.

The **C-Standard** formulates requirements regarding the professional competences of guidance practitioners, which must be oriented towards an acknowledged competence profile, as well as requirements for related education and training. A corresponding competence profile has been developed as part of the BeQu-Concept (see Chapter 3)

The **O-Standards** describe requirements for the design of organisational conditions, which are beneficial for the guidance activities. They address the responsible provider organisation of the guidance service as well as guidance practitioners and policy makers. The O-Standards range from the formulation of the organisation's mission statement and goals to the arrangement of structures and processes within the organisation and – finally – the provision of the necessary resources.

The **S-Standards** include the requirement to reflect the societal context in the guidance process, i.e. the economic, societal, educational, and labour-market-related structures and developments, and their influence on the educational and vocational opportunities of the clients. On the other hand, the S-Standards demand that guidance must not only be client-oriented, but also be oriented towards fulfilling societal, educational and employment-related objectives and expectations, which are connected with the public provision and funding of guidance services, e.g. increased educational participation, improved labour-market integration, and the social inclusion of disadvantaged groups. Professional career guidance and counselling can be of vital importance for the achievement of these objectives and should be measured according to these criteria.

The structure of the quality standards –levels of concretion and actors addressed

The BeQu Quality Standards contain different levels of concretion – from "short and crisp" to a detailed elaboration. The goal is to meet the different responsibilities and needs of the addressed target groups (see figure below).

The *first level* is made up of only one sentence, which is short and concise.

On the *second level*, the standard is substantiated and operationalised by a set of criteria. The criteria address three levels of action Concrete requirements are formulated for guidance practitioners, the management in the guidance organisation, as well as policy makers.

The *third level* consists of additional explanations and examples from practice. This part however, which is published in the German Online Version of the BeQu-Concept, is not available in English (http://bequ-konzept.beratungsqualitaet.net/).

Figure 3: Structure of each of the 19 Quality Standards

Level 1: Quality Standard	➔ Short and concise
Level 2: Criteria (5 – 10 for each Quality Standard)	➔ Substantiate the standard ➔ Describe the standard in detail ➔ Address the responsible actors (practitioners, providers, policy makers)
Level 3: Comments and examples	➔ Explanations and examples from guidance practice in different sectors (available only online in German)

2.2 The BeQu Quality Standards in Detail

The BeQu Quality Standards for Career Guidance and Counselling (Overview)	
T	**Transversal Quality Standards**
T1	Good guidance focuses on the clients' concerns, interests, competences and potentials.
T2	Good guidance, in principle, requires voluntary participation.
T3	Good guidance is easily accessible and transparent for clients.
T4	Good guidance is committed to ethical principles and protects clients' rights.
T5	Good guidance is based on a strategy of continuous quality development, which is in accordance with the quality standards presented here or comparable standards.
P	**Process-Related Quality Standards**
P1	Good guidance requires the joint development of a relationship, which is advantageous in view of the clients' concerns and the guidance process.
P2	Good guidance does not presuppose results and requires the collaborative clarification of the clients´ expectations as well as an agreement on the objectives, procedure and desired outcomes of the guidance process.
P3	Good guidance requires a joint analysis and reflection of the clients' situation as well as their interests, values and resources.
P4	Good guidance assists clients in developing alternative solutions, making decisions and transferring them into action in an active and autonomous manner.
C	**Quality Standard on Practitioner Competence and Professionalism**
C1	Good guidance presupposes that guidance practitioners are capable of offering professional guidance. The required competences are specified in a competence profile for guidance, which corresponds to the quality standards presented here.
O	**Organisational Circumstances, Requirements, and Strategies**
O1	Good guidance is oriented by an organisational mission statement, which describes the purpose of the guidance organisation, the strategy, goals and ethical principles of its guidance services.
O2	Good guidance requires clearly defined processes, workflows and responsibilities, which promote guidance as a communicative social service.
O3	Good guidance requires a constructive and participative culture of communication and collaboration within the guidance organisation.
O4	Good guidance requires the provision of adequate human and material resources for the specific guidance service offers in view of the quality standards presented here.
O5	Good guidance requires a good collaboration between the guidance organisation with its partners and other relevant actors in the social environment.
S	**Societal Context and Objectives**
S1	Good guidance considers the relevant societal context and current developments in the educational and vocational systems and the labour market, in addition to clients' individual situations, and makes this knowledge accessible for clients in an adequate manner.
S2	Good guidance empowers clients to pursue their educational and professional development autonomously (capacity for self-organisation).
S3	Good guidance assists clients in sustainably pursuing and realising their educational, vocational, and employment-related goals.
S4	Good guidance promotes the social inclusion and equality of (potentially) disadvantaged groups, especially regarding gender, age, handicaps, cultural and ethnical background.

Transversal Quality Standards for Career Guidance and Counselling as a Complex Social Service (T-Standards)

Quality Standard T1

Good guidance focuses on the clients' concerns, interests, competences and potentials.

Acronym	Criteria

The guidance practitioners (GP)…

Acronym	Criteria
T1 GP1	…focus on the individual demands, concerns and values of their clients and consider their socio-cultural backgrounds.
T1 GP2	…do not pursue objectives, which contradict the interests of clients.
T1 GP3	…point out to clients whenever their concerns or interests are in conflict with the objectives or the mandate of the guidance organisation.

The management of the guidance organisation (ORG)…

Acronym	Criteria
T1 ORG1	…aligns its service, its formats, contents and methods with the demands of the target groups (in view of its legal mandate).

The responsible policy makers (POL)…

Acronym	Criteria
T1 POL1	…guarantee individuals a (legal) entitlement to career guidance services.
T1 POL2	…acknowledge career guidance and counselling as a professional service, which focuses on the individual demands and interests of clients and on the development of individual solutions for problems related to education and employment.

Quality Standard T2

Good guidance, in principle, requires voluntary participation.

The guidance practitioners (GP)…

T2 GP1	…encourage the willingness and ability of clients to engage openly and voluntarily in the guidance process, especially when they do not participate on their own initiative, e.g. in a compulsory context.
T2 GP2	…explain potential (legal) consequences for the clients, which may arise due to non-attendance or the outcomes of the guidance process, in cases where participation in guidance is compulsory.
T2 GP3	…raise the issue of their different roles and responsibilities as guidance practitioners as well as administrators (when applicable) and highlight shifts in their roles whenever necessary.

The management of the guidance organisation (ORG)…

T2 ORG1	…supports voluntary participation by securing that clients get comprehensible information about their rights and obligations and their personal benefits from participating in the guidance process. Clients can decide about their further participation in the guidance process based upon this information.
T2 ORG2	…gives guidance practitioners a sufficient degree of professional freedom to address the clients´ needs, especially if participation in career guidance and counselling is compulsory.
T2 ORG3	…enables clients to make use of an additional, alternative guidance service in cases where the use of guidance is compulsory and may lead to sanctions (e.g. loss of unemployment benefits).

The responsible policy makers (POL)…

T2 POL1	…make a clear difference between the guiding and counselling roles and other (e.g. administrative or sanctioning) roles of guidance practitioners in non-voluntary, statutory guidance services. They point out clearly how guidance practitioners as well as providers of guidance services shall handle relevant role conflicts.
T2 POL2	…safeguard the availability of alternative guidance services without potential sanctions or conflicts of interest for clients who must participate in non-voluntary, statutory guidance services.

Quality Standard T3

Good guidance is easily accessible and transparent for clients.

The guidance practitioners (GP)…

T3 GP1	…ensure that the format, progression, and content of the guidance process are easy to understand and comprehensible for clients.
T3 GP2	…document the results of the guidance process in a transparent and comprehensible way for clients, as well as for other persons involved.
T3 GP3	…also use information and communication technologies (ICT) for their guidance services (email, chat, online counselling, social media), where this benefits the individual case and suits the media habits of their clients.

The management of the guidance organisation (ORG)…

T3 ORG1	…ensures that the objectives, content and structure of the guidance service are well communicated to the public and designed to enable easy access for all target groups.
T3 ORG2	…aligns opening hours, availability by phone and the scheduling of appointments with the needs of the different target groups.
T3 ORG3	…utilises various formats, media and channels for its public relations activities and considers socio-cultural characteristics of the target groups in doing so.
T3 ORG4	…enables the use of information and communication technologies for the guidance process and warrants the necessary technological infrastructure and leeway in its usage for guidance practitioners and clients.

The responsible policy makers (POL)…

T3 POL1	…communicate the overarching objectives, conditions and arguments for the provision of career guidance and counselling within their area of responsibility.
T3 POL2	…promote the transparency and accessibility of guidance services within their area of responsibility through corresponding policies.

Quality Standard T4

Good guidance is committed to ethical principles and protects clients' rights.

The guidance practitioners (GP)…

T4 GP1	…commit themselves to acknowledged ethical standards for career guidance and counselling, which have been developed and established by various national and international guidance associations and which are in accordance with the standards published here. These include following principles: - promoting the acknowledgement of work and education as important and meaningful areas of human life, - empowering clients, avoiding any harm to them, - respecting and appreciating diversity in clients, - keeping the data of the clients confidential and respecting data protection requirements, - informing clients about their rights and obligations in an appropriate way, - advocating for clients and their interests, including in overarching contexts, - sharing findings from guidance practice with relevant institutions to effect necessary organisational or social changes/improvements where possible, - reflecting the scientific and ethical justifications of their actions.

The management of the guidance organisation (ORG)…

T4 ORG1	…commits itself to acknowledged ethical standards in agreement with its guidance practitioners and promotes these standards publicly.
T4 ORG2	…ensures that the education and training of the guidance practitioners also include ethical principles and legal rights of clients.
T4 ORG3	…warrants that clients can refer to an (independent) authority if ethical or legal principles may have been violated.

The responsible policy makers (POL)…

T4 POL1	…commit themselves to the ethical standards, which are generally acknowledged by the career guidance and counselling profession, and endorse them publicly in their area of responsibility as guiding principles for professional practice.
T4 POL2	…provide clear guidelines, which legal aspects are meaningful in career guidance and counselling and which independent authorities can be consulted, when rights or ethical principles have been violated.

Quality Standard T5

Good guidance is based on a strategy of continuous quality development, which is in accordance with the quality standards presented here or comparable standards.

The guidance practitioners (GP)…

T5 GP1	…use the quality standards for guidance and counselling presented here to inform and orientate their practice.
T5 GP2	…actively engage in a jointly formulated strategy of continuous quality development within their organisation.

The management of the guidance organisation (ORG)…

T5 ORG1	…initiates and takes responsibility for a common strategy of continuous quality development and actively involves clients, guidance practitioners and other relevant actors.
T5 ORG2	…considers the standards presented here or corresponding quality development approaches in its quality strategy.
T5 ORG3	…periodically evaluates the quality and efficacy of the guidance service as part of its quality development strategy and uses the findings for continuous improvement.
T5 ORG4	…documents the results of the continuous quality development and makes them transparent for clients and for the funding bodies.

The responsible policy makers (POL)…

T5 POL1	…require evidence from guidance organisations (in their domain) that these continuously develop the quality of their services in view of the standards presented here or comparable standards.
T5 POL2	…support continuous quality development of guidance services through appropriate measures and conducive conditions.

Quality Standards Relating to the Guidance Process (P-Standards)

Quality Standard P1

Good guidance requires the joint development of a relationship, which is advantageous in view of the clients' concerns and the guidance process.

The guidance practitioners (GP)…

P1 GP1	…create an environment and an atmosphere in which clients feel safe and taken seriously and can engage in the collaborative guidance process (foundation of trust).
P1 GP2	…clarify their tasks, roles and functions, which are relevant for the guidance process, and emphasise any changes of their roles where necessary.
P1 GP3	…organise the guidance process, their communication and choice of methods etc. in a way, which is comprehensible for the clients, and discuss the structure, process, and methods of the guidance activity.
P1 GP4	…actively involve the clients in the organisation of the guidance process.
P1 GP5	…are authentic and empathic and display respect and appreciation for their clients.
P1 GP6	…align their use of language and methods with the biographical, social, and cultural background of the client.
P1 GP7	…make themselves aware of their potential implicit and explicit presuppositions about clients.

The management of the guidance organisation (ORG)… *(see O-Standards, as well)*

P1 ORG1	…ensures that the appearance of the organisation as a whole supports the development and maintenance of a favourable relation with the clients, and takes measures to ensure that all staff members treat clients respectfully.
P1 ORG2	…warrants the best possible environment and resources for the development of relations, which are favourable for the guidance process.

The responsible policy makers (POL)…

P1 POL1	…acknowledge and emphasise the importance of building a professional counselling alliance for the success of guidance.

Quality Standard P2

Good guidance does not presuppose results and requires the collaborative clarification of the clients´ expectations as well as an agreement on the objectives, procedure and desired outcomes of the guidance process.

The guidance practitioners (GP)…

P2 GP1	…collaboratively clarify clients' concerns and expectations at the beginning of the guidance process, and relate these to the possible support, which the guidance service can offer.
P2 GP2	…come to an agreement with the clients concerning the objectives and approach of the guidance process as well as on the desired outcomes, while guaranteeing an approach, which does not pre-empt results.
P2 GP3	…regularly review whether and how the concerns and objectives of the clients change over the course of the guidance process.

The management of the guidance organisation (ORG)… *(see O-Standards, as well)*

P2 ORG1	…safeguards a transparent and outcome-neutral approach to guidance, even where statutory requirements regarding formal results exist (e.g. settlement of an integration agreement or definition of an action plan), and does not formulate any requirements regarding the content-related outcomes of the guidance process.

The responsible policy makers (POL)…

P2 POL1	…acknowledge the principle of outcome-neutrality as a constitutive element of career guidance and counselling and align their policies and expectations to serve this principle.

Quality Standard P3

Good guidance requires a joint analysis and reflection of the clients' situation as well as their interests, values and resources.

The guidance practitioners (GP)…

P3 GP1	…analyse clients' situations and relevant influencing factors in a collaborative manner, and assist clients in arriving at an independent evaluation of their situation.
P3 GP2	…collect the relevant personal information about clients and identify their competences and resources in agreement with them; use diagnostic methods where necessary, if clients give their consent.
P3 GP3	…identify and collaboratively interpret clients' typical behaviours, patterns of thought and emotions, where these are relevant in view of the clients' concerns.
P3 GP4	…collaboratively work out the objectives, values and motivations of clients, which are important in view of their concerns.
P3 GP5	…demonstrate potential inconsistencies and contradictions regarding the objectives and values of clients.

The management of the guidance organisation (ORG)…

	see O-Standards, especially O4

The responsible policy makers (POL)…

	see O-Standards, especially O4

Quality Standard P4

Good guidance assists clients in developing alternative solutions, making decisions and transferring them into action in an active and autonomous manner.

The guidance practitioners (GP)…

P4 GP1	…ensure that clients' competences and resources as well as their interests and values form the basis for developing solutions.
P4 GP2	…discuss alternative developmental possibilities with their clients.
P4 GP3	…collaboratively support clients in searching for ways to overcome possible obstacles.
P4 GP4	…provide information as required by and appropriate for the target group of the client, in consideration of the possible differences in the capacities to receive and handle information.
P4 GP5	…call clients' attention to resources for independent use (self-help resources).
P4 GP6	…reflect and evaluate relevant information in collaboration with the clients regarding their concerns, situation and opportunities.
P4 GP7	…jointly draw conclusions about the process and outcome of the guidance process with the client, and discuss the upcoming activities of the client or the guidance practitioner, if any.
P4 GP8	…offer follow-up guidance, when an additional need is obvious.
P4 GP9	…reflect limitations of their own professional capabilities as guidance practitioners and possibly refer clients to support services of other providers.

The management of the guidance organisation (ORG)…

	see O-Standards, especially O4

The responsible policy makers (POL)…

	see O-Standards, especially O4

Quality Standard Referring to the Competences and Professionalism of Guidance Practitioners (C-Standard).

Quality Standard C1

Good guidance presupposes that guidance practitioners are capable of offering professional guidance. The required competences are specified in a competence profile for guidance, which corresponds to the quality standards presented here (see Chapter 3).

The guidance practitioners (GP)…

C1 GP1	…possess the guidance competences as required by a competence profile for the practice of career guidance and counselling, which corresponds to the standards presented here. Such a competence profile must also describe the required field-specific expert knowledge.
C1 GP2	…provide evidence of their competence and relevant expert knowledge either through a specific qualification for the practice of career guidance and counselling, or on the basis of a recognized procedure for the validation of their informally or non-formally acquired guidance competences. Where evidence is provided through a qualification in guidance, this should bear a clear reference to the competence profile and exhibit a minimum volume of training.
C1 GP3	…participate in further education activities to develop knowledge and competences, which are relevant for their specific field of practice.
C1 GP4	…continuously reflect their professional behaviour and their competences through appropriate methods, and derive objectives for their professional development from this reflection.

The management of the guidance organisation (ORG)…

C1 ORG1	…ensures that specific job profiles exist for staff members with and without guidance responsibilities referring to their different tasks.
C1 ORG2	…ensures that guidance activities in the organisation are performed by competent guidance practitioners, who practice guidance professionally.
C1 ORG3	…guarantees staff members an adequate and organisationally agreed entitlement to further training and supervision or similar activities for reflecting their practice.
C1 ORG4	…defines requirements concerning the periodical participation of staff members in further training activities and concerning the quality of the training offers.
C1 ORG5	…ensures that direct superiors know the abilities and competences of their staff members and that they promote their motivation and competence development. For this purpose, managers will benefit from guidance competences, in addition to leadership competences.

The responsible policy makers (POL)…

C1 POL1	…formulate clear guidelines for the utilisation of a competence profile for guidance practitioners which is clearly set out as such, agreed upon by the relevant actors (policy, practice, and science), and which corresponds with the quality standards presented here.
C1 POL2	…formulate requirements for the validation and documentation of competences for career guidance and counselling.
C1 POL3	…define minimum requirements for the further education of guidance practitioners in their area of responsibility, which must also be fulfilled by contractors in the case of public procurement.

Quality Standards Referring to the Organisational Circumstances, Requirements, and Strategies (O – Standards)

Quality Standard O1

Good guidance is oriented by an organisational mission statement, which describes the purpose of the guidance organisation, the strategy, goals and ethical principles of its guidance services.

The guidance practitioners (GP)…

O1 GP1	…know the mission statement of the organisation and align their guidance activities with this mission and the operative strategies of the organisation.
O1 GP2	…actively participate in the formulation and enhancement of the mission statement.

The management of the guidance organisation (ORG)…

O1 ORG1	…develops a mission statement in collaboration with the staff members, translates it into strategies, concepts, organisational procedures and structures for the guidance activities, continuously refines it, and publishes it in appropriate ways.
O1 ORG2	…aligns the formulation and enhancement of the organisation's mission statement with the needs of its target groups, the relevant societal circumstances, and the quality standards for career guidance and counselling presented here, as well as with political and legislative guidelines.
O1 ORG3	…ensures that the fundamental goals and principles of career guidance and counselling are appropriately represented in the mission statement.

The responsible policy makers (POL)…

O1 POL1	…take steps to ensure that guidance organisations in their domain formulate mission statements, which pronounce the mandate and objectives of the organisation, as well as its quality development strategy and ethical principles.

Quality Standard O2

Good guidance requires clearly defined processes, workflows and responsibilities, which promote guidance as a communicative social service.

The guidance practitioners (GP)…

O2 GP1	…proactively take charge of their areas of responsibility in the organisation and make their contribution to the effectiveness of the central processes and workflows; to achieve this, they collaborate effectively with other relevant actors in the organisation.
O2 GP2	…actively participate in optimising the processes, workflows, and structures of the organisation, which are relevant for their work.

The management of the guidance organisation (ORG)…

O2 ORG1	…defines the key processes, which are required for an effective and efficient provision of the guidance services in collaboration with the guidance practitioners, and makes the results accessible for everybody involved.
O2 ORG2	…creates the structures, which are required for delivering the guidance service, and improves them, if necessary, in collaboration with the guidance practitioners.

The responsible policy makers (POL)…

O2 POL1	…consider the possibilities, resources and working conditions of the organisations providing guidance when defining administrative or allocation-specific expectations for such organisations (e.g. for their reporting).

Quality Standard O3

Good guidance requires a constructive and participative culture of communication and collaboration within the guidance organisation.

The guidance practitioners (GP)…

O3 GP1	…foster a collaborative communication culture and actively participate in its reflection and development.

The management of the guidance organisation (ORG)…

O3 ORG1	…contributes to a collaborative and communicative organisational culture through exemplary behaviour and through its design of the working conditions.
O3 ORG2	…establishes a common understanding of the rules for internal communication and conflict management / resolution.
O3 ORG3	…promotes a participative culture of communication and collaboration by creating appropriate participation structures.

The responsible policy makers (POL)…

	no specific criteria

Quality Standard O4

Good guidance requires the provision of adequate human and material resources for the specific guidance offers in view of the quality standards presented here.

The guidance practitioners (GP)…

O4 GP1	…actively participate in determining the required human and material resources.
O4 GP2	…make efficient and sustainable use of the available resources and utilise them as effectively as possible to achieve the aims of the guidance service.

The management of the guidance organisation (ORG)…

O4 ORG1	…equips the guidance service with the necessary working space, settings for confidential communication, communication technologies, as well as human resources and time resources, which allows the guidance activities to be performed in accordance with the quality standards presented here and to the objectives of the specific providing organisation.
O4 ORG2	…involves staff members when determining the required human and material resources.
O4 ORG3	…provides guidance practitioners with an adequate degree of autonomy in deciding how to use the available resources most effectively for their guidance activities.

The responsible policy makers (POL)…

O4 POL1	…warrant the provision of human and material resources, which are necessary to perform guidance in line with the quality standards presented here, in their area of responsibility.
O4 POL2	…ensure adequate planning and budgetary security as well as appropriate funding periods for the guidance organisations in their area of responsibility.

Quality Standard O5

Good guidance requires a good collaboration between the guidance organisation with its partners and other relevant actors in the social environment.

The guidance practitioners (GP)…

O5 GP1	…actively cooperate with actors outside of their organisation, where relevant for the concerns of the clients, the success of guidance, and the quality of guidance offers.
O5 GP2	…participate in research and scientific activities, which are relevant for the practice of career guidance and counselling, within the limits of their possibilities.

The management of the guidance organisation (ORG)…

O5 ORG1	…continuously monitors the relevant environment of the organisation and reflects its relations with the relevant actors (e.g. other guidance providers, public agencies, associations, enterprises, and employers).
O5 ORG2	…reviews whether the image of the organisation is favourable for a good collaboration with clients and relevant partners.
O5 ORG3	…develops useful information, collaboration and networking structures and activities in collaboration with other relevant actors.
O5 ORG4	…involves staff members in the development of cross-organisational collaboration in a suitable manner.

The responsible policy makers (POL)…

O5 POL1	…promote the cross-departmental and cross-institutional collaboration and networking of the various local, regional, national, and international information systems concerning education, the vocations, and the labour market.

Quality Standards Referring to Societal Context and Objectives (S-Standards)

Quality Standard S1

Good guidance considers the relevant societal context and current developments in the educational and vocational systems and the labour market, in addition to clients' individual situations, and makes this knowledge accessible for clients in an adequate manner.

The guidance practitioners (GP)…

S1 GP1	…foster their clients' knowledge and understanding of relevant societal circumstances concerning the education system, the employment system, as well as educational offers and the labour market, where such information is relevant for the clients' concerns and their educational and vocational decisions.

The management of the guidance organisation (ORG)…

S1 ORG1	…ensures that information about educational and vocational options, the labour market, as well as other important societal conditions, which relates to the typical concerns of clients, is provided in a neutral, up-to-date, user-friendly, and easily accessible form.
S1 ORG2	…reviews the success of informational activities and the increase of the clients´ knowledge by means of periodical evaluation.

The responsible policy makers (POL)…

S1 POL1	…advocate for an increased transparency and interconnectedness of the various local, regional, national and international information systems concerning education, the vocations, and the labour market.

Quality Standard S2

Good guidance empowers clients to pursue their educational and professional development autonomously (capacity for self-organisation).

The guidance practitioners (GP)…

G2 GP1	…assist clients in developing and improving their competences to plan and pursue their career development in an autonomous and successful manner.

The management of the guidance organisation (ORG)…

S2 ORG1	…includes the aim of advancing clients' career management competences and capacity for self-organisation as part of the organisation's mission, and promotes the achievement of this goal through supportive measures.
S2 ORG2	…evaluates the success of the supportive measures and the advancement of clients' career management competences and capacity for self-organisation in view of the success factors that have been defined for the organisation's field of career guidance and counselling.

The responsible policy makers (POL)…

S2 POL1	…define the advancement of clients' career management competences and capacity for self-organisation as central objectives of the guidance services they are responsible for in relevant political documents.

Quality Standard S3

Good guidance assists clients in sustainably pursuing and realising their educational, vocational, and employment-related goals.

The guidance practitioners (GP)…

S3 GP1	…assist clients in pursuing and achieving the educational, vocational, and employment-related goals, which they aspire to, and to which they can have access.
S3 GP2	…support clients in identifying possible constraints for the achievement of their educational, vocational, and employment-related goals, as well as appropriate solutions as part of the guidance process.

The management of the guidance organisation (ORG)…

S3 ORG1	…determines the relevant objectives and possible support measures of the organisation's guidance offers in relation to clients' career aspirations (drawing on evaluation studies and impact analyses).
S3 ORG2	…reviews the success of the supportive measures and the achievement of sustainable improvements in the education system and the labour market in view of the success factors, which have been defined for the specific field of career guidance and counselling (evaluation studies, impact analyses).

The responsible policy makers (POL)…

S3 POL1	…codify (overarching) objectives for the guidance services in their domain, which concern the sustainable achievement/clarification of the clients' career aspirations and include them in the relevant policy documents.

Quality Standard S4

Good guidance promotes the social inclusion and equality of (potentially) disadvantaged groups, especially regarding gender, age, handicaps, cultural and ethnical background.

The guidance practitioners (GP)…

S4 GP1	…reflect their possible contributions to promote social inclusion and equality and realise these in their guidance activities in ways, which are appropriate for the individual case and situation.
S4 GP2	…make the clients aware of gender- and culture-related prejudices, and assist them in dealing with them adequately.
S4 GP3	…support clients in enforcing their equality-related rights and entitlements.
S4 GP4	…make their co-operation partners in education, career and employment (schools, enterprises etc.) aware of social inclusion and equal opportunity related goals, requirements and services and assist them in implementing appropriate measures.

The management of the guidance organisation (ORG)…

S4 ORG1	…supports the political goals of guidance relating to social inclusion and equality by embedding them in the organisation's objectives/mission statement.
S4 ORG2	…ensures adequate human resources and organisational conditions for guidance services, which are committed to the goals of equality and social inclusion.
S4 ORG3	…conducts own activities to achieve these goals, and participates in/supports corresponding activities of partner organisations and professional networks.
S4 ORG4	…reviews the success of the supporting measures and the achievement of improved social inclusion and equal opportunity according to the success factors, which have been defined for th particular guidance field.

The responsible policy makers (POL)…

S4 POL1	…enshrine the political goals of guidance relating to social inclusion and equality in corresponding laws, regulations and political programmes, as well as their public relations activities, and by creating the necessary conditions.

Chapter 3

The Competence Profile for Guidance Practitioners

3.1. Structure and Content of the BeQu Competence Profile

The structure of the BeQu Competence Profile is based on the systemic understanding of career guidance and counselling (see Graph on page 4). Based on this systemic understanding of guidance, we can differentiate between three groups of competences:

- **Process-related competences (P),**
- **Organisation-related competences (O), and**
- **Competences related to society (S).**

A fourth competence group complements them: **Transversal competences (T)**, which relate to the entire system, and which can be understood as overarching.

Professional competence in guidance manifests itself through the convergence of these four groups of competences. They specify competences, which guidance practitioners should possess for them to be capable of handling the specific challenges of career guidance and counselling professionally.

Each of the four competence groups is differentiated into single competences, which formulate requirements for the professional performance of guidance-specific tasks (see Table X). Each competence is supplemented by competence indicators, which describe the competence in detail. The competence indicators as presented in the competence profile delineate professional dispositions for action, which are based on cognitive (e.g. guidance-specific theoretical and methodical knowledge, understanding of ethical aspects) and affective-motivational resources (e.g. motivations, emotions, professional convictions and values, which have been internalised). The specification of the competences in terms of their meaning at the activity level, and the consideration of relevant resources seemed necessary to us, because competence should be understood as a latent construct. The emergence, application and development of competence requires cognitive and affective-emotional resources, i.e. contextually bound abilities and qualities.

The *affective-motivational resources* should be understood as the necessary internal dispositions to carry out activities, which are independent from the context and the available cognitive resources. Unlike to the cognitive resources, it is difficult to specify the affective-motivational resources in relation to the competence groups and individual competences. The higher the motivation and emotional stability of the agents facing guidance-specific challenges, the stronger their readiness and capacity to act professionally. Consequently, the affective-motivational resources are implicitly accounted for in the descriptions of the competence indicators: Without their activation, professional action is hardly possible, even when the cognitive resources are available. Thus, we have formulated the competence indicators in such a manner that they presume a strong willingness to act professionally, drawing upon cognitive resources.

In the competence profile, the *cognitive resources* describe the necessary knowledge for the development of competences – e.g. theoretical and methodical knowledge, pedagogical and psychological knowledge, knowledge related to specific fields of guidance and legal knowledge. In complex, guidance-specific situations, guidance practitioners can consult and actualise this knowledge cognitively, which enables them to act professionally. In the competence profile, the cognitive resources are presented explicitly, since they are mostly connected to the context of action and form the basis for competent, professional action (presuming the availability of the affective-motivational resources). In the process of developing the cognitive resources, we considered existing curricula for education and training in career guidance and counselling, as well as the teaching and learning contents of the German Master Programme at the University of Heidelberg "Berufs- und organisationsbezogene Beratungswissenschaft" (see http://www.beratungswissenschaft.de; Schiersmann/Weber 2016).

3.2 The BeQu Competence Profile in Detail

	The BeQu Competences for Guidance Practitioners (Overview)
T	**Transversal Competences**
T1	Focussing on the client (Client Orientation)
T2	Making the guidance offer transparent
T3	Exhibiting a professional attitude and ethical behaviour
T4	Co-designing quality development process
P	**Process-Related Competences**
P1	Developing stable working conditions and a secure environment
P2	Building a sound working alliance and emotional security
P3	Clarifying the clients' concerns and coming to a guidance agreement
P4	Clarifying the situation and objectives
P5	Identifying and reinforcing clients' internal and external resources
P6	Developing perspectives for problem solution and action
O	**Organisation-related Competences**
O1	Developing and implementing the organisational Mission Statement
O2	Designing and optimising formal organisational structures and processes
O3	Co-creating and enacting the organisational culture
O4	Ensuring the sustainability and efficient use of resources
O5	Cooperating with the professional and interdisciplinary environment
S	**Competences related to society**
S1	Considering societal circumstances
S2	Considering societal goals

In the following, we present the differentiated version of the competence profile, comprising the competence indicators and cognitive resources. This compilation of competence indicators as well as cognitive resources should neither be viewed as normative, nor as final or complete. Its purpose is to illustrate the scope of the competences at the concrete level (without claiming completeness). In the future, it shall be developed further based on a sequence of empirical investigations.

Transversal Competences (T)

Competence T1
Focussing on the Client (Client Orientation)

Guidance practitioners are willing and able to focus their guidance activities on the particular needs of the clients – whether they are interacting with clients, engaged in organisational activities, or working at the societal level. They recognise their clients as competent, autonomous individuals with their own rights and interests, and make them the centre of career guidance and counselling.

Competence Indicators (T1-Ind.)

Guidance practitioners…

T1-Ind.1	…align their activities with the individual needs and the concerns of the clients;
T1-Ind.2	…respect the diverse characteristics of clients relating to their ethnic and cultural affiliations, their socio-economic status, gender and age;
T1-Ind.3	…address potential conflicts of interest whenever clients' interests may collide with the mandate of the guidance organisation or societal mission of career guidance and counselling;
T1-Ind.4	…consider the clients' biographical circumstances, as well as the individual resources and restrictions, which result from the clients' social backgrounds in the guidance process;
T1-Ind.5	…assist clients with the aim of strengthening their ability for self-organisation.

Cognitive Resources (T1-Res.)

Guidance practitioners know…

T1-Res.1	…developmental processes along the course of life (e.g. personality theories, theories of career development and vocational choice, lifeworld models);
T1-Res.2	…biographical transitions and disruptions within the education and employment system (e.g. school, vocational education and training, vocational changes, returning to work, termination, retirement);
T1-Res.3	…socio-economic and cultural differences (diversity);
T1-Res.4	…approaches to foster self-organisation and self-efficacy.

Competence T2

Making the Guidance Offer Transparent

Guidance practitioners are willing and able to make the guidance offer transparent for all stakeholders.

Competence Indicators (T2-Ind.)

Guidance practitioners…

T2-Ind.1	…communicate the objectives, contents and structures of the guidance offer and make this information easily accessible for all target groups;
T2-Ind.2	…present their guidance offers in a comprehensible way, pointing out all relevant criteria (e.g. guidance formats, availability, standards, quality assurance) for all relevant stakeholders (e.g. clients, cooperation and network partners, policy makers).

Cognitive Resources (T2-Res.)

Guidance practitioners know…

T2-Res.1	…marketing strategies as well as public relations concepts;
T2-Res.2	…formats and media for the public advertisement of guidance offers (e.g. leaflets, brochures, posters).

Competence T3

Exhibiting a Professional Attitude and Ethical Behaviour

Guidance practitioners are willing and able to exhibit a professional attitude regarding their tasks and responsibilities and to adhere to ethical and professional principles for career guidance and counselling in their practice – whether they are interacting with clients, engaged in organisational activities, or working at the societal level.

Competence Indicators (T3-Ind.)

Guidance practitioners…

T3-Ind.1	…follow ethical principles in their actions and behaviour, and make these ethical principles transparent and perceivable;
T3-Ind.2	…are aware of their roles and functions and can represent and justify their professional identity (mandate, role, and guidance concept) in a convincing manner;
T3-Ind.3	…plan measures for their competence development and define their needs for further training;
T3-Ind.4	…engage in reflection as an immanent part of their professional conduct and demonstrate an awareness of their own abilities and limitations;
T3-Ind.5	…deal with criticism, resistance and conflicts in their professional context in a constructive manner;
T3-Ind.6	…develop professional self-regulation abilities in handling professional requirements

Cognitive Resources (T3-Res.)

Guidance practitioners know…

T3-Res.1	…ethical standards for career guidance and counselling as well as concepts of professionalism and professionalization;
T3-Res.2	…the professional mission / guidance concept of their guidance organisation;
T3-Res.3	…conflict management strategies;
T3-Res.4	…reflective techniques to deliberate about their role, profession, and guidance activities on a meta-level;
T3-Res.5	…options for further education and methods of collegial counselling (peer learning, intervision) and professional supervision;
T3-Res.6	…current research findings and profession-related developments in the field of career guidance and counselling;
T3-Res.7	…strategies to cope with stress and to foster self-efficacy and self-motivation.

Competence T4

Co-designing Quality Development Processes

Guidance practitioners are willing and able to align their practice with a quality concept – whether they are interacting with clients, engaged in organisational activities, or working at the societal level. They participate in developing and implementing the quality concept and realise it in actual practice.

Competence Indicators (T4-Ind.)

Guidance practitioners…

T4-Ind.1	…observe acknowledged quality standards for career guidance and counselling in their practice;
T4-Ind.2	…translate these quality standards into concrete actions, in accordance with their tasks;
T4-Ind.3	…regularly participate in planning, implementing and documenting activities of quality assurance and enhancement;
T4-Ind.4	…regularly work with the quality standards and contribute to their continuous improvement;
T4-Ind.5	…make the results of the quality assurance and enhancement activities transparent;
T4-Ind.6	…engage in the evaluation of guidance processes and consider the results of such evaluations for the enhancement of their guidance offers.

Cognitive Resources (T4-Res.)

Guidance practitioners know…

T4-Res.1	…concepts of quality assurance and enhancement;
T4-Res.2	…evaluation methods, as well as further scientific methods of measuring and assessing the quality of guidance processes.

Process-related Competences (P)

The process-related competences describe the professional requirements of how guidance practitioners can shape and mould the individual guidance process in a narrower sense. Such professional management/organisation of guidance processes includes
- the development of stable working conditions, a secure environment, and a sound working alliance for the collaborative process of career guidance and counselling,
- the clarification of the client's guidance concerns,
- the collaborative analysis of the client's situation and goal clarification,
- the identification and reinforcement of the client's competences and resources, as well as the development of perspectives for problem-resolution and action.

Competence P1

Developing Stable Working Conditions and a Secure Environment

Guidance practitioners are willing and able to develop stable working conditions for the guidance process, which promote the clients' feeling of structural security and a positive communicative atmosphere.

Competence Indicators (P1-Ind.)

Guidance Practitioners…

P1-Ind.1	…ensure a comfortable, undisturbed atmosphere and adequate premises for guidance;
P1-Ind.2	…plan in the minimum amount of time, which will be necessary for the guidance session;
P1-Ind.3	…make their mandates, roles and functions transparent, where these are relevant for the guidance process;
P1-Ind.4	…provide information about the conditions of the guidance offer (e.g., voluntariness, outcome-neutrality, scope of the offer, legal aspects);
P1-Ind.5	…find an agreement with clients about how to proceed in the guidance process;
P1-Ind.6	…ensure that the guidance process is structured and transparent for clients regarding its form and contents;
P1-Ind.7	…find an agreement with clients about what should be documented during the guidance process;
P1-Ind.8	…explain to clients how their personal data and information will be handled (data protection/ confidentiality);

Cognitive Resources (P1-Res.)
Guidance Practitioners know…

P1-Res.1	…requirements for the confidentiality of a guidance setting;
P1-Res.2	…methods of structuring and managing/organising guidance discussions and processes;
P1-Res.3	…methods for time management
P1-Res.4	…data protection guidelines and privacy/confidentiality agreements.

Competence P2

Building a Sound Working Alliance and Emotional Security

Guidance practitioners are willing and able to build a working alliance, which is adequate in consideration of the client's concern, and to foster the client's emotional security.

Competence Indicators (P2-Ind.)

Guidance practitioners…

P2-Ind.1	…demonstrate respect and appreciation for clients;
P2-Ind.2	…generally encounter clients with an empathetic attitude;
P2-Ind.3	…behave in a congruent and genuine way at all levels of communication (verbal and non-verbal) in the sense of authenticity and openness;
P2-Ind.4	…professionally balance between closeness and distance in contact with the client;
P2-Ind.5	…foster and stimulate the motivation and initiative of clients regarding the guidance process.

Cognitive Resources (P2-Res.)

Guidance practitioners know…

P2-Res.1	…approaches of building relations and trust (e.g., person-centred approach, three-stage model of building trust);
P2-Res.2	…theories of communication psychology (e.g., communication square, meta-communication);
P2-Res.3	…discussion techniques (e.g., interview techniques, active listening, reframing);
P2-Res.4	…psychological theories and approaches referring to motivation and emotion (e.g., incentive theories)
P2-Res.5	…moderation techniques (e.g., brainstorming, mind mapping).

Competence P3

Clarifying the Clients´ Concerns and Coming to a Guidance Agreement

Guidance practitioners are willing and able to make the clients' concerns and expectations in view of the guidance process sufficiently explicit in dialogue with them. They come to an agreement regarding the goals of the guidance process / focus of the guidance offer.

Competence Indicators (P3-Ind.)

Guidance practitioners…

P3-Ind.1	…systematically record clients' guidance needs and come to a mutual understanding of the clients' general concerns;
P3-Ind.2	…work out a first idea of the key issues behind these concerns in collaboration with clients and clarify, whether the guidance offer is the adequate format to address their concerns;
P3-Ind.3	…clarify with clients, which expectations they have regarding the guidance offer, and explicate the limitations of the service (e.g., which concerns go beyond the guidance offer);
P3-Ind.4	…pay attention to possible changes in the clients´ concerns and objectives during the guidance process, and react in an appropriate way, e.g. by coming to a new agreement;
P3-Ind.5	…provide information about specific institutions and services, where required by the situation of the client (e.g., case management, addiction counselling);
P3-Ind.6	…pay attention to legal requirements and institutional guidelines (where applicable) when making guidance agreements/contracts.

Cognitive Resources (P3-Res.)

Guidance practitioners know…

P3-Res.1	…different theoretical approaches and methods of guidance;
P3-Res.2	…alternative, supplementary offers for guidance and counselling
P3-Res.3	…legal requirements and institutional guidelines (where applicable) for contractual agreements.

Competence P4

Clarifying the Situation and Objectives

Guidance practitioners are willing and able to support clients´ in assessing their situations in view of their concerns, and to assist them in re-evaluating their situation and forming realistic objectives through deliberation.

Competence Indicators (P4-Ind.)

Guidance practitioners…

P4-Ind.1	…work out clients' perceptions of their concerns with them, and identify factors, which may influence or cause the troublesome situation;
P4-Ind.2	…clarify, whether other attempts had been made to deal with the concern;
P4-Ind.3	…support clients in exploring their objectives and motives, where these relate to their concern;
P4-Ind.4	…assist clients in forming an autonomous description of their situation, and in (re-)evaluating their situation (e.g. in view of their individual attitudes, values, abilities, and goals);
P4-Ind.5	…collaborate with clients in prioritising their objectives;
P4-Ind.6	…inform clients about chances and risks in the achievement of their goals, concerning the institutional and societal circumstances, and raise their awareness for potential conflicts and contradictions.

Cognitive Resources (P4-Res.)

Guidance practitioners know…

P4-Res.1	…methods of systematic situational analysis;
P4-Res.2	…methods for the identification, definition, and operationalisation of goals/objectives;
P4-Res.3	…the influence of diversity on education, vocational choice, and employment (e.g. educational participation and opportunities, diversity as a resource);
P4-Res.4	…institutional and societal systems, structures, offers, and developments (e.g. education and employment system, vocational structures, options for education and training, funding opportunities, regional and supra-regional labour market developments);
P4-Res.5	…relevant legal regulations concerning education, vocational options, and employment (e.g. labour law, regulations for vocational education and training).

Competence P5

Identifying and Reinforcing Clients' Internal and External Resources

Guidance practitioners are willing and able to assist clients in identifying their competences and re-sources, and to consider these resources and their further development in view of their concerns and objectives.

Competence Indicators (P5-Ind.)

Guidance practitioners…

P5-Ind.1	…collaboratively identify clients' attitudes, emotions, motivations and behaviours, where these are relevant for dealing with their concerns;
P5-Ind.2	…collaboratively explore clients' biographies, competences, and resources, and re-late them to their guidance concerns and objectives;
P5-Ind.3	…collaboratively identify clients' potential resources (and constraints), which result from their social background and wider societal environment, in consideration of their relevance for the achievement of the clients´ objectives and their decision making (e.g. aspects of the family background, the educational, vocational, or occupational environment);
P5-Ind.4	…use scientifically validated and appropriate diagnostic approaches for competence assessment and/or self-assessment, where required, if clients consent;
P5-Ind.5	…jointly interpret the results of the diagnostic approaches with clients (where applicable), so that clients understand the results, and they can be used to enrich the guidance process;
P5-Ind.6	…support clients in developing their self-perception regarding their potentials, competences and, resources;
P5-Ind.7	…inform clients about possibilities to develop their potentials, competences, and re-sources.

Cognitive Resources (P5-Res.)

Guidance practitioners know…

P5-Res.1	…methods to identify and mobilise individual resources;
P5-Res.2	…behavioural theories and approaches of pedagogical psychology;
P5-Res.3	…approaches of (psycho-) diagnostics, competence assessment and recognition, as well as tools for self-assessment;
P5-Res.4	…the concepts of career management competences and the lifelong learning;
P5-Res.5	…living environments and states of neediness of diverse target groups.

Competence P6

Developing Perspectives for Problem-Resolution and Action

Guidance practitioners are willing and able to support clients in developing possible solutions and action plans for reaching their goals.

Competence Indicators (P6-Ind.)

Guidance practitioners…

P6-Ind.1	…jointly work out realistic ideas of how to solve problems and act with clients, in view of their competences, qualifications and resources;
P6-Ind.2	…jointly develop decision criteria with clients, and assist them in their decision-making processes;
P6-Ind.3	… inform clients about options and strategies to increase their chances to achieve their goals and to overcome possible obstacles;
P6-Ind.4	…provide clients with information and/or refer them to sources of information, which they can consult themselves, when these resources suit the target groups and needs of the clients;
P6-Ind.5	…raise opportunities to promote social inclusion and equality in view of age, gender, handicaps, cultural and ethnic origins, where appropriate to the particular case and situation;
P6-Ind.6	…assess whether further and/or external counselling should be sought by clients to address their guidance concerns, also in consideration of the guidance process' development;
P6-Ind.7	…collaboratively summarise the progression and results of the guidance process with clients when the process is progressing towards the end, and discuss the clients' next steps, where relevant.

Cognitive Resources (P6-Res.)

Guidance practitioners know…

P6-Res.1	…decision-making theories and models;
P6-Res.2	…methods of information search and analysis
P6-Res.3	…context-sensitive sources of information and databases

Organisation-related Competences (O)

The organisation-related competences describe requirements for guidance practitioners concerning the organisational circumstances of the guidance process. Guidance practitioners participate in formulating and the organisational mission statement and implement it effectively. They participate in the design and optimisation of the formal organisational structures and processes, and act in conjunction with these. They contribute to an organisational culture, which enacts its values, as well as to its further development. They ensure an efficient use and the sustainability of the organisational resources, maintain cooperation with experts and other relevant actors in the societal context of the organisation, and contribute to the development of networks.

Competence O1

Developing and Implementing the Organisational Mission Statement

Guidance practitioners are willing and able to participate in the development of an organisational mission statement and to implement it effectively. The specific part of the mission statement, which describes the mandate and purpose of the guidance service, its strategy and conception of guidance, should respect the concerns of the target groups, the societal circumstances, and quality standards for good guidance.

Competence Indicators (O1-Ind.)

Guidance Practitioners…

O1-Ind.1	…participate in the formulation and enhancement of the mission statement;
O1-Ind.2	…participate in translating the mission statement into strategies, guidance concepts, and organisational processes;
O1-Ind.3	…make the mission statement of the organisation transparent to the public and key stakeholders (e.g., partner organisations, education providers, sponsors);
O1-Ind.4	…align their professional activities with the organisation's mission.

Cognitive Resources (O1-Res.)

Guidance practitioners know…

O1-Res.1	…approaches for the development and implementation of mission statements (e.g., bottom-up-/top-down-approaches; Balanced Scorecard);
O1-Res.2	…theories and methods of strategic management (e.g., market-oriented / resource-based approach);
O1-Res.3	…methods of formative and summative evaluation (e.g., utilisation-, target-, and management- oriented evaluation);
O1-Res.4	…public relations instruments (e.g., leaflets, posters, open house days).

Competence O2

Designing and Optimising Formal Organisational Structures and Processes

Guidance practitioners are willing and able to participate in the design and optimisation of formal organisational structures and processes and to act in conjunction with them.

Competence Indicators (O2-Ind.)

Guidance practitioners…

O2-Ind.1	…identify established structures, functions and key processes of the organisation and collaborate in enhancing them in line with clearly defined objectives;
O2-Ind.2	…define organisational interfaces regarding the effectiveness and efficiency of the guidance services, particularly in consideration of the target groups' interests;
O2-Ind.3	…determine organisational structures and functions in collaboration with the management of the guidance organisation, considering roles and responsibilities, tasks and competences;
O2-Ind.4	…act in conjunction with the actual structures and processes of the organisation.

Cognitive Resources (O2-Res.)

Guidance practitioners know…

O2-Res.1	…concepts of organisational development;
O2-Res.2	…classification schemes of organisational structures and processes;
O2-Res.3	…methods for the design of efficient organisational structures and processes.

Competence O3

Co-creating and Enacting the Organisational Culture

Guidance practitioners are willing and able to contribute to a organisational culture of transparent, enacted values, by collaborating in the development of a constructive and participative culture of communication, cooperation, decision making, and conflict management.

Competence Indicators (O3-Ind.)

Guidance practitioners…

O3-Ind.1	…participate in processes to enhance the organisational culture;
O3-Ind.2	…contribute to the constructive spirit of the organisational culture through their co-operative behaviour;
O3-Ind.3	…apply prescribed or collaboratively developed rules in their external and internal communication (e.g., oral/written);
O3-Ind.4	…make responsible use of their leeway for in organising guidance processes autonomously and of their options to participate in organisational decision-making;
O3-Ind.5	…engage in a continuous dialogue with colleagues to discuss various aspects of guidance and its organisation (e.g., informal peer learning, constructive feedback, team discussions, and appraisal interviews).

Cognitive Resources O3-(Res.)

Guidance practitioners know…

O3-Res.1	…approaches and concepts concerning organisational culture;
O3-Res.2	…strategies and models of conflict management;
O3-Res.3	…guidelines for communication and behaviour, as well as leadership principles of the particular organisation.

Competence O4

Ensuring the Sustainability and Efficient Use of Resources

Guidance practitioners are willing and able to work with the available human and material resources efficiently, and actively participate in the determination of required resources and safeguarding their availability in the future (sustainability).

Competence Indicators (O4-Ind.)

Guidance practitioners…

O4-Ind.1	…support the budgeting, acquisition and sustainability of necessary organisational resources in their areas of responsibility;
O4-Ind.2	…actively participate in the determination of which human and financial resources will be needed in the future;
O4-Ind.3	…use the available human and material resources effectively in pursuing the objectives of the guidance service.

Cognitive Resources (O4-Res.)

Guidance practitioners know…

O4-Res.1	…strategies of resource management (e.g. financial planning, controlling, working-time management);
O4-Res.2	…marketing strategies, as well as methods of client acquisition;
O4-Res.3	…sources of information relating to the application for material and financial means.

Competence O5

Cooperating with the Professional and Interdisciplinary Environment

Guidance practitioners are willing and able to utilise their professional network (within the organisation as well as across organisations) and the wider societal environment relating to reliable and targeted information, cooperation and networking, and to contribute to the development of these networks.

Competence Indicators (O5-Ind.)

Guidance practitioners…

O5-Ind.1	…obtain an up-to-date picture of their relevant environment (e.g., comparable services, other service providers, administrative bodies, the economy);
O5-Ind.2	…develop cooperation and activities, which are relevant for the success and quality of the guidance service pertaining to their areas of responsibility;
O5-Ind.3	…collaborate in developing, maintaining and utilising guidance networks;
O5-Ind.4	…participate in interdisciplinary cooperation, and – to a reasonable degree – in scientific and research activities.

Cognitive Resources (O5-Res.)

Guidance practitioners know …

O5-Res.1	…networking strategies and concepts;
O5-Res.2	…options for cooperation and relevant environments (e.g., contact persons in administrations, education and training providers, enterprises, ministries, policy makers);
O5-Res.3	…networks in the guidance field (professional associations, labour administration, chambers of commerce, etc.).

Competences Related to Society (S)

The competences related to society describe requirements for guidance practitioners regarding the consideration of relevant societal circumstances (e.g., the educational system, occupational system, and labour market), as well as the pursuit of widely accepted societal goals (e.g., promoting clients´ self-organisation; increasing participation in education, vocational training, and employment; reduction of individual and societal misallocations; enhancing social participation and inclusion).

Competence S1

Considering societal circumstances

Guidance practitioners are willing and able to consider those societal circumstances, which are relevant in view of clients' guidance concerns, within the guidance process, as well as for the further development of the guidance offers.

Competence Indicators (S1-Ind.)

Guidance practitioners…

S1-Ind.1	…reflect the relevance of societal circumstances / influence factors for the development of the guidance services;
S1-Ind.2	…actively participate in processing and preparing knowledge on societal circumstances for its use in guidance and for the clients (knowledge management);
S1-Ind.3	…consider how societal circumstances (e.g., labour market conditions, features of the educational system) may be relevant for their clients´ concerns (see P1–P6).

Cognitive Resources (S1-Res.)

Guidance practitioners know…

S1-Res.1	…relevant fields of knowledge concerning society (e.g., labour market, economics, the educational system, vocational systems, requirements in terms of competences and qualifications, and funding opportunities);
S1-Res.2	…societal developments (e.g., globalization, growing complexity, demographic change, lifelong learning, and diversity);
S1-Res.3	…databases, knowledge resources, and methods knowledge management.

Competence S2

Considering Societal Goals

Guidance practitioners are willing and able to consider societal goals in their guidance practice – whether they are interacting with clients, engaged in organisational activities, or working at the societal level. Relevant societal goals comprise the transfer of knowledge and information, the promotion of clients' career management competences, increased participation in education, vocational training, and employment, the reduction of individual and societal misallocations, as well as the promotion of social participation inclusion of potentially disadvantaged groups.

Competence Indicators (S2-Ind.)

Guidance practitioners…

S2-Ind.1	…reflect societal goals in view of career guidance and counselling;
S2-Ind.2	…reflect the impact (and limits) of guidance on the societal environment;
S2-Ind.3	…express the experiences and insights from guidance to inspire societal discourses (e.g., at the local level, or in professional associations);
S2-Ind.4	…participate in determining the goals of their organisations' guidance offers (these may be used as output criteria for evaluation);
S2-Ind.5	…assist clients in linking their individual objectives with societal goals in a reasonable way (see P1–P6).

Cognitive Resources (S2-Res.)

Guidance practitioners know…

S2-Res.1	…the societal goals related to career guidance and counselling (e.g., promotion of self-organisation and career management competences, social participation, and social inclusion);
S2-Res.2	…approaches of promoting abilities for self-organisation, as well as social participation and inclusion;
S2-Res.3	…problem areas in the educational, vocational, and employment systems (such as disadvantages, opportunities for participation), as well as measures meet these challenges.

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