



**QUAL-IM-G**

Improving the implementation of quality assurance in career guidance

# Mentoring program for quality certification

Helping practitioners comply with the requirements of different  
quality assurance mechanisms

Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union



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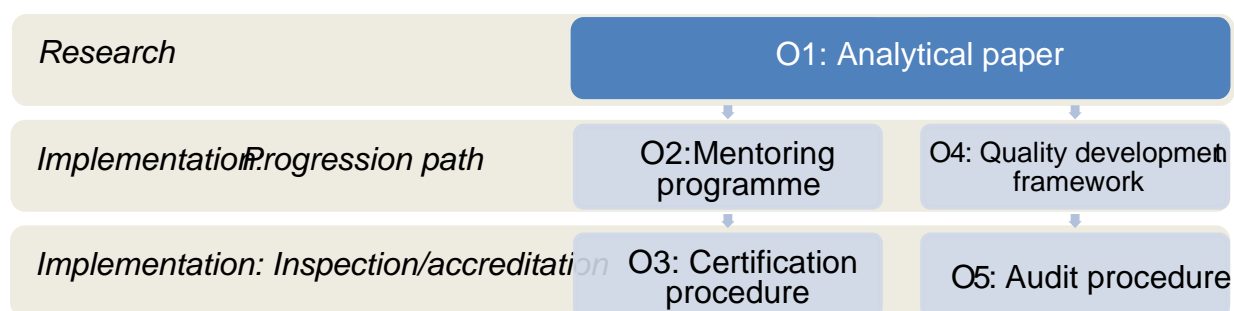
## General Introduction

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This document was produced within an Erasmus + funded project “Qual-IM-G” that builds on the experience of different projects, initiatives and existing mechanisms in the field of quality assurance for career guidance in the partner countries. It recognises that countries, depending on the history in the field of careers will have varying traditions in developing quality standards to support individual practitioners and organisational procedures and proposes a set of intellectual outputs that can optimize the implementation of existing mechanisms in the field of quality assurance for career guidance or facilitate the development of new ones:

- **O1: Analytical paper on impact and success factors of different QA approaches in Europe:** Through qualitative and quantitative research, the current state of different trans-national and national QA practices in CG were analysed. The paper identifies the success factors and impact of these different approaches and is the basis for the development of the following outputs (iCeGS).
- **O2: Mentoring programme for CG practitioners:** A non-formal mentoring/training programme that allows practitioners to comply with a quality standard. It contains training modules that allow the counsellor to develop skills and competences in areas required in most of the QA practices focused on individual counsellor. It contains a core mentoring programme for areas most important in certification processes and supplementary modules (abif).
- **O3: Certification/accreditation procedure of CG practitioners:** Procedure for the accreditation of counsellors with recommendations and examples of self-assessment tools and procedures, list of possible required evidence and a checklist for the implementation of such mechanism (SKPKR).
- **O4: Quality development framework (QDF) for providers:** A model that supports service providers with their continuous quality development and assurance irrespective of a formal external certification/auditing process (see O5). The implementation of the QDF requires voluntary commitment and a participative process of all members of the organization wishing to improve their services. The QDF is applicable to various Quality Standards existing in different countries. It focusses however on those indicators that are most commonly present in different standards (nfb).
- **O5: Audit/labelling procedure for providers:** Contains pre-audit process, self-evaluation questionnaire/checklist, audit plan and certification process diagram (BKS Úspech).

The following details these outputs and shows how they relate to the key aims of the project:



All the outputs are freely available for download on the project website

[www.guidancequality.eu](http://www.guidancequality.eu).

## What's the added value of the programme?

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Different training programmes for career guidance counsellors that were developed within European projects exist. However, of those that were researched during the project at hand, only 14% provide mentoring as part of the support resources for organisations and individuals. One of the goals of QUAL-IM-G was therefore to create a mentoring programme that would prepare guidance counsellors for different quality standards and certifications. The aim was not to design a new training programme to enhance skills, but to help experienced practitioners document their experience, skills and knowledge to meet the expectations of the examiners – and to fill any gaps found in the process.

Most quality assurance standards address multiple and inter-related aspects of provision including professionalism, CPD, evaluation, partnerships, LMI, client satisfaction and leadership. Therefore, the mentoring programme focuses less on the development of professional knowledge, skills and competences, but on one's capacity to comply with transversal elements of existing quality standards. That is why the product is compatible with existing transnational and national quality standards for career guidance counsellors and thus highly transferable to different contexts.

## How was the programme developed?

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Based on the comprehensive **analytical paper on impact and success factors of different QA approaches in Europe** and the expertise of the partners from 7 different European countries, the most essential topics on which the programme should focus were identified. From June 2018 till December 2018, the partner organizations developed and internally tested those modules for which they could provide the most extensive expertise. Starting in January 2019 and ending with May 2019, the programme was then piloted in transnational events in the Czech Republic and Slovakia, in Germany and in Austria with more than 40 experienced counsellors participating.

Across the four countries, all modules could be tested, which provided comprehensive feedback on which of the modules were most helpful, best executed and most needed. Although the participants were generally very satisfied with the mentoring, a lot of feedback was also collected regarding the organisational and content aspects of the mentoring programme. To the extent that these were feasible and compatible with the objectives of the project, they were then incorporated into the final version of the programme.

## What is the target group of the programme?

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The mentoring at hand is aimed at (experienced) **individual practitioners working in the fields of vocational and educational guidance, counselling or coaching** who wish to undergo a QA process or certification.

The programme allows them to comply with quality standards which most of the researched QA practices focus on. It provides a balanced approach between the **development of competences of the candidate** (reinforcing theoretical base, providing examples of good practice, ...) AND **preparation for the QA procedure** (description of one's own practice, preparing and collecting evidence, ...). It also contains mentoring methodology that allows counsellors to monitor and document their learning progress.

## How can I use the programme? What's a module?

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The project partners identified the most crucial topics in which career guidance counsellors must prove and document their expertise to comply with existing quality standards.

For each of these 21 topics, the partnership created a training module. Each module is approximately half a day long, but can be shortened or extended, according to the needs of the clients. Usually, a module consists of theoretical information (in most cases in the form of a PowerPoint presentation) as well as practical exercises, either to be done during a group training or to be done alone as "homework".

Since the target group is defined as *experienced* career guidance counsellors, none of the participants will need support regarding each of the topics. Therefore, **the mentoring programme is designed as a "cafeteria model"**: Based on an initial external or self-assessment (and depending on the applicable national QA standards), it can be decided which of the modules are important. These can then be implemented flexibly and adapted to individual requirements. Since the modules are independent of each other, content and exercises may overlap.

## From which modules can I choose?

The 21 modules can be organized into 9 thematic fields:

Module	Thematic fields	Available in ...
<b>Theoretical Basics / Action Planning</b>	Guidance approaches & counselling techniques	English
<b>Outcomes of guidance (General)</b>	Outcomes of counselling	English, German, Czech, Slovak
<b>Social Outcomes</b>	Outcomes of counselling	English
<b>Career Management Skills</b>	Outcomes of counselling	English
<b>Ethics (General)</b>	Ethics	English, German, Czech, Slovak
<b>Mission Statement and Vision</b>	Ethics	English, German, Czech, Slovak
<b>Intake / Needs Analysis</b>	Ethics	English
<b>Using Labour Market Information</b>	Knowledge on labour market, education & offer landscape	English
<b>Networking and partnerships</b>	Knowledge on labour market, education & offer landscape	English, German, Czech, Slovak
<b>Decision-making techniques and personality</b>	Decision-making techniques	English
<b>Assessments and career testing</b>	Acquisition of skills & competencies	English
<b>Building a career portfolio</b>	Acquisition of skills & competencies	English, German, Czech, Slovak
<b>Gender</b>	Personalization of the service	English
<b>Personalization of the service (General)</b>	Personalization of the service	English
<b>Career guidance at a distance</b>	Personalization of the service	English
<b>Quality assuring career guidance</b>	Quality Assurance	English, German, Czech, Slovak

Measuring feedback and impact	Quality Assurance	English
Reflection of own practice	Quality Assurance	English
Evidence based practice	Quality Assurance	English, German, Czech, Slovak
Management basics	Management	English
Marketing	Management	English

While each of the modules is available in English (“Supplementary Programme”), some are also available in German, Czech and Slovak languages (“Core Programme”). The decision on the core and the supplementary programme was based on

- how necessary a certain mentoring module is (i.e. whether there are already corresponding offers),
- how much in demand a mentoring module is (i.e. whether the appropriate skill or knowledge is required to obtain certificates), and
- how the quality, practical relevance of the content and novelty of the exercises was assessed by the partners and the participants of the piloting.

## What do I need to implement the mentoring? What are the “useful resources”?

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The modules are mostly designed to be delivered in groups of about 10 – 15 people in training rooms with moveable furniture. However, the modules can theoretically be used in **both individual and group settings**, although this may involve adapting the methods used. In both cases, “self-study materials” are of great importance. **Please keep in mind that “self-study materials” rarely refer to theoretical input but to practical exercises that are given to the trainings participants so they can do them as “homework”.**

Each module of this mentoring programme is supported and supplemented by the **“useful resources”**: These primarily contain PowerPoint presentations, worksheets and sometimes case studies and continuative literature as a basis for exercises. In the mentoring programme, reference is made at an appropriate point if it would be useful to use the corresponding resources.

## What can I do if I have further questions?

All the outputs are freely available for download on the website [www.guidancequality.eu](http://www.guidancequality.eu).  
For more details about the different outputs please contact the respective lead organization:

Country	Organization	Representative	Email address
<b>Slovakia</b>	Association for Career Guidance and Career Development	Board of the association	info@zkprk.sk
<b>Czech Republic</b>	Association for Career Guidance and Career Development	Alice Müllerová	sdruzenikp@gmail.com
<b>Germany</b>	National Guidance Forum in Education, Career and Employment	Karen Schober/ Barbara Lampe	info@forum-beratung.de
<b>Austria</b>	ABIF – analysis, consulting and interdisciplinary research	Claudia Liebeswar	liebeswar@abif.at
<b>United Kingdom</b>	International Centre for Guidance Studies at the University of Derby	Siobhan Neary	S.Neary@derby.ac.uk
<b>Netherlands</b>	NOLOC - Professional Association of career guidance counsellors in Netherlands	Board of the association	info@noloc.nl
<b>Norway</b>	Inland Norway University of Applied Science	Erik Haug	Erik.Haug@inn.no



This document was published in 2019 by the partners of the QUAL-IM-G project:

- **Association for Career Guidance and Career Development (ZKPRK)**, Slovakia – association of career professionals and service providers in Slovakia ([www.rozvojkariery.sk](http://www.rozvojkariery.sk))
- **BKS Úspech**, Slovakia – career guidance and training provider, ISO certification expert ([www.bksuspech.sk](http://www.bksuspech.sk))
- **Teamwork for a better future**, Slovakia – non-profit association ([www.ozbuducnost.sk](http://www.ozbuducnost.sk))
- **NOLOC**, Netherland - Dutch association for career professionals ([www.noloc.nl](http://www.noloc.nl))
- **German National Guidance Forum in Education, Career and Employment (nfb)**, Germany – coordinator of the national QA system for guidance ([www.forum-beratung.de](http://www.forum-beratung.de))
- **International Centre for Guidance Studies (iCeGS)**, England - applied research centre specialising in career development and employability ([www.derby.ac.uk/research/icegs](http://www.derby.ac.uk/research/icegs))
- **ABIF**, Austria - independent social science research and consulting institute ([www.abif.at](http://www.abif.at))
- **Association for Career Guidance and Career Development (SKPKR)**, Czech Republic – association of career professionals in Czech Republic ([www.sdruzenikp.cz](http://www.sdruzenikp.cz))
- **Inland Norway University of Applied Science (INN)**, Norway – research institution (<https://www.inn.no>)