National Quality Framework for Career Guidance
Presentation of the areas of Competence standards, Career competence and Ethics
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Foreword

This report has been prepared as part of the work on the National Quality Framework for Career Guidance, for which Skills Norway has been commissioned by the Ministry of Education and Research. The report presents three out of four areas in the assignment: competence standards, career competence and ethics.

In 2018, a proposed solution for each of these three areas was developed in collaboration with three broadly composed groups, involving representatives from a range of sectors, roles and administrative levels involved in career guidance services. The groups were headed by the specialists Torild Schulstok, Assistant professor (Inland Norway University of Applied Sciences – INN), Rie Thomsen, Professor in career guidance (Aarhus University), Anne Holm-Nordhagen, Assistant professor (USN) and discipline coordinator Erik Hagaseth Haug, Associate professor (INN), assisted by Tonje F. Gravås, Line W. Engh and Gry E. Bakke from Skills Norway. The proposed solutions were circulated for comment in the spring of 2019. This report presents the three areas after the comments were incorporated.

Skills Norway would like to thank the participants from the three groups for their extensive and high-quality contributions towards the development of the proposed solutions. We would also like to thank the four specialists for their efforts, both in the implementation of the project and for their invaluable expert contributions.

Oslo, 16 October 2020

Ingjerd Espolin Gaarder
Head of Department (acting)
Department of Career Guidance

In July 2021 Skills Norway became part of the Norwegian Directorate for Higher Education and Skills.
1 Development of a national quality framework for career guidance

1.1 Introduction

The aim of a National Quality Framework for Career Guidance is to ensure that the population has access to high-quality career guidance services. Career guidance services in Norway are available in a range of different sectors to many different target groups, and the services offered are diverse and provided under varying framework conditions. Sometimes the main task of a service is to provide career guidance, while at other times, this guidance is integrated within other services. Irrespective of where and how the career guidance is offered, the aim is always for the service to be of high quality.

There has already been a great deal of good work dedicated to the quality of career guidance services in Norway, even without the support of a national quality framework. The aim of developing a cross-sectoral national quality framework for career guidance is to provide practitioners, owners, managers and the field in general with a useful tool for developing quality in career guidance.

This report presents the specialist work that has resulted in the National Quality Framework for Career Guidance. To find out more about the Framework, you can either read this report or visit the website Quality in Career Guidance1, which presents the framework digitally. The website also contains resources and tools for quality development.

Quality is not something that develops by itself, but tends to be the result of continuous focus and long-term effort. Nor is quality development something that one achieves and is then done with; it is

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1 https://www.kompetansenorge.no/kvalitet-i-karriere/
continuous, ongoing work that requires commitment and effort from multiple parts of an organisation. It is specific work that must be performed by owners, managers and practitioners together. The hope is that a framework for quality in career guidance can provide support, inspiration, structure and practical assistance for in order to develop the quality of career guidance services in Norway.

ABOUT SKILLS NORWAY
Skills Norway was a directorate reporting to the Ministry of Education and Research which works to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to enjoy lifelong learning and to acquire the skills they need.

Skills Norway aims to ensure that adults have access to flexible training, that immigrants receive high-quality Norwegian language tuition and appropriate testing, and that Norwegian businesses have a targeted approach to work on skills development. Skills Norway also aims to ensure that the authorities and population are well informed about the kind of skills that will be needed in the future.

Skills Norway is also responsible for the range of national of public career guidance services. The aim is to provide better access to services, improve the quality of career guidance and help to provide equality of services for young people and adults in every phase of their life.

Skills Norway develops and coordinates the field of career guidance by:
- improving quality and professionalism
- improving basic knowledge and providing specialist advice
- creating arenas and building networks, nationally and internationally
- supporting and guiding those who offer career advice
- helping the various parties to collaborate on and coordinate their career guidance work
- providing input on policymaking

In July 2021 Skills Norway became part of the Norwegian Directorate for Higher Education and Skills.

About The Directorate for Higher Education and Skills
The Directorate for Higher Education and Skills was established on 1 July 2021, under the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research. The directorate is a result of the merger of the Norwegian Agency for International Cooperation and Quality Enhancement in Higher Education (Diku), Skills Norway, and Universell, as well as parts of Unit and the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD). The directorate will also be taking over selected tasks for the Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT).

The directorate is the executive agency for the Ministry of Education and Research within the higher education and higher vocational education sectors and is responsible for the national skills policy. We advise the Ministry, we implement national policies, and we coordinate incentive schemes and management instruments.

The directorate shall contribute to enhance the quality of education and skills, strengthen international collaboration, and be a driving force for the digital restructuring of Norwegian universities and university colleges. We strive to enhance knowledge and skills in the population, make lifelong high-quality education and learning accessible to all and ensure that the world of work has access to a competent work force.
1.2 Background

The Official Norwegian Report NOU 2016:7 *Career Guidance for Individuals and Society* recommends the development of a National Quality Framework for Career Guidance. A cross-sectoral quality framework is regarded as an important measure in terms of providing cohesion in a comprehensive system of lifelong career guidance. One of the main aims of the quality framework is to ensure that high-quality career guidance services are provided in every sector in Norway. Quality and professionalism in career guidance are essential if the services are to have the desired outcome, both for the individual and society.

As well as NOU 2016:7, the OECD’s *Skills Strategy Action Report (2014)* for Norway and the *Norwegian Strategy for Skills Policy (2017)* are important reference points for today’s focus on quality in Norwegian career guidance. All the above reports emphasise the significance of a comprehensive system of career guidance. This focus appears to stem from the recommendations in the European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network’s (ELGPN) *Guidelines for Policies and Systems Development for Lifelong Guidance (2015)*. NOU 2016:7 concludes that the ELGPN’s views on quality have ‘an approach that generally ties in well with the committee’s views on developing a comprehensive system for lifelong career guidance in a Norwegian context. If the system is to work, reach all the target groups and have an effect, it must address purpose, access, quality and coordination (p. 29). Based partly on the ELGPN’s recommendations, NOU 2016:7 assumes that a comprehensive career guidance system must comprise four elements:

1. Access for all groups
2. Comprehensive content
3. Mechanisms for coordination and collaboration
4. Consistently good quality and professionalism.
The quality framework thereby becomes an element of the work of developing a comprehensive system of lifelong career guidance.

As a means of following up on NOU 2016:7, in its 2017 letter of allocation, Skills Norway (now the Norwegian Directorate for Higher Education and Skills) was commissioned by the Ministry of Education and Research to study and initiate the development of a quality framework for career guidance services, in partnership with other parties involved in career guidance. The assignment was specified in more detail in a letter dated 16 March 2017: Further details on Skills Norway’s assignment – preparing a quality framework for career guidance. This was further ratified in the national budget for 2018, which stated:

‘Skills Norway has been commissioned to start work on reporting on and developing a quality framework for career guidance. The aim is to provide all the inhabitants of this country with equitable career guidance services. The quality framework must be cross-sectoral, and among other things must define quality criteria for the services and competence standards for career guidance practitioners’.

One of the specific objectives of the quality framework is to be used as a tool for developing quality in career guidance. The framework must be useful, both in terms of developing quality in practice, and in terms of management and leadership. The framework is not an objective in itself. The actual process of developing and implementing the quality framework is no less important in terms of achieving the objective of improving the quality of career guidance. For that reason, the assignment from the Ministry of Education and Research to Skills Norway also includes a requirement to involve a broad range of parties. The assignment emphasises that Skills Norway must ‘facilitate a broad and inclusive process in which all parties, state agencies tasked with career guidance, the municipal sector (municipalities and county authorities) and other relevant parties are included in the development work’.

1.3 The assignment, organisation and involvement

The assignment from the Ministry of Education and Research includes four defined deliverables:

1) Competence standards – professional career guidance
2) Career competence – learning outcome from career guidance
3) Ethics – principles and code for good practice
4) Quality assurance – quality criteria, indicators, evaluation, statistics and research

The objective of the assignment is to develop a national quality framework that can be useful and relevant towards developing the quality of career guidance in all sectors. The assignment involves extensive development work, in which the process itself is important in terms of ensuring the involvement of all parties and their inclusion in the implementation phase.

It is for this reason that the Norwegian Directorate for Higher Education and Skills and the Ministry of Education and Research early came to an agreement that the first phase of the development had to be specialist development work that would result in the proposal of specialist solutions for the various parts of the quality framework. This was necessary because career guidance is a young specialist field in Norway, and work with questions concerning quality will require a joint process in order to mature. In terms of implementing the framework, it is also important for the framework to be perceived as relevant and legitimate in its field. It was also extremely important to establish the specialist development work before starting to discuss questions of policy, such as what kind of status all or parts of the framework should have in

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the various sectors, how it should be implemented etc., since these are questions that to some degree require different skills and other fora for dialogue and decision-making. Every part of the field must be included in the specialist development work, while questions of, for example, status, i.e. legislation versus recommended guidelines, must be managed by the authorities.

The Norwegian Directorate for Higher Education and Skills therefore defined a time frame of two plus two years. 
- The first phase had a time frame of two years (2018 and 2019). In 2018, specialist development work was performed by groups on three of the deliverables.
- In 2019, the proposals were presented to the field and then revised on the basis of comments.

In the second phase of the project (2020 and 2021) the focus was on the development of the fourth sub-project (quality assurance), the development of a website for quality in career guidance, as well as the implementation of the policy framework.

1.3.1 WORKING PROCESS AND ORGANISATION
In line with the assignment, three specialist groups were set up for the first three deliverables, with cross-sectoral representation. The deliverables were defined as sub-projects. Mandates were drawn up for each of these sub-projects. The mandates gave the various groups the task of reporting on and presenting proposals for the content of the various deliverables. Each of the three groups was headed by Skills Norway (now the Norwegian Directorate for Higher Education and Skills), assisted by a specialist. The work was coordinated by a discipline coordinator. A total of four two-day meetings were held for each of the three groups during 2018. The groups comprised a total of 24 people from a range of sectors and administrative levels, and included persons representing the system level, the field of practice and academia. The Norwegian Directorate for Higher Education and Skills has acted as the overall project manager. The phases of the fourth sub-project were postponed, so this part will be developed in 2020 and 2021.

While this work was under way, Skills Norway obtained input and the relevant knowledge base. This included a review of other countries’ approaches to the development of quality in career guidance. Skills Norway maintained a close dialogue with the project’s interdepartmental reference group, and also obtained comments on the development work from parties such as Nasjonal koordineringsgruppe for karriereveiledning (National Coordination Group for Career Guidance) and Nasjonalt forum for karriereveiledning (National Forum for Career Guidance).

The expert report ‘Nasjonalt kvalitetsrammeverk for karriereveiledning. Faglig forslag til områdene etikk, karrierekompetanse og kompetansestandarder’ (National quality framework for career guidance. Specialist proposals on the areas of Ethics, Career competence and Competence standards) was submitted to the Ministry of Education and Research on 15 February 2019. On the basis of feedback from the Ministry and from the comments received after circulation, the first three parts of the policy framework were revised. This report is a revised version of the report that was submitted to the Ministry of Education and Research. The fourth part, regarding quality assurance, will be developed and completed during 2021 and is not discussed in this report.

1.3.2 COMMENTS AND INVOLVEMENT
The specialist proposals for the quality framework, as described in the report, were circulated for comments through a process in two stages.

The first part of this involved a digital comments process through the project website, in which any interested parties were invited to present their feedback on the three main themes of competence standards, career competence and ethics. There was also an opportunity to submit more general feedback. The comments were
collected through QuestBack.

The second part involved a series of brainstorming sessions. Skills Norway paid visits to relevant parties representing the various branches of the field in order to obtain comments. Examples of parties with whom we met include the school sector (through the Norwegian Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance and Karriereenheter i Oslo (Oslo Career Unit)) and career guidance practitioners in higher education. We have also had cross-sectoral meetings with groups of practitioners, owners and representatives at system level in Hordaland and Troms/Finnmark counties, as well as an all-day meeting with the members of the Nasjonalt forum for karriereveiledning (National Forum for Career Guidance). The meetings were held all over the country and involved presentations of the three parts of the quality framework (Competence standards, Career competence and Ethics), with the audiences then providing their feedback through QuestBack.

The comments we received were extremely useful for the review and the onward development process. These are some extracts:

- ‘In my role as manager I particularly see the relevance when organizing the framework for career guidance practitioners in our company.
- ‘There is too much focus today on fixing problems when people encounter them, instead of on working to prevent these problems by taking small steps over a long period in order to equip people to be able to change course and make decisions without this feeling of a crisis situation’.
- ‘I find the contents recognizable, useful and relevant. That it brings into focus many important themes that we encounter on a daily basis in career guidance. This could become rather complex. But after all, it is also up to us to look at how we can make active use of this in developing our career guidance services. It will be good to use it in training new practitioners’.
- ‘It will make it easier to make guidance more systematic. It will provide us with structure or areas to explore’.
- ‘Useful tool for improving our awareness as career guidance practitioners, of what we must remember to relate to and what we must find a balance between’.

Communication and involvement

In order to ensure a good level of communication and involvement, a stakeholder analysis was performed prior to the development work. The stakeholder analysis focused on the stakeholders’ wishes, need for information and degree of involvement in the work. As part of this analysis, interviews were conducted with representatives of various groups, and personas were developed, i.e. types of stakeholders with characteristics, wishes and needs.

The stakeholder analysis was used to create a communication strategy, to select the participants of the groups and to develop a project website. The project website contained information about the assignment and the process, and a presentation of the groups and specialist articles. The project website had a lively tone, regularly posting brief informative texts, longer specialist texts, photos and short videos, which worked together to show the progress being made on the project and emphasise key messages.

Throughout the development period, the objective has been to achieve good dialogue and increase stakeholders’ interest. The broad dialogue with the field through participation in conferences, meetings and seminars all over the country was also a choice that was made on the basis of the stakeholder analysis and communication strategy.

The project’s website was regularly updated with various types of information and knowledge, on the basis
of the stakeholder analysis and communication strategy. The website also contained a comment function enabling parties to submit comments and feedback to Skills Norway. This comment’s function was also used when workshops and meetings were held with various stakeholders, in order to obtain comments on the drafts and work in progress.

The Quality in Career Guidance website
The quality framework has been made available through the Quality in Career Guidance website. The aim is for the contents of the website to be relevant for the relevant target groups. Our objective is for the website to play a role in ensuring that the quality framework can act as a useful tool for developing the quality of career guidance in all sectors and at all levels. The website is operated by an editorial team in The Norwegian Directorate for Higher Education and Skills, and new content is developed in close dialogue with the specialist field and practitioners in all the relevant sectors.

1.4 Key concepts

In this section, we comment on how we use some key concepts in our work on the National Quality Framework for Career Guidance. This mainly concerns the concepts of career guidance, quality and competence. The definitions form the basis of the concepts used in this report.

1.4.1 CAREER GUIDANCE
The question arose during the development work as to which definition of career guidance should be used as a basis. There are various definitions of career guidance, both nationally and internationally. The OECD adopted its definition in 2004, which has been widely used in a Norwegian context, and which was also referred to in NOU 2016:7. It runs as follows:

Career guidance refers to services and activities intended to assist individuals of any age and at any point throughout their lives, to make educational, training and occupational choices and to manage their careers. Such services may be found in schools, universities and colleges, in training institutions, in public employment services, in the workplace, in the voluntary or community sector and in the private sector. The activities may take place on an individual or group basis and may be face-to-face or at a distance (including helplines and web-based services). They may include career information provision (in print, ICT-based and in other forms), assessment and self-assessment tools, counselling interviews, career education courses and programmes (to help individuals develop their self-awareness, opportunity awareness, and career management skills), taster programmes (to sample options before choosing them), work search programmes, and transition services.

This definition has the advantage of providing a broad picture of what can be encompassed by the concept of career guidance, both in terms of what career guidance aims to achieve, what it includes and where and how it is provided. The problem is that it is so broad that it is not equally suitable to form the basis of every part of the quality framework, partly because it puts on an equal footing all the different activities that can be part of a (short or long) career guidance process. Some of the elements that it lists are less essential than others, and others appear to be rather randomly chosen. The definition as a whole is very long. It was therefore decided that it was not suitable enough to be used as a basis for the quality framework, so we have developed our own definition of career guidance.

Any definition of career guidance tends to include the following elements:

- What is the purpose or objective of career guidance?
- What does it involve / what is it?
Who is it for, and where can it take place?

In our definition, we have also decided to add what we may call a quality dimension, or a normative dimension, namely:

- What requirements must be stipulated to allow an activity to be called professional career guidance?

This question and the question of what the purpose of career guidance is are questions that are most likely to be the subject of discussion. There may not necessarily be major differences in the positions, but depending on point of view, there can be a varying emphasis on what the purpose of career guidance is, and what kind of requirements should be made of it. For example, a definition may emphasise the purpose of career guidance at community level, such as contributing to social justice, or it may focus more on the individual level.

The task of developing a national quality framework encompasses many things. It must include aspects such as competence standards for career guidance practitioners, codes of ethics and a description of career competence. Career learning is regarded as an integral part of career guidance. The framework is also intended to be cross-sectoral and applicable to various forms of guidance, and it should be built on a professional foundation. The intention is to contribute to develop the quality of career guidance. We have developed a definition based around these criteria, and have therefore decided to include the quality dimension. Our intention has been to illustrate what kinds of activity or what types of services will be covered by the quality framework, and what contribution career guidance will make at the individual level. We have not included social effects in our wording of the purpose of career guidance in our definition. The definition includes a quality dimension, in that it describes which requirements must be stipulated for an activity to be called career guidance.
The definition of career guidance that we have used as a basis for the quality framework runs as follows:

DEFINITION OF CAREER GUIDANCE
The aim of career guidance is to improve people’s ability to manage transitions and make meaningful choices related to education, learning and work throughout their life. Career guidance provides an opportunity to explore an individual’s situation, wishes and opportunities, and provides support for actions, decisions and social participation. Career guidance may be provided on an individual or group basis, either physically or digitally, and within the framework of a range of sectors and organisations. Career guidance is provided by competent parties and performed with a high degree of ethical awareness.

It is important to note that this definition is not intended to replace other definitions of career guidance. For example, it displaces neither the OECD’s nor the ELGPN’s definitions. Every definition helps to delineate and illustrate what career guidance is and what it aims to do. Our definition does not go into the many types of content that can be included in career guidance, such as information, guidance interviews and courses.

1.4.2 QUALITY
The Store Norske Leksikon (Gundersen & Halbo, 2018) encyclopaedia writes that quality involves the degree to which a set of innate properties of a phenomenon meet the needs or expectations, usually implicit or compulsory, that have been indicated. One may therefore say that the quality of career guidance involves which valued properties such a service must have in order to meet indicated expectations and needs. NOU 2016:7 states that quality-related expectations and needs can be described as quality of results, while the valued properties of career guidance involve both quality of structure and quality of process. The use of these concepts was illustrated by Kvalitetsutvalget (Quality Committee), which in its two reports (NOU 2002:10; NOU 2003:16) emphasises that the results, which in their context concern the development of pupils and apprentices, form the chief and most important criterion for the evaluation of quality. Quality of structure and quality of process are important prerequisites needed for learning and development to take place. There are also references to the concept of total quality, which comprises the sum of quality of structure, quality of process and quality of results.

Quality of structure describes an organisation’s external prerequisites and resources, broadly interpreted. In research into career guidance in schools, quality of structure is described on the basis of two main areas: background factors and framework conditions (Buland, Mathiesen, Aaslid, Haugsbakken, Bungum & Mordal, 2011).

Background factors are general structures within which career guidance exists. These include political and cultural prerequisites, such as the national budget, acts and regulations, but also special features of Norwegian society, such as the way work and education are organised. Framework conditions concern the structures in an individual organisation, which tend to be determined on a local basis.

Quality of process concerns an organisation’s internal activities, its own work on career guidance and the quality of the relationships and processes needed to ensure that the service provided is good.
Examples of these include the availability and quality of the career guidance practitioners` interaction with clients, the relationships and cooperation between the various parties within the organisation, and cooperation with parties outside the organisation.

Quality of results concerns the defined, desired results of a service (NOU 2002:10; NOU 2003:16). This thereby concerns the key question regarding the purpose and objective of career guidance. NOU 2016:7 states that: ‘In brief, the objective and scope of career guidance can be described thus: Career guidance shall contribute to the participation of the population in education and work’ (p. 22). The committee goes on to write that career guidance in the lifelong perspective has three specific objectives: (1) Educational objectives intended to improve the effectiveness of education, minimise drop-out rates and create better coherence between education and the labour market, (2) Labour market objectives intended to create a better balance between supply and demand, and minimise friction in the labour market, and (3) Social inclusion objectives intended to create equality of education and employment opportunities for all, and to counteract marginalisation. We may consider these objectives to be the desired outcome of the career guidance service, and thereby the expression of the desired quality of results.

Buland, Mathiesen & Mordal (2014) point out that there may be some overlap between the quality concepts. Structures often tend to have procedural aspects (and vice versa). For example, collaboration and coordination often tend to have formal and relational aspects. Results and the extent to which targets are achieved are key elements in the quality of career guidance, but it is difficult to obtain good data about these. They also point out that the parties involved have clear opinions about what constitutes good quality. These opinions are both personal and institutional and will vary between parties and contexts. The variation in institutional opinions is described by Andreassen and Fossestøl (2014) as differences in institutional logic.

Consequently, we see that the concept of quality involves many nuances and types of quality, and that it is negotiable, something that we also touched upon when we discussed the quality dimension in the definition of career guidance in Section 1.4.1. The first three parts of the quality framework primarily concern quality of structure and quality of process. For a more detailed examination of the aspects of quality in career guidance, see Section 1.5.

1.4.3 COMPETENCE

Competence is a concept that can be defined in various ways, but a common denominator in the definitions is that they mention the ability to use one’s knowledge, skills and attitudes to produce a desired result (Gilje, 2017). To illustrate this, we can present three slightly different definitions, which nevertheless have a great deal in common.

Fagfornyelsen (the subject renewal project in “Kunnskapsløftet” in Norwegian schools) defines competence like this: ‘Competence is the ability to acquire and apply knowledge and skills to overcome challenges and solve problems in known and unknown contexts and situations. Competence involves understanding and the ability to reflect and think critically’.  

The European Commission (EC 2007:5) defines competence as ‘the sum of knowledge, skills and attitudes applied in a given context. Competence can refer to cognitive, social and emotional skills, but also competence that specifically relates to the practice of a profession. Competence is about solving problems and overcoming challenges in specific situations’.

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9 https://www.udir.no/laring-og-trivsel/lareplanverket/overordnet-del/prinsipper-for-laring-utvikling-og-danning/kompetanse-i-fagene/
The Norwegian Committee on Skill Needs assumes ‘a broad interpretation of the concept of competence, and the Committee uses competence as a blanket term for knowledge, understanding, skills, qualities, attitudes and values. But competence is more than the combination or sum of its components. The components are complementary, and the concept of competence also includes the interactive effect of the components’ (NOU 2019:2).

We have decided here to use the definition used by the Norwegian Directorate for Higher Education and Skills, namely ‘(...) the ability to solve problems and overcome challenges in specific situations. Competence includes our knowledge, skills, abilities and attitudes, and how they are used in interaction’.

However, the other definitions quoted above provide deeper explanations of what competence can involve and can be used in combination to help to explain the concept. The concept of competence is also expanded on and discussed in more detail in Chapter 2 Competence standards and Chapter 3 Career competence.

There are also concepts in addition to the three described above that are key to the description of three of the four themes in the quality framework. Examples of these are career competence and career learning, competence standards and professional ethics. These concepts are described in more detail in those parts of the expert report that present the various themes.

1.5 Quality assurance of career guidance – what and how

An important basis for the work on the National Quality Framework for Career Guidance was to draw on the existing knowledge base and other countries’ approaches to the development of quality in career guidance. Tristram Hooley (2019) was commissioned by Skills Norway to carry out a study of selected countries’ approaches to this. The countries studied were Australia, England, Germany, Netherlands, Scotland and South Korea. The objective was to illustrate and summarise experiences from quality systems that are already established. Hooley based his analyses on two theoretical models developed by Hooley and Rice (2018). One of them illustrates various approaches to how to develop and ensure quality in career guidance, including different degrees of control at national level in relation to local flexibility. We may call this the how dimension, and the model is presented in Section 1.5.1. The second model examines what can potentially be quality-assured in terms of career guidance. We may call this the what dimension. The model is presented and used in the review of examples of quality assurance measures in other countries in Section 1.5.2, and in the review of examples of measures already existing in the Norwegian context in Section 1.7. The need to develop models arose as a result of the complexity associated with the interpretation and use of the concept of quality in career guidance.

From a specialist point of view, the need to clarify the concept of quality is based on the fact that, as we have already touched upon, it is possible to interpret quality in career guidance differently, depending on the positions of the parties involved. There is thereby a potential for tension between the different views on quality, which in turn leads to discussions between the various parties on what the understanding of good career guidance should be (Haug, 2017; Hooley, 2019; Hooley & Rice, 2018; Kjærgård, 2012; Sultana, 2018). Clarification is also an important prerequisite in order to make use of recommendations given to countries like Norway, which is in the initial phase of developing its National Quality Framework.

1.5.1 DIFFERENT APPROACHES TO DEVELOPING QUALITY

The review of how other countries organise their quality systems identified major variations (Haug, 2018b); these can be seen in Hooley’s report (2019) and other academic articles on the subject (such as Bimrose, Hughes & Collins, 2006; Hooley & Rice, 2018; Plant, 2012). Hooley and Rice (2018) argue that on a general basis,
it is possible to categorise the approaches into four different types:

**TABLE 1**: Four approaches to quality assurance in career guidance across systems (Hooley & Rice, 2018, page 10). The table has been modified.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree of provider professional autonomy</th>
<th>Change driver</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Advisory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Regulatory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>Organic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Competitive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The horizontal axis in the figure refers to whether the responsibility for quality development lies with local practitioners or with national, decision-making authorities. The vertical axis concerns the practitioners' degree of autonomy, from high to low, in terms of ensuring quality in their career guidance services.

A *regulatory* quality system is based on national legislation as an instrument of quality assurance.

This type of system tends to be based on statutory standards and indicators. In this perspective, quality assurance will largely be based on national supervision of the individual parties' target achievement in relation to specified indicators. We can see an example of this type of approach in the Greek quality assurance system (Sultana, 2018, p. 12).

An *advisory* quality system contains descriptions or recommendations of what characterises quality. The descriptions tend to be general and contain examples of good practice. Like those in the regulatory systems, the characteristics of quality are largely defined nationally, but the responsibility for implementing measures is more often expected to be at local level. We find examples of this type of approach in Gatsby's (2014) guidelines for good career guidance in England.

According to Hooley and Rice (2018), an *organic* quality system is based on the idea that whatever characterises quality should mainly be assessed and decided by the practitioners at local level. This tends to involve establishing various types of continuous quality development work, for example through systematic peer guidance.

The final type, *competition-based*, can also be described as a market-controlled approach. Hooley and Rice (2018) write that this type 'views quality as being driven by customer responses to information on outcomes, consumer feedback and movement of consumers towards or away from specific providers in response to consumer perceptions about quality' (p. 10). They continue by saying that this type often involves results-based funding, where funding for the operation of services is awarded retrospectively, based on the degree to which targets have been achieved.

As a comment to the figure, Hooley and Rice (2018) note that in national quality assurance systems, it is unusual to find pure variants of one of the four types. For example, in the German quality system (German National Guidance Forum in Education, Career and Employment [nfb] & Research Group Quality in Guidance...
at the Institute of Educational Science, Heidelberg University, 2016) we not only find quality standards (an advisory type) but also a model for local, continuous quality work (an organic type). However, one of the four types often tends to be more dominant than the other three.

1.5.2 AREAS TO BE QUALITY ASSURED
When we talk about developing national quality systems, a central theme is what is to be quality assured, in addition to how. Based on the international review of the topic, Hooley and Rice (2018) argue that there are six areas on which quality development can focus: policy development, organisations, processes, practitioners, outcome and clients. Based on the review of other countries’ quality systems, Hooley (2019) highlights a number of examples of measures within the six different quality areas. These are shown in the table below.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality area</th>
<th>Examples of measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Policy development Policy development and monitoring, evaluating and studying  | - Committing to regular review of career guidance policy  
- Establishing research and evaluation agencies or departments to monitor and support the implementation of career guidance policy  
- Commissioning independent evaluations of policy  
- Compare political initiatives against specified quality indicators  
- Involve a range of parties in policymaking.  
- Make sure that resources and systems are in place in order to ensure that political initiatives translate into practice  
- An annual publication focusing on the implementation and significance/benefits of implemented career guidance policies |
| the effect of policy development in the field of career guidance              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Organisations                                                               | - Develop standardised quality assurance systems for career guidance providers  
- Develop tools that enable providers to evaluate their services against specified outcome standards (benchmarks), while also performing external studies of target achievement by providers  
- Integrate career guidance in major quality surveys  
- Award distinctions to ‘approved’ and outstanding providers. In certain cases, award contracts for advertised state services on the basis of such distinctions  
- Offer funding for the development and/or further development of services provided |
| Clarify which organisations can be approved as providers of career guidance   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| services and how these should work                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Processes                                                                    | - Develop a range of methods and procedures for continuous quality development by service providers  
- Provide guidance on processes for developing practice  
- Include observation of practice as part of external quality control |
| Evaluate which processes should be used as a basis for developing good-       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| quality career guidance services, and ensure that these processes are        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| implemented                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Practitioners                                                                | - Establish professional and ethical standards  
- Specify which qualifications are required in order to hold the role of career guidance practitioner  
- Provide opportunities for continuing professional development  
- Create a register of professional/approved career guidance practitioners  
- Regulate the right to hold the role of career guidance practitioner and provide access to public funding on the basis of a person’s professional status |
| Specify who can practise as career guidance practitioners, which qualifications|                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| and competences they should have, and define how the profession should be   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| organised and governed                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Outcome                                                                      | - Create an overview of expected outcomes from career guidance  
- Find out which qualifications or professions pupils/students attain when they have completed their education  
- Use the ‘payment by results’ principle in conjunction with the two above points |
| Clarify what outcome can be expected from career guidance processes, and how  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| this can be observed and recognised                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| User participation                                                           | - Study the use and user satisfaction of various services  
- Perform major longitudinal surveys  
- Perform research into users’ needs and perspectives  
- Require feedback from users as part of the process of approving and evaluating the suitability of career guidance practitioners  
- Involve user representatives in policy-making  
- Use the ‘payment by results’ principle in conjunction with the degree of user satisfaction |
| Recognise clients’ experiences with career guidance and find ways of         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| addressing their perspective                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
1.6 Areas to be aware of when developing quality systems

Based on the examples from the six countries, Hooley (2019) points out five general findings, presented below. For countries working on developing quality in career guidance, the findings can serve as points to keep in mind.

Overlapping and complementary effect
The listing of the six areas in the table above should be regarded as a theoretical categorisation. There will be a great deal of overlapping of effects between different areas. Hooley points out that it is not necessarily so that the more areas for which a country has systems, the better the quality of these systems is. Nor can we unambiguously state the order of priority in which quality areas should be developed. In some countries, developing good systems for the qualification of people and organisations has formed an important basis for policy making, while in other countries, political initiatives have been of critical importance to the other areas.

National/local and cross-sectoral/sectoral quality systems
This concerns the relationship between national/local and cross-sectoral/sectoral quality systems. In his review, Hooley finds that none of the six countries have one single, national, cross-sectoral system for quality in career guidance. There are many reasons for this, and they concern the relationship between national and regional levels of governance, but also differences in the content of services in the various sectors. Hooley emphasises that the lack of a common system does not necessarily mean a reduction in the quality of services. As he writes: ‘Many of the participants in this research see value in devolved and decentralised approaches to quality assurance that allow sectors, jurisdictions or even individual providers or professionals to define quality’ (Hooley, 2019, p. vii).

Interwoven or separate quality systems
One of the main challenges in all the countries studied is that career guidance is provided as part of a more extensive service which already has quality assurance systems in place. This leads to the question as to whether we should try to develop separate quality systems for career guidance or aim to integrate these into already established systems.

Developing quality systems
In most of the countries studied, the quality systems have grown over time, through long processes in which a range of parties have been involved, different perspectives have been discussed and solutions have been chosen.

Implementation and governance
The final perspective highlighted by Hooley (2019) is the significance of distribution and implementation. He points out the following success factors needed to allow a national system to become established in practice: ‘clear reasons to engage; consequences for failing to engage; advocacy and support; and clear and effective governance’ (p. viii). In other words, different types of incentives and governance are needed to ensure that distribution and implementation are successful.

1.7 Quality areas in the Norwegian context

In the following section, we provide a short review of practice in Norway, and compare this with examples of measures in other countries’ quality systems. It is important to emphasise that this review is not based on the same data collection method and type of basic data used in the study of the six other countries (Hooley, 2019). This review is based on the description of Norwegian quality assurance work given in the
report NOU 2016:7, combined with smaller surveys of key players (such as the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training). The review is intended to provide examples of measures already in place in a Norwegian context and is not exhaustive.

Given the project’s mandate, the main focus of the review below is on national initiatives. In this context, it is important to note that a great deal of quality development work is being performed by county authorities, regional networks and internally within organisations and businesses that will not be mentioned here. As in Hooley’s report, the following paragraphs are of a descriptive nature.

Policymaking

Seen in relation to the examples in Section 1.5 (*Quality assurance of career guidance – what and how*), there are several relevant measures to mention in a Norwegian context related to this quality area. However, as in the countries studied by Hooley (2019), these initiatives are exclusively sectoral or specific to target groups. The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training regularly collects data on education and career guidance in lower secondary and upper secondary schools, mainly through the Elevundersøkelsen (Pupil Survey) and Lærlingeundersøkelsen (Apprentice Survey). However, this is limited to only one or a few questions, and provides little basis for evaluating whether the policymaking is good enough in terms of guidance provided in schools. They also regularly collect data from the Follow-up Service. From time to time, career guidance has been included in the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training’s surveys and has been the subject of research or study assignments, for example in relation to guidance in primary schools (Mordal, Buland & Mathiesen, 2018). The county career centres submit annual reports providing information about such things as how many people have used their services, their age and other characteristics of the users, how many individual career guidance interviews, courses and group guidance sessions they have held, etc.

There are not many reports that compare the results of different evaluations of career guidance in Norway. One exception is the report *Career guidance: Needs, outcome and significance* (Berge, Larsen, Gravås, Holm, Lønvik & Midttun, 2015) that describes and compares one population-based survey and three surveys relating to career guidance in county career centres. The report shows that different clients have different needs. It also indicates the importance of career guidance for people who have little or no connection to the labour market, and the importance of having enough capacity to meet the demand for career guidance.

Regarding the recommendation to involve a range of parties in policymaking, it is worth mentioning Nasjonalt forum for karriereveiledning (National Forum for Career Guidance). The purpose of the forum is to provide key players with the opportunity to discuss status, development and problems in the field of career guidance. Another example of involvement is Nasjonal koordineringsgruppe for karriereveiledning (National Coordination Group for Career Guidance). This is run by Skills Norway, and its purpose is to debate and discuss relevant focus areas and strategies. The group can also put forward proposals for solutions that could be implemented in existing lines of management. As well as Skills Norway, the group is made up of representatives with managerial responsibility from the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration, the Directorate of Integration and Diversity, Universities Norway and the National Council for Tertiary Vocational Education.

Frequent reviews of governing policymaking documents and a joint, cross-sectoral, annual publication focusing on the implementation and significance of implemented career guidance policies are some of the examples mentioned by Hooley (2019) in his studies of other countries. In a Norwegian context, there are a few examples that such initiatives have been implemented.

Organisations

In a Norwegian context, the following initiatives may be mentioned as examples of developing and
assuring quality in organisations providing career guidance services: The Pupil Survey is an example of how the subject of career guidance can be integrated into broader surveys. Careers advice is a fixed topic every autumn in the Pupil Survey for the 10th grade and is represented by one compulsory question: Whether the pupils, so far in lower secondary school, feel that they have received sufficient information to be able to make choices regarding education and careers. Other supplementary questions are optional for schools, but provide the opportunity, for schools who want this, to go into more detail about the various elements of education and career guidance (advice on further education, advice on future choice of career, the Selection of Education subject, individual guidance, etc.). The same applies to Vg1 (upper secondary school level 1), in which the fixed and compulsory question is: How satisfied are you with the advice you received regarding choice of education and career at lower secondary school? The optional supplementary questions concern advice on education and career, future career paths and vocational orientation.

In the Norwegian context, there are currently few schemes that allow providers to evaluate their own service against specified outcome standards (benchmarks). Nor are there any schemes to award distinctions to ‘approved’ and outstanding providers. In terms of funding provision for the development and/or further development of services, there are some examples of this. These are primarily associated with specific political initiatives, such as developing better career guidance as part of integration work.

Processes
In terms of ensuring the quality of guidance processes, there are few examples of national initiatives or measures. However, one example of measures implemented to develop methods and procedures is the provision of webinars for digital career guidance, developed by Skills Norway. The purpose of these webinars has been to provide motivation in order to increase the use and awareness of digital tools and platforms as a resource in career guidance. Another example is the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration’s (NAV) guidance platform. Although this has been developed not solely for career guidance, it contains relevant resources for continuous quality work for advisers in NAV and a dedicated module in ‘career-oriented guidance’.

Practitioners
There are many examples in various sectors in the Norwegian context of national initiatives or schemes to ensure the quality of practitioners working with career guidance. Examples of these include the code of ethics for career guidance practitioners in schools (developed by the Norwegian Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance), for public career centres (developed with the assistance of the career centres and Skills Norway) and for the careers advice services provided by higher education institutions (developed by the Career Services at the University of Oslo, adopted by Forum for karriereservice i høyere utdanning (Forum for careers services in higher education)). In addition, the recommendations of the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, ‘Recommended formal competence and guiding competence criteria for career guidance practitioners in schools’\(^\text{10}\), can be mentioned as an example of how certain qualifications are specified as prerequisites for a person to hold the role of career guidance practitioner. These are worded as recommendations rather than requirements, but nevertheless provide direction about what is expected of career guidance practitioners in schools. So far in Norway, there has been no tradition of measures such as registers of approved career guidance practitioners, regulation of the role of career guidance practitioner or access to public funding being determined on the basis of a career guidance practitioner’s qualifications.

Outcome
It can be argued that the guiding competence criteria for career guidance practitioners in schools implicitly

\(^{10}\) https://www.udir.no/globalassets/upload/brev/5/vedlegg_1_anbefalte_kompetansekrav_og_veiledende_kompetansekriterier.pdf
contain an overview of the expected outcome of career guidance. In terms of an overview of which qualifications or jobs pupils/students attain when they have completed their education, systematically collected information is available. This applies mainly after the transition from primary and secondary education into work or further education, but is also available in the higher education sector’s candidate surveys and NAV’s statistics.

User participation
In schools (the Pupil Survey), the higher education sector and the county career centres, there are procedures for surveying the use and user satisfaction of the services. Other than individual initiatives by research teams at individual universities and university colleges (such as Andreassen, 2016), no major long-term surveys have been performed. With regard to research into users’ needs and perspectives, Skills Norway performs surveys of the adult portion of the population concerning their interest in, benefit from and need for career guidance (e.g. Vox, now Skills Norway, 2011). In terms of the involvement of user representatives, there are a few examples of this, including the representation of various user groups such as the School Student Union of Norway and National Union of Students in Norway in Nasjonalt forum for karriereveiledning (National Forum for Career Guidance). However, there are no systematic national initiatives for requiring feedback from users as part of the process of approving and evaluating the suitability of career guidance practitioners.

1.8 The quality framework in a wider context

As explained earlier, this report presents the deliverables of competence standards, career competence and ethics. Seen in relation to the six quality areas to which Hooley and Rice (2018) relate quality assurance and quality development, the three deliverables encompass the following:

- Organisations (ethics and competence standards)
- Processes (ethics, competence standards and career competence)
- Practitioners (ethics, competence standards and career competence)
- Outcome (career competence, by virtue of their focus on targets for individual users in their dealings with the career guidance services)

The quality areas policymaking and user participation are not part of the focus of the three deliverables presented in this expert report. From a specialist point of view, the fact that the plans for the National Quality Framework do not currently include measures in all six of the quality areas can be defended based on Hooley’s (2019) emphasis that it is not necessarily the case that the more areas a country includes in its quality systems, the better the quality. However, on an overall basis, it is vital for the areas in a quality system to support and complement each other.

One of the main aims of the work has been to ensure that there is an internal, logical connection between the sub-projects. The fourth sub-project, which concerns systems that will tell whether what we are doing is of high quality, will be based on the three parts that are presented in this expert report. Quality criteria, indicators, statistics and research may touch on more than one of the quality areas. If we are to develop quality criteria and indicators, it may for example be relevant to include criteria addressing practitioners’ qualifications, the manner in which providers organise their services, the content of the guidance provided and what kind of surveys are used to monitor the quality of services.

Establishing a national quality framework is an important milestone in improving the quality of career guidance.
guidance. This must be seen as part of the more extensive process of professionalising and quality assuring career guidance in Norway. The parts of the quality framework are key components in a quality system, and the focus on career guidance practitioners as professionals is clear. Professions researcher Monica Nerland (2011) writes that one of the features of the professionalisation of a field may be ‘a common ethical superstructure and a collective set of values that clarify the profession’s social mandate and provide guidelines for the work’ (p. 182). Official Norwegian report NOU 2016:7 states, supported by Brante (2011):

Recent definitions of the profession are based on ‘knowledge-based groups’, in which the profession is made up of occupations that provide access to the highest science-based knowledge within a given area. This provides legitimacy and authority. Within a profession, competence and qualifications criteria must be met in order for a person to work in that occupation and use the job title.

An interesting debate that could arise in the wake of establishing competence standards and codes of ethics concerns the extent to which career guidance may or may not be on its way to becoming a profession in Norway. This is a question that has been debated for some time. In 2011, Nerland described career guidance as a field that was moving towards gaining a professional structure. But on the basis of some common criteria that define professions, such as an established knowledge-base, level of education, protected position in the labour market, autonomy and the right of self-determination, Nerland (2011) concluded then that the field was not quite there yet. And perhaps full professional autonomy was not even the goal. How does the situation appear to be today?

Since 2011, we have seen many signs that move towards professionalisation. The establishment of a master’s degree in career guidance, which started up at the Inland Norway University of Applied Sciences and University of South-Eastern Norway in 2014, and the national quality framework are two significant signs. Irrespective of whether we can label career guidance as a profession or not, we can state that with national competence standards and codes of ethics in place for career guidance, we are a large step closer to the goal of professional career guidance practice across sectors. This will have a major impact on the quality of the services. Combined with the focus on several of the other quality areas, both within the quality framework and through sector-specific and local measures and processes, we are moving towards professionalism and increased quality in Norwegian career guidance. This will result in improved outcomes for the individual and for society at large.
Competence standards

2.1 Background

Competence standards for career guidance practitioners have been focused upon in Europe for some time (Cedefop, 2009; NICE, 2016). In Norway too, there has been a desire to increase the degree of professionalisation the field of career guidance (NOU 2016:7). However, it is still a diverse field, with practitioners who have different roles and tasks, work in different sectors, have entered the profession in different ways and have different professional skills (Damvad, 2012). National, cross-sectoral competence standards may help to unify the field, illustrate which standards must apply across sectors and set a standard for competence and professionalism.

The benefits of national, cross-sectoral competence standards are obvious. A composite occupational group gains something when able to model itself towards something specific, enabling it to make decisions, document and aim for knowledge, skills and meta-competences that are needed in professional career guidance. Career guidance service managers gain a valuable tool to use when recruiting staff, putting teams together and planning skills development. For researchers and educational institutions, national competence standards will provide the support needed to keep study programmes and courses relevant and up-to-date at all times. The standards will also provide a direction for future policymaking in the field. Standards also concern professional authority and legitimacy. Although Norway does not operate with a formal authorisation for career guidance practitioners, national competence standards will result in specific competences being recognised and sought after, and this could have a major impact on the further development of quality and the professionalism of the field in general.
Competence is a concept that can be defined in various ways, but a common and recurring denominator in the definitions is that they include the ability to use one’s knowledge, skills and attitudes to produce a desired result (Gilje, 2017). This interpretation is expressed in the definition used by Skills Norway: ‘…the ability to solve problems and overcome challenges in specific situations. Competence includes our knowledge, skills, abilities and attitudes, and how they are used in interaction’. Competence standards describe competence at a predetermined level, within a limited and measurable area.

The mandate for Competence standards – professional career guidance points out that career guidance practitioners with good, relevant competence are essential if high quality career guidance is to be achieved. Other people working with and in relation to career guidance should also be sufficiently competent to undertake their roles in a manner that improves quality of service.

This chapter presents competence standards for career guidance. The competence standards have been developed with the assistance of a group appointed by Skills Norway. The competence standards provide an overview of the areas of work involved in the field of career guidance, present seven areas of competence including a description the competence that may be required of a cross-sectoral career guidance practitioner and also describe two levels. The competence standards apply to career guidance practitioners. They are also relevant for other practitioners involved in career guidance, from managers of various types of career guidance services, to people researching and teaching in the career guidance field, to those working with career guidance at system level and to those who own or are responsible for various services involving career guidance.

For an occupational group, there are many benefits from having good and precise competence standards to measure oneself against. The development work has made use of such things as other related competence standards, including the NICE network’s work with European competence standards.

The mandate in brief
The working group had a mandate on which to base its work (see Appendices 3 and 4). The group worked according to the mandate, but during the working process made some interpretations and decisions:

The group prepared competence standards for career guidance practitioners but did not prepare separate competence standards for other people working in career guidance practice or who are responsible for career guidance services, which the mandate requests. However, the group described which areas of work these could be involved in at system level and showed how the competence standards also could be used to illustrate what kind of competence people holding such roles and performing such tasks should have.

The competence standards were designed to apply across sectors. Each sector must therefore continue to work to interpret the competence standards to suit the roles and tasks included in each particular career guidance service. The group chose to identify and describe the areas of work applying to the entire field, and to use examples from the sectors to highlight the various roles. The areas of work were divided into two main areas: tasks performed in the field of practice, and tasks at system level.

In terms of implementing the competence standards, the group did not decide what kind of status the standards should have in various sectors. Nor did it look into what education programmes should be the

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12 See Appendices 3 and 4.
13 The European academic network NICE, made up of around 40 higher education institutions in 28 European countries, has looked at the different roles, functions and tasks that career guidance practitioners have or should have in modern Europe.
result of the implementation. These questions should be addressed in the next phase of development of the competence standards, the actual implementation and the rest of the quality framework for career guidance.

2.2 Professional foundation for the competence standards

Competence as a concept has varied in popularity over time. Ronald Sultana (2009) describes how the concept of competence flourished in the 1970s, only then to be met with more critical objections in the 1980s. The concept of competence was perceived as confusing and messy, and people questioned whether splitting a complicated whole into smaller, measurable skills could promote instrumentalism and test regimes (Delamare Le Deist & Winterton, 2005). During the 1990s, competence-based approaches became more popular, and competence has now become a fully integrated term, both in everyday language and specialist contexts.

In Europe, according to Sultana (2009), we have been increasingly focused on ensuring that competence is not reduced to a narrow and mechanical interpretation which is only interested in specifying measurable, technical proficiencies. Instead, we should base our understanding of competence on a holistic \textit{know, do and be} approach.

We can find one understanding of competence that has just such a holistic ambition, and which has become very widespread, in Cheetham and Chivers (taken from Delamare Le Deist & Winterton, 2005). They list the following dimensions of competences that are closely connected to each other:

- **Cognitive competence** (\textit{know that})
  About involving the use of theory and concepts
- **Functional competence** (skills or \textit{know-how})
  About what a practitioner should be capable of doing and demonstrating
- **Personal competence** (\textit{know how to behave})
  About knowing how to act in a specific situation
- **Ethical competence**
  About holding adequate personal and professional values, and having the ability to make reasonable evaluations of these in work-related situations
- **Meta-competence**
  About being capable of taking a systematic approach to uncertainty, complexity, learning and reflection

The national, cross-sectoral competence standards are based on a holistic and multidimensional understanding of competence.

2.2.1 KEY AREAS OF TENSION AND ASSESSMENT

Sultana (2009) describes some tensions that arise in the process of developing competence standards. These tensions are described as two opposite poles, which are not necessarily mutually exclusive, but any emphasis in one direction or the other can be of great significance. Further on in this chapter, we discuss the areas of tension and the national, cross-sectoral competence standards based on Sultana’s (2009) categorisation and arguments.

These areas of tension are important to focus upon because the emphasis we make dictates how competence is registered, recognised, measured, assessed, developed and rewarded.

Focus on tasks versus roles
Everyone who has tried to identify competences that practitioners in complex helping professions
should have, must at some point make a decision related to whether their focus will be on tasks or roles. According to Sultana (2009), this is a particularly important question for the field of career guidance where the roles are often unclear and complex. On the one hand, a focus on roles will tend to cover multiple competences, both broadly and in depth. A focus on formally defined tasks rather than roles also means that it is easy to overlook important aspects, such as tacit knowledge. However, when we set out to develop competence standards for career guidance across sectors, we saw that it was difficult to define a gallery of roles that could be recognised by all sectors.

NICE (2016) defined three roles that were independent of sector: career adviser, career professional and career specialist.

The first role, career adviser, is defined by NICE as a ‘first in line adviser’, which is typically the first person whom a client contacts for information and with simple questions regarding education and career choices. For this person, simple career guidance tasks tend to be a minor part of their job, which means that they need basic career guidance competence so that they know when clients need professional career guidance.

The second role, career professional, describes people who are associated with the profession of career guidance practitioner as their more or less full-time job. In this category, a career guidance practitioner has specialist competence in career development and choices, and assists people both individually and in groups. The career guidance practitioner takes care of clients facing complex choices, uncertain situations and critical transitions, and uses guidance activities to teach clients to be as self-reliant as possible in career orientation and decision-making processes.

According to NICE, the third role, career specialist, describes people who have overall responsibility for the professionalism of guidance in various parts of the field, and who work to advance career guidance and career learning in different ways. Some of them work with the administration of career guidance services, with developing plans, policy and framework, and with supervising career professionals. Others work primarily with research, development work and teaching career guidance courses.

Except for the exception of career professionals, these roles are not applicable to the field of career guidance in Norway today. The first role, career adviser, is difficult to introduce in a Norwegian context, partly because of its very name (‘karriererådgiver’ in Norwegian). Primary and secondary education has a long tradition of using the term ‘rådgiver’ (adviser), and in this context not as a first-line service. There are also numerous advisers in employment companies that currently hold the title of ‘karriererådgiver’ (career adviser). However, it is not only the title that represents a challenge. The many people who have subsidiary tasks in career guidance have such diverse backgrounds and different areas of responsibility that it was not practical to squeeze them together into a single role in order to define what kind of competence they should have. The same problem also applies to the third role, career professionals.

In our development work, we assessed various bases from which to categorise roles across sectors in a Norwegian context:

- **Scope-based categorisation**
  How much career guidance work does the practitioner do? How much of their role does it constitute?

- **Task-based categorisation**
  Which areas of work and tasks does the practitioner have, and how complex are the problems that he or she must manage in for example their guidance work?

- **Categorisation based on professional identity**
  To what extent, if any, is career practitioner the professional identity of the practitioner? This means the perception of identity associated with roles and tasks.
Since the intention was for the competence standards to be cross-sectoral, it became clear that when the field is to be identified and described in a Norwegian context, the best solution is to use areas of work and tasks as a basis.

For staff whose areas of work and main tasks are within career guidance, we have identified the role of career guidance practitioner, and have created the competence standards for this role. For other staff whose job only involves some career guidance tasks, we have described primary areas of work and tasks, and have not created detailed competence standards for this group.

The tension between the focus on areas of work, tasks and roles also leads us to the question as to who best can define the competence of an occupational group (Sultana, 2009). Is it mainly managers, experts and academics? Is it the field of practice itself, in the form of best practice analyses? According to Sultana (2009), there are advantages and disadvantages to both approaches, and we should be ensure that the competence standards are solid enough to be resilient towards frequent changes.

Knowledge versus skills
Finding the optimum balance between knowledge (know that) and skills (know how) is also a central challenge for the development of competence standards. How much emphasis should there be on these two types of competence respectively? Higher education is traditionally criticised for its strong emphasis on knowing that. However, we must be aware of the other extreme. Sultana (2009 p. 24) refers to some frameworks that have a tendency to prioritise knowing how over knowing that and give little recognition to the significance of knowledge of theoretical frameworks and models. We are then in danger of losing our focus on the important meta-competence that helps career guidance practitioners to reflect creatively and critically on complex situations and challenges.

In the national competence standards, every competence area is divided into knowledge, skills and general competence. In this way, there is appropriate balance in the relationship between knowledge and skills. The category of general competence includes a meta-competence that is made up of a synthesis of knowledge, skills and attitudes.

Defined behaviour versus autonomy
As a parallel to the relationship between knowledge and skills, according to Sultana (2009) it is important to be aware that many definitions of competence are based on predefined procedure descriptions. The aim is then for a practitioner to be able to demonstrate satisfactory behaviour at the right time and in the right order in the guidance process. But there are also those who question whether the ability to follow systematic procedure descriptions comes at the expense of the quality that can arise through an autonomous understanding of roles, and who therefore prefer to downplay procedure descriptions in competence standards. There are differences in whether the opportunities and creativity that lie in the freedom to create one’s role autonomously are emphasised or downplayed in various current competence standards.

Professor of psychology and social work Pær Nygren (2004) argues that control of external conditions represents an important part of competence. The more control a person has over the framework of their everyday work, the more competent they become at solving specific problems. Control of external conditions is related to the opportunity to have autonomy in one’s everyday work.

The national competence standards are not intended or designed to be a detailed description of how a career guidance practitioner should perform their work. This means that these standards allow for a role to be practised autonomously. We have also tried to avoid excessively detailed specifications of knowledge
and skills.

Sultana (2009) also questions whether a set of competence standards focusing on a career guidance practitioner’s knowledge and behaviour may be too narrow, and whether they should be complemented by a framework for clients. In the National Quality Framework for Career Guidance, a model for working with the career competence of the population is one of three sub-projects (see Chapter 3 Career competence).

The specific versus the general
In a field like career guidance, the emphasis of specialist versus general competence in competence standards is open to discussion: Should the main focus be on general competences, or should there be more emphasis on the specific knowledge, skills and procedures that a practitioner should have in order to be able to perform a good job in a specific area? According to Sultana (2009), competence standards for career guidance that emphasise general skills will traditionally have their main focus on fundamental guidance skills such as listening, asking questions and building relations. There are many good arguments in favour of emphasising general skills like these, not least the fact that practitioners themselves perceive them to be absolutely essential (Loven, 2016; Schulstok, 2018). With general standards like these, training and education institutions will have a wide register with which to work, and practitioners’ competence could then be transferable to many sectors and situations (Sultana, 2009).

On the other hand, one may question whether putting the main emphasis on such general skills adequately illustrates the special nature and raison d’être of career guidance in relation to other occupational groups whose main tool is also good communication (Loven, 2016; Schulstok, 2018). In many cases, this is one of the many intentions behind the development of competence standards. One may also argue that it is primarily specific knowledge, integrated in experience, that will help clients to overcome career-specific challenges (Brown et al., 1989, taken from Sultana, 2009). The challenge for competence standards that will be based on subject-specific competence is that this can easily result in lists that are too detailed, complex, technical and bureaucratic (Sultana, 2009).

The varying degrees of emphasis placed on general communication and guidance competence and that which is specific to the field of careers have been the subject of discussion among several career guidance researchers. Evangelista (2011) criticised some existing competence frameworks for including too many factors that are not reserved solely for career guidance practice, and called for a narrower focus on factors that are specific to career guidance. Hiebert and Neault (2014) described this kind of approach as exclusionary and argued that competences that career guidance practitioners share with many other occupational groups, such as communication and IT, will in many cases be absolutely essential if we are to be able to identify a competent and holistic career guidance practice. The emphasis on the general versus the subject-specific has been important in the work with the national competence standards. The standards include both general (basic) guidance competence, which has been very much part of the Norwegian pedagogic guidance tradition, and key, specific career guidance competences. However, the focus has also been on not making the list too extensive and complex.

Core versus periphery
Some competence standards differentiate between core and peripheral competences, but it is not always clear what is meant by core competences (Sultana, 2009). Is something a core competence when it is something expected of all practitioners, at every level and in every sector? Or is something a core competence when it involves a basic skill that must be present in order to advance to the next level? Another approach to core competence is to talk about what are known as ‘transversal’, cross-disciplinary competences. These are competences that are by nature common to all the disciplines and that complement and inform other areas of competence. Examples of these kinds of cross-disciplinary competences in the competence standards are the areas of ethics and relationships.
The area of **ethics** is a separate competence area in the national competence standards, despite the obviously cross-disciplinary nature of this competence. Ethics were highlighted as a separate area because it was important to illustrate specific knowledge, skills and attitudes within this subject. The competence area was also made separate because it is key to professional practice. The other competence areas consistently have a critical, reflective dimension.

Sultana (2009) makes a point that in the work of defining which competences we should regard as core, and which are more peripheral for an occupational group, we must be aware that these are largely political and ideological questions. The question of what is presented as fundamental for a field, what is categorised as peripheral and what is written off as irrelevant obviously has a great impact on the professional practice and development of a subject and profession.

**Learning versus stability**

An important, but according to Sultana (2009) often under-communicated problem associated with competence standards concerns the degree to which competences are seen as set attributes connected to individual prerequisites. In other words: Is it implicit that there are some key competences that some practitioners will never be able to manage well enough because they relate to personal qualities, or is it assumed that all essential competences can be learned by anyone? In an extension to this question, it is also important to think about whether a competence will remain stable over time, or whether it is likely that there will be some development of this competence in either a positive or negative direction.

What kinds of theories regarding learning and development are used as a basis in the development of competence standards must also be made clear? A defined understanding of learning has not been used as a basis in the national competence standards. Chapter 3 *Career competence* refers to an understanding of learning as something that takes place through participation in a context (Dreier, 2009). In a sociocultural perspective, competences must relate to specific contexts and activities. The social framework around our actions has a major impact. Intellectual development has its foundation in social activity, where individual knowledge and skills primarily develop due to social interaction. The framework emphasises that competence and learning primarily are developed through participation in social practice, where a career guidance practitioner’s development must be understood in relation to the social activities of which he or she is a part (Säljö, 2001). In this perspective, knowledge and competence are regarded as socially and culturally constructed. This means that knowledge and competence are developed and maintained interactively between individuals and groups in a historic, cultural and social context.

**Context-free or context-specific**

An extension of the previous point also concerns the issue of being sensitive to which sociocultural assumptions form the basis of our definition of competence. Do we look at competence as a universal attribute, or rather as something that is socially constructed and strongly influenced by time and place? In our development work, we have also had to ask ourselves whether competences should primarily be regarded and described as permanently established and stable capacities possessed by a career guidance practitioner, irrespective of context. Or should competence standards take more account of the fact that competences can be demonstrated and articulated in the interface with environmental aspects, such as the cultural and linguistic context? If so, how can we identify and practise fairness in such a contextual understanding of competence?

In other words, the key problem involves the choice between developing a broad set of competence standards that can apply to all practitioners, or a more minimalist set of standards that are specific to role and context (Sultana, 2009). Our assignment was to develop cross-sectoral standards that cover everyone
who has career guidance tasks in Norway, and from that perspective, we are able to assert that we should design a broad set of competence standards. However, we have defined the competence areas around the role of career guidance practitioner, and our focus has been on ensuring that the competence standards must be able to take context-specific problems into consideration.

Static versus dynamic orientation

According to Sultana (2009), there are essentially two main reasons for developing competence standards. The first primarily concerns the ability to evaluate practitioners against predefined, more or less static standards, with all the benefits these bring in terms of the recruitment and continuing development of one’s staff. The second main reason, which is not mutually exclusive with the first, but which can nevertheless make a significant difference to the structure of the standards, has more of an emphasis on the development perspective. Here, the focus is on ensuring that the standards will also inspire people to further develop their competence, and facilitate training packages, guides for self-assessment and self-initiated competence development.

Whether it is possible to design competence standards that inspire people to continuous development of their competence is something of which we have been aware of while developing the competence standards. One of the key aspects of this problem concerns level. Many competence standards describe competence areas as minimum competences that must be ticked off. Introducing two levels, competent and specialist, illustrates a development potential. If you have achieved the competent level in most areas, you may still strive for new, higher competences at the specialist level.

Individual versus collective

Whether competence standards are based on an individual or collective approach to the question of competence can have major consequences on several levels. Should they revolve around individual skills, or can we rather look at competence as a systemic whole, and as something that can be distributed in and between sectors and institutions? Behavioural theory approaches traditionally regard the individual as the focal point of competence, and the natural unit for analysis. On the other hand, more constructivist approaches put more emphasis on collective structures. The process from novice to expert moves primarily through integration in a collective specialist network of expertise (Sultana, 2009).

One of the objectives is for the national competence standards not only to stimulate the competence development of the individual career guidance practitioner, but also potentially to be an instrument in and across sectors to ensure that career guidance competence is of an all-round nature that will benefit most clients. The degree of complexity, breadth and depth on which the seven competence areas are based means that it will be a difficult ambition for a career guidance practitioner to achieve specialist competence in every competence area. It is therefore important for the various sectors responsible for career guidance services to think holistically, collectively and complementarily when assessing competence needs.

2.3 Presentation of Competence standards for career guidance

Competence standards for career guidance are made up of three parts:
1. Areas of work, tasks and roles in the career guidance field, both at system level and practice level, with descriptions and clarification of who works at the practice level and who is responsible for career guidance.
2. Description of seven competence areas for career guidance, with a specification of what career guidance practitioners across sectors must have by way of knowledge, skills and general competence within each area.
3. A subdivision into two levels: competent and specialist.
2.4 Areas of work, tasks and roles in the career guidance field

When designing competence standards for an occupational group, as mentioned in Section 2.2.1 and in the section on Focus on tasks versus roles, one must choose between making them task-based or role-based. In line with the mandate (see Appendix 4) to ‘describe the various professional roles, based on which tasks and functions the various professional practitioners have’, we have described areas of work in the career guidance field, and highlighted tasks that are performed in a career guidance service. We have also provided examples of roles in different sectors. The examples are primarily based on the public career guidance services. The descriptions are based both on written sources such as NOU 2016:7 and on presentations and discussions in the broadly composed working group.

Areas of work, tasks and roles are divided in two main levels: system level and field of practice. As the model shows, the areas of work at system level are divided into three main areas. The same applies to the field of practice, but the working areas here are more overlapping, so they have not been divided in the model.

FIGURE 1: Overview and categorisation of the career guidance field in Norway

This chapter will also describe the areas of work and tasks within each level, in addition to giving examples of roles from the various sectors.

2.4.1 CAREER GUIDANCE AT SYSTEM LEVEL

System level is understood to be areas of work performed by parties with system responsibility for the career guidance field. These are people who have managerial responsibility for career guidance services, people who work with research, professional development and training, and people who are responsible for designing and developing career guidance work, both nationally, regionally and locally. The parties involved at system level are mainly responsible for ensuring that career guidance is arranged, provided and developed.

Three areas of work have been identified at system level:
- management of career guidance services
• research, education and training in the career guidance field
• policy and system development in the career guidance field

2.4.2 MANAGEMENT OF CAREER GUIDANCE SERVICES

Management of career guidance services is an area of work that involves running units, organisations or services in which career guidance is performed. It involves designing, developing and running a career guidance service, and ensuring the quality of the service.

Management of career guidance services often involves tasks such as:
• running and governing the career guidance service
• developing and ensuring the quality of the service by facilitating development work and innovation in order to improve the career guidance provision in one’s own organisation
• establishing and managing quality assurance systems
• ensuring that the service has the framework needed for the provision of career guidance, such as resources and premises
• ensuring that the service as a whole has access to the necessary competence
• ensuring that the service is ethically responsible
• coordinating the service and ensuring the necessary level of cooperation with other parties in and associated with the field of career guidance
• marketing and raising awareness of the organisation’s career guidance provision

Career guidance may be the only service provided by an organisation or unit, or it may be part of a bigger organisation or unit offering several services or activities. Managers of career guidance services may therefore be at different levels and have responsibility for a broader portfolio or only for the career guidance service.

Examples of roles in the field with this area of work:
• managers of public career centres
• managers of career centres in higher education institutions
• school owners and head teachers/principals in primary and secondary education and adult education who have overall responsibility for the career guidance service
• inspectors, heads of department or advisers/career guidance practitioners, who in some schools are responsible for managing the career guidance work
• managers of the introduction programme
• managers of NAV offices and work and inclusion companies

2.4.3 RESEARCH, EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN THE CAREER GUIDANCE FIELD

Research, education and training in the career guidance field is an area of work that involves working with research into and professional development of career guidance locally, nationally and in some cases internationally, in addition to training career guidance practitioners and people with other roles in the field.

This involves tasks such as:
• providing education and training, teaching and supervising students
• developing and quality assuring education and training in career guidance, in order to ensure that the field of practice gains quality-assured access to formalised competence
• helping to develop career guidance practice and the career guidance subject locally, nationally and internationally through research, dissemination, development work and network-building
It is the higher education institutions that are responsible for research and education in the field of career guidance. The academic staff of the higher education institutions occupy positions in a range of categories, and together these take care of the tasks of education, research and dissemination. Examples of such positions or roles are assistant professors, associate professors, professors and PhD candidates. Outside the formal education system, there are a number of other training establishments offering continuing education, courses and certification, in addition to enhancing competence through conferences.

2.4.4 POLICY AND SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT IN THE CAREER GUIDANCE FIELD

Policy and system development is an area of work that involves developing, advancing and following up on questions relating to the field of careers and political guidelines in the career guidance field. It can also involve developing the career guidance services, including digital services and other resources, regionally or nationally.

This can involve tasks such as:

- developing and managing career guidance services regionally and nationally, including following up on legislation and political guidelines
- working with the framework conditions for the provision of services regionally and nationally
- developing the quality of services, for example by developing quality systems, standards and knowledge bases
- advising political leaders at the regional or national level and providing the field of practice with recommendations and guidelines
- promoting collaboration and coordination locally and regionally in order to ensure the uniformity and quality of services, including creating arenas and building networks nationally and internationally

Examples of roles in the field with this area of work:

The tasks within policy and system development are performed by the staff of national authorities, including ministries and directorates. The ministries and directorates have sectoral responsibility for the services, and the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration (NAV), the Directorate of Integration and Diversity (IMDi) and Skills Norway have staff whose role partly or fully falls within the field of career guidance.

In addition, a range of tasks are performed by the municipal sector, by staff in the county authorities, municipalities and NAV’s county organisations. Every county authority has appointed a career guidance partnership coordinator and adviser coordinator. Policy development in the field is also performed by employer and employee organisations, and to a certain degree by other stakeholder organisations. In some cases, managers and practitioners will also be involved in system-level work.

2.4.5 CAREER GUIDANCE IN THE FIELD OF PRACTICE

Career guidance in the field of practice is understood to mean the career guidance work performed by practitioners. The field of practice comprises all the services and organisations providing career guidance. The tasks are performed by career guidance practitioners and other practitioners working in the field of practice.

The career guidance practitioner is central in the field of practice, despite the fact that the role does not have a title common to all the sectors and career guidance services (see examples below), and it is defined and performed to a varying extent. However, career guidance practitioner is a title used by many people across sectors. Other people in the field of practice who do not hold the role of career guidance practitioner have much more varying titles and role descriptions in the various sectors and career guidance services. See

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14 One of the recommendations of NOU 2016:7 is that the title ‘karriereveileder’ (career guidance practitioner) be introduced in schools.
Three main areas of work have been identified in the field of practice:

- career guidance processes
- career information
- career learning

A career guidance practitioner will have tasks within all three of these areas of work. A career guidance practitioner leads career guidance processes, provides career information and facilitates career learning. Career information and career learning thus fall within the areas of work of a career guidance practitioner, but in some sectors or services are performed by staff who only have tasks within one of the two areas of work. Many of the practitioners of these roles have career information and/or career learning (career education) as one of many tasks, and not as their main occupation.

The different roles are described below, some of them through references to examples from different sectors and services.

Career guidance processes
In this working area, there is a clear role that is recognisable across sectors – the career guidance practitioner. It is the career guidance practitioner who performs the tasks. Career guidance processes as an area of work involves facilitating and leading guidance processes; everything from short and finite guidance activities, to more complex and long-term processes. They involve helping to make clients better able to manage transitions and make meaningful choices relating to education, learning and work. Guidance can be provided both individually and in groups, and both physically and digitally.

Tasks include facilitating the exploration of a person’s situation, wishes and opportunities, and providing support for action and decisions.

Facilitating and leading guidance processes involves tasks such as:
- working with the client to identify and explore their situation and needs
- evaluating and selecting formats, tools and methods that could be relevant in guidance
- creating structure and progress in the guidance
- working with the client to assess whether the guidance is relevant, understandable and appropriate for the client
- arranging activities, experience-sharing and practice where this is relevant for the client
- assuming responsibility for ensuring that the career guidance is performed in an ethically responsible manner

Career guidance can both focus on a client’s specific situation and challenges and have a broader learning objective. Career guidance processes also involve contributing with career information and facilitating career learning.

The Swedish researcher Gunnel Lindh (2000) points out that it can be useful to talk about a narrow and a wide perspective in career guidance, with the narrow perspective involving only the actual career guidance interview, and the wider perspective involving every form of career guidance activity (including the guidance interview). The working area of career guidance processes is based on both perspectives.

Examples of roles in the field of practice with career guidance processes as the area of work: It can be difficult to identify with certainty the roles in the field that perform all the tasks in the working area of career guidance processes. This is because the organisation and distribution of...
roles in organisations providing career guidance not only vary between sectors, but can also vary between individual providers, such as career centres, NAV offices, schools or adult education centres. The manner in which a service is organised, including who does what and to what extent, is largely decided by the service’s social mission and management.

These examples provide a pointer as to who performs the tasks within the working area of career guidance processes, and who has the role of career guidance practitioner:

- career guidance practitioners in public career centres
- career guidance practitioners in the careers service at universities and university colleges
- education and vocational advisers\(^{15}\) in primary and secondary education
- in many municipalities, programme advisers or refugee advisers in the introduction programme (and others in the same role with similar titles) will have the full spectrum of tasks within career guidance.
- staff at some NAV offices work with career guidance, although they often have a different title, such as adviser or job specialist
- staff in work and inclusion companies who work with career guidance. Titles used here include adviser, counsellor, career adviser and career guidance practitioner

Career information

*Career information* as an area of work involves preparing and communicating information relating to education, learning, job and career. It also includes arranging career guidance. These are tasks performed by people in different sectors, either as part of another job or as the full-time part of their job. People with these tasks are often the first people that clients meet, either digitally or physically.

Providing career information can involve one or more of the following tasks:

- Producing and preparing career information:
  This is a task that staff of both public guidance establishments and other establishments perform to a varying scope and extent. Career information is understood to mean any information that can be relevant to clients in terms of career development, such as labour market information, information about education programmes, job seeking and rights. Producing career information can involve compiling and preparing relevant information or developing customised information for clients. Information can also be in the form of digital self-help tools.
- Communicating information digitally, in writing or physically in face-to-face meetings with clients:
  Communicating career information (verbally or in writing) involves giving clients an overview of current and relevant information, showing clients where they can find the relevant information themselves, and helping clients to critically evaluate the information. Communicating information verbally can be in the form of an independent activity (such as an information meeting) or as part of a guidance interview.
- Facilitating guidance:
  This involves facilitating various activities as part of or in preparation for guidance, such as mapping and clarification.
- Referring clients:
  This involves establishing whether the client needs further or other services or agencies and referring them to these.

Career information is a central task in career guidance work in every sector. For the career guidance practitioner, this is an important part of their work. However, some people have this task even though

\(^{15}\)In acts and regulations, school career guidance practitioners are described as educational and vocational advisers. NOU 2016: 7 recommends changing the title to career guidance practitioner ("karriereveileder").
they do not work with other working areas within career guidance.

Examples of these roles can include:

- staff who produce and obtain a range of information, either in digital or other formats, for example on utdanning.no, vilbli.no, nav.no and other websites that are a good source of career information
- information and communication staff affiliated to a guidance service
- counter or reception staff in establishments such as adult education centres, NAV offices or careers centres in university colleges or universities
- staff who to varying degrees communicate career information as part of their job, such as contact teachers and subject teachers in primary and secondary education, educational psychological counsellors and programme advisers in the introduction programme.

Career learning

Career learning as an area of work involves helping to ensure that clients acquire career competence through learning and exploration. Career learning can take several formats, and can be part of individual guidance, group guidance, teaching and digital interaction. In Section 3.2.2 on career learning, the term structured career learning is used and described in detail. Structured career learning is the learning that takes place when an career guidance practitioner or teacher assumes the role of facilitating learning. Structured career learning can take place through many different types of learning activities.

Examples of activities in this working area can be:

- analysing and assessing what could be relevant career competences for individuals or groups
- planning, developing, implementing and evaluating career learning activities through the use of relevant methods, tools and resources
- Developing and adapting learning resources for use in structured career learning

Helping clients to acquire career competence is one of the central tasks of career guidance, and career guidance can be part of a range of guidance and learning situations. This is one of the tasks of a career guidance practitioner, whether in individual guidance or guidance for groups. However, some people have the task of career learning or career education even though they do not work with other working areas within career guidance.

Examples of these roles can include:

- teachers whose main task is career education, for example teachers who teach the Selection of Education subject
- teachers who teach subjects in which career learning is relevant, such as subject teachers, Norwegian language teachers and adult education teachers
- others who provide teaching and training with career competence as one of the objectives, for example under the auspices of a careers centre, work and inclusion company, introduction programme or NAV
- staff in establishments that develop learning resources for use in structured career learning, for example by publishers, digital services, companies or school owners

2.5 Competence areas

Career guidance competence is multifaceted and complex, and there are many areas in which a career guidance practitioner needs competence. In the national, cross-sectoral competence standards, competence is divided into seven competence areas. Each competence area has an introduction with a brief, general description of the area. This is followed by a detailed description of the content of the
competence area, which is the core of a career guidance practitioner’s competence. We have chosen to call these detailed descriptions subsidiary competences. They describe part of the overall competence in an area.

The competence areas are based on the recognised international competence framework NICE\textsuperscript{16}, but have been revised and adapted to the Norwegian situation. The competence areas are also based on discussions and comments from the broadly composed group, informal peer reviews in the workplaces of the members of the group, comments obtained at various conferences and gatherings, and feedback from the comments process that took place in the spring of 2019.

Norwegian career guidance practice has strong roots in a broad approach of guidance pedagogy, in which knowledge of and basic skills in learning and change work are prioritised.

Professional career guidance also assumes competence in career theory and methodology that can complement general competence in guidance. One of the main intentions of compiling the seven competence areas has therefore been to achieve a good balance between general and cross-disciplinary guidance competence and competence that is specific to the field of careers.

Competence areas for career guidance:
1. Guidance
2. Ethics
3. Career specific theories and methods
4. Career learning
5. Education and work
6. Target groups and context
7. Development, network and policymaking

\textsuperscript{16} NICE (2012), NICE (2016) [NICE Handbook II]
In the seven competence areas, areas 1 and 2 represent general guidance competence, cf. Section 2.2.1, which discusses key areas of tension and assessment. Areas 3, 4, 5 and 6 represent those that are more specific to the field of careers. Area 7 represents competence that is both specific to the field of careers but also more cross-disciplinary competence. Each competence area is divided into subsidiary competences within knowledge, skills and general competence, in the same way as in the National Qualifications Framework that is used in higher education in Norway. Knowledge, skills and general competence are defined as follows:

- **Knowledge**
  Understanding of theories, facts, terms, principles and procedures within subjects, subject areas and/or professions

- **Skills**
  Ability to apply knowledge to solve problems and tasks. There are different types of skills:
  - Cognitive, practical, creative and communicative

- **General competence**
  The ability to apply knowledge and skills independently in different situations in education and work contexts by showing responsibility and the ability to collaborate, reflect and think critically

The competence areas refer to client in the singular, as in one person. However, client can also mean a group of clients.

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17 A subsidiary competence describes part of the overall competence in an area. Subsidiary competences are divided into knowledge, skills and general competence.

18 https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/e579913fa1445c2b2219a69c726670b/nkr.pdf
The competence standards are designed to apply to the career guidance practitioner across sectors and are intended to cover all of a career guidance practitioner’s working areas. Separate standards have not been created for the other roles in the field, but the seven competence areas are also relevant for them. Using the standards as a basis, every service or sector can further define what constitutes relevant competence in the context that applies to them. This is discussed in more detail in Section 2.6 about levels. The seven areas of competence provide an overview of what is involved in career guidance. They are therefore relevant, both at system level and for the field of practice.

2.5.1 GUIDANCE

A career guidance practitioner manages important processes with people facing change and development through professional interviews. The career guidance practitioner understands that professional guidance interviews require a certain progress and structure, uses adequate guidance methods and tools, and continuously develops their own communication and relational skills.

Knowledge
The career guidance practitioner:
- has knowledge of what constitutes reflection, progress and structure (the different phases in guidance)
- has knowledge of how to establish, develop and maintain good relations in guidance
- has knowledge of the significance of establishing a clear guidance contract that specifies the goal and limits of the guidance process
- has knowledge of how to facilitate guidance processes for individuals and groups

Skills
The career guidance practitioner:
- is aware of the choice of methods available for working with the client in order to establish and analyse background, current situation and expectations
- develops a good relational framework for guidance
- applies key guidance skills, such as appropriate and varied questions and listening techniques, in order to:
  - create the necessary structure and progress
  - help the client to set goals for themselves and to plan and reflect on choices and actions, for the present and for the future
  - work with the client to create meaning and understanding, and facilitate achievement

General competence
The career guidance practitioner:
- understands the importance of the need to continuously and systematically maintain and develop relational and guidance skills, both through practice, reflection and working with their colleagues
- takes the initiative to have critical discussions with their peers on various kinds of guidance practices and approaches
2.5.2 ETHICS

The area ‘Ethics’ concerns ethical awareness in career guidance, and observing and acting in line with codes of ethics for career guidance in one’s practice.

A career guidance practitioner is aware of their own attitudes and competence, reflects systematically on their own practice and relates specifically and reflexively to the career guidance code of ethics. The career guidance practitioner meets clients with openness and respect and understands the importance of showing a good understanding of roles.

Knowledge
The career guidance practitioner:
- is familiar with the career guidance code of ethics and has a basic awareness of ethical theory
- has knowledge of alternative courses of action and obligations when facing dilemmas and challenges in career guidance
- has knowledge of relevant statutory provisions concerning data protection and the handling of personal data

Skills
The career guidance practitioner:
- observes and acts in line with codes of ethics in their practice
- recognises ethically problematic situations and makes sound assessments about what is the ethically responsible action
- develops and exercises ethical agency in day-to-day guidance work
- systematically and thoroughly reflects on their own practice independently and with others

General competence
The career guidance practitioner:
- is aware of their own values, attitudes and behaviour in relation to clients, has the ability to critically assess their own exercise of the role and how understandings and communication can affect their guidance
- takes the initiative to promote ethical reflection and action in their professional circle

2.5.3 CAREER SPECIFIC THEORIES AND METHODS

The area ‘Career specific theories and methods’ concerns theories and methods that are specific to career guidance, as well as physical and digital forms of guidance.
A career guidance practitioner is aware of the breadth of the theoretical field concerning career development and career guidance. The career guidance practitioner applies careers theory to develop and enrich perspectives in guidance and to make conscious and appropriate choices regarding method. The career guidance practitioner can integrate and balance physical and digital guidance and assesses which form and arena is most appropriate in a particular career guidance activity.

Knowledge
The career guidance practitioner:
- has knowledge of how the individual makes choices, and what affects the individual’s choices and career development
- has knowledge of specific career guidance methods
- has knowledge of the opportunities and limitations involved in the various tools used to explore interests, wishes and opportunities for education and work
- has knowledge of physical and digital forms of guidance, and how they separately and together constitute flexible career guidance processes

Skills
The career guidance practitioner:
- applies relevant careers theory in order to bring multiple perspectives into the guidance
- is aware of and can justify the choice of career guidance method
- evaluates the appropriate use of different types of and arenas for career guidance
- masters digital career guidance and can integrate this with other forms of guidance

General competence
The career guidance practitioner:
- critically evaluates different career choice theories and the use of these in their career guidance practice
- can apply careers theory to new ideas, innovation and dissemination in the service
- understands the significance of leading and organising career guidance activities in digital and physical settings in ways that stimulate the client’s ability to reflect innovatively on their situation.

2.5.4 CAREER LEARNING

The area ‘Career learning’ concerns facilitating learning processes and activities to ensure that the client gains a better learning outcome and develops the skills to manage their career through change and transition.

A career guidance practitioner has knowledge of career learning and knows how career competence can make individuals better able to manage change and transition in their life, learning and work. The career guidance practitioner can facilitate exploration and learning in order to develop career competence.

Knowledge
The career guidance practitioner:
- has knowledge of career learning and career competence
- has basic knowledge of learning and learning theory
- has knowledge of a broad range of career learning activities
• has knowledge of the complexity of handling change and transition in life, learning and work

Skills
The career guidance practitioner:
• facilitates guidance processes for individuals and groups, with the goals of learning and exploration
• explores, plans and implements career learning activities through the use of relevant methods, tools and resources
• evaluates the learning outcome of career learning activities
• works with parties who can contribute to career learning activities that are relevant to the individual or group

General competence
The career guidance practitioner:
• shows understanding of the context in which the individual lives, and recognises that career learning must be based on the individual’s situation
• critically and with a high degree of ethical awareness, is able to analyse how career learning and career competence can affect the individual’s life and choices

2.5.5 EDUCATION AND WORK

A career guidance practitioner has up-to-date knowledge about the particular focus areas of career guidance: education and work. The career guidance practitioner has knowledge of educational pathways, trends and labour market demands, and is aware of information and research about future competence needs. The career guidance practitioner understands the complexity and limitations in the diversity of information about education and the labour market.

Knowledge
The career guidance practitioner:
• has updated knowledge about the education system at all levels, and basic knowledge about the education system’s special schemes, including rules, opportunities, requirements, deadlines, exemptions and grant schemes
• has knowledge of continuing and further education and relevant local courses available
• has knowledge of the labour market’s needs and demand for labour locally, regionally and nationally, and about forecasts for future competence needs
• has knowledge of expectations and requirements relating to the jobseeking process and to participation in the labour market

Skills
The career guidance practitioner:
• uses quality-assured information channels about education and work and has a critical approach to sources of
information
• together with the client, evaluates information about education and the labour market in relation to the client’s wishes, opportunities and limitations
• acts as a guide in the application process relating to education and work
• helps clients to identify, understand and apply their own competence, which includes enabling them to describe general competence that is transferable from one working area to another

General competence
The career guidance practitioner:
• has insight into the significance of work in people’s lives
• can communicate the significance of voluntary work for the local community and the individual
• is aware of when it is important and possible to challenge structures that obstruct inclusion in the workplace

2.5.6 TARGET GROUPS AND CONTEXT

A career guidance practitioner has knowledge of the various career guidance target groups and about the various career guidance services’ mandates and legislation. The career guidance practitioner has an insight into how sociocultural circumstances can affect the individual’s career development, and consciously uses this insight in interaction with the client in order to help expand the client’s horizon of opportunities.

Knowledge
The career guidance practitioner:
• has knowledge of the various career guidance services and their target groups
• has knowledge of their own service’s target group, and their prerequisites and needs
• has knowledge of the relevant acts, rules, rights and obligations that set the framework for their career guidance
• has insight into how social categories such as gender, socio-economic background, ethnicity, age, health and sexuality can affect the individual’s career development

Skills
The career guidance practitioner:
• understands various sectors’ different roles in society
• recognises the circumstances and needs of the individual’s life, and helps them explore their opportunities and limitations

General competence
The career guidance practitioner:
• has insight into the consequences of exclusion and the significance of inclusion and social justice for the individual and society
• is conscious of when it is important to explore the opportunity to challenge norms and frameworks that affect and/or limit the individual’s options
2.5.7 DEVELOPMENT, NETWORK AND POLICYMAKING

A career guidance practitioner has the competence to undertake tasks at system level, including coordination, network building, innovation, process management and the development of career guidance services.

Knowledge
The career guidance practitioner:

- has knowledge of how the field of career guidance in Norway is organised
- has knowledge of the significance of strategic and targeted career guidance work in their own organisation
- has basic knowledge of organisational development, innovation, management and administration

Skills
The career guidance practitioner:

- takes the initiative to development work in order to strengthen the career guidance provision in their own organisation or sector
- facilitates strategic communication work and helps to promote the available career guidance provisions
- builds networks and collaborates with the educational, employment and voluntary sector

General competence
The career guidance practitioner:

- can communicate results, problems and specialist perspectives from the career guidance field in a range of formats and media
- has an understanding of political processes and what career guidance contributes to a complex system

2.6 Descriptions of levels

As a rule, a competence standard refers to a fixed level of competence, and therefore describes a minimum of what is needed to be able to document that the standard has been met. According to Sadler (1987), the difficulty of this understanding of ‘absolute competence’ is that although the ideal is to achieve unique, universal competence descriptions that in themselves are constant, in practice this proves to be an extremely difficult task in a number of subject areas. Despite the best intentions, relativity tends to creep in, in relation to how practitioners and students are assessed against the standard.

It is obvious that anyone who will be performing career guidance tasks needs quality-assured competence in a number of areas. But grading the levels of these competence areas is more of a challenge. What constitutes good, less good or very good competence in areas or subjects such as ethics, cross-disciplinary cooperation and labour market knowledge?

Providers of education programmes, courses and training packages often have tools that allow them to
develop exams and tests in order to evaluate the level of competence of a student or participant within specific subjects. Various taxonomies, such as Bloom’s knowledge taxonomy, Simpson’s psychomotor levels and Krathwohl’s affective levels, etc. were developed as an aid to identifying the competence levels of a student or participant. In the education system, we use grading systems to rank students. But how can we use cross-sectoral competence standards, that do not relate to specific education and training pathways, to quality-assess those who perform career guidance tasks in a way that provides transparency and meaning for the entire field of practice? The national competence standards have attempted to solve this by referring to two levels of competence: competent and specialist.

2.6.1 TWO LEVELS – COMPETENT AND SPECIALIST
The seven competence areas are in themselves extensive and complex, which makes it difficult to define absolute reference points. It has been important in the development process to ensure that the competence standards represent a development potential for individual employees and managers, and that they not merely act as static checklists; cf. Section 2.2.1. On this basis, several levels have been defined in the competence standards, in the same way as in similar competence standards, such as NICE.

The national, cross-sectoral competence standards operate with two levels:
1) Competent
2) Specialist

The definition of competent states that the career guidance practitioner:
- has good knowledge and an awareness of the subsidiary competences as described within the area of knowledge
- is generally capable of competently demonstrating skills as described within the area of skills
- generally demonstrates good judgement and independence as described within the area of general competence

The definition of specialist states that the career guidance practitioner:
- has very good knowledge and a detailed awareness of the subsidiary competences as described within the area of knowledge
- can demonstrate very good skills as described within the area of skills
- demonstrates very good judgement and a high degree of independence as described within the area of general competence

Subdividing the competence standards by level was discussed in the development work, and it was decided that one condition for doing so was that the subdivision into levels should not be too complicated, and for this reason, two levels were chosen. Subdividing into two levels can make sense for the field of practice, and this choice is supported by the fact that it is also the option that was chosen in countries such as the United Kingdom. After performing an analysis of job vacancies in the career guidance field (Neary, Marriott & Hooley, 2014, p. 14), the researchers concluded that the desired qualifications in career guidance practitioners naturally fell into the categories of ‘practitioners’ and ‘advanced practitioners’. Although the categories cannot be interpreted entirely unambiguously, according to Neary et al. (2014, pp. 25–26), there is an expectation that ‘the advanced practitioner’ should be able to perform at a generally higher level, and this is comparable with the category of specialist in our competence standards.

The competence standards for career guidance practitioners therefore do not come in two versions, one

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19 See for example Bjelke (2012)
describing what constitutes competent, and another describing what you can do if you are a specialist. Instead, the two levels are defined through descriptions of the extent to which, or how well, a career guidance practitioner meets the competence standards. The term competent represents a minimum standard, even if this may be in the form of a high level of competence, while specialist represents a more advanced proficiency, either within one of the competence areas, or one or more of the subsidiary competences. These descriptions were used as the basis, instead of trying to establish separate definitions for the levels. The reason for this is to allow the descriptions to provide an easily understandable and sufficient differentiation between the two levels.

One of the purposes of the competence standards is to inspire people to continue developing their competence, cf. Sections 2.2.1 and 2.7. We have tried to highlight this through the subdivision into levels. Introducing two levels, competent and specialist, illustrates a development potential. If a career guidance practitioner has achieved the competent level in most areas, they may still strive for new, higher competences at the specialist level.

The goal is for a career guidance practitioner to be competent in all the competence areas (and subsidiary competences). A career guidance practitioner is at (or can be or can develop to) the specialist level within competence areas or subsidiary competences, if they have very good competence, additional experience, formal or informal qualifications within a competence area or a subsidiary competence.

FIGURE 3: Description of level

In a competence development process for a career guidance practitioner, from beginner (novice) to expert, there will be some graduated stages before the levels of competent and specialist are achieved. A career guidance practitioner will tend to go from not having knowledge or skills within a subject area, to having some knowledge and then approaching the first level – competent. We have therefore defined some stages against which to measure oneself before achieving the levels of competent and specialist. It was particularly important to define the graduated stages towards the competent level in conjunction with the development of a self-assessment tool for career guidance practitioners, cf. Section 2.7.

Description of the stages towards competent and specialist
The career guidance practitioner:

• Stage 0: has no knowledge or skills within that subsidiary competence
• Stage 1: has a small degree of knowledge or skills within that subsidiary competence
• Stage 2: has some degree of knowledge or skills within that subsidiary competence

A subsidiary competence describes part of the overall competence in an area. Subsidiary competences are divided into knowledge, skills and general competence.
In Section 2.2.1 (*Static versus dynamic orientation*), we accounted for our emphasis on a *development perspective*, which is one of the main reasons for developing competence standards. The focus is on ensuring that the standards will inspire people to further develop their competence, and form the basis for training packages, guides for self-assessment and self-initiated competence development. The description of the stages towards competent, as well as the description of the two levels, competent and specialist, are key elements in the competence development of career guidance practitioners.

### 2.7 How to use the competence areas and level subdivisions?

It has not yet been clarified what status the competence standards should have or what education programmes should accompany the standards. This is discussed in more detail in Section 2.8. Depending on this, the competence areas and level subdivisions could be used as a basis for evaluating career guidance practitioners’ level of competence, and also as a basis for further competence development.

A career guidance practitioner can use the competence areas and level subdivisions to get an idea of their own competence and as a basis for evaluating what the next step could be in their own competence development. This can be achieved by identifying one’s knowledge, skills and general competence in each competence area, and with the aid of the level subdivisions, evaluating where one is in one’s competence development. When one has evaluated whether one is moving towards competent or specialist, the next step can be to take a closer look at the following:

- Within which competence areas does one have the best competence?
- Within which competence areas does one have insufficient competence?
- How can one move forward in one’s competence development? (Examples can be formal skills improvement, courses, participation in conferences, reading more specialist literature, taking the initiative for more experience sharing, etc.)

In the same way, managers of career services can use the competence areas and level subdivisions to gain an overview of the combined level of competence in their business, in employee development and in recruitment processes.

In 2020, Skills Norway will develop a self-assessment tool that will enable career guidance practitioners to evaluate their own competence, as well as resources showing how individuals and the service as a whole can continue to develop their competence within the seven competence areas. The tool and the resources will be published on the *Quality in career guidance* website.

**Competence and competence standards in the field of practice**

As mentioned above, the competence standards have been designed for the *role of career guidance practitioner*. The career guidance practitioner has tasks within all three of the working areas in the field of practice, i.e. *career guidance processes, career information and career learning*. However, there are other practitioners in the field of practice who are not career guidance practitioners, cf. Section 2.4.5. The competence areas and subsidiary competences within each area can also provide a basis for defining standards for competence for the other roles in the field of practice.

However, since there is enormous variation in the roles within the *career information* and the *career learning* work areas in the various physical and digital career guidance services, it must be up to the individual service and authorities of each sector, using the competence standards for career guidance practitioners as a basis, to define what each employee or groups of employees must have by way of competence. The competence areas and level subdivisions have been developed with this as a basic
assumption. Since the competence standards are intended to function across sectors, it is not possible to create standards for all of the various roles encompassed by the field.

For example: Career guidance in lower secondary schools

As an example of how the competence standards can be used to define competence standards for roles other than that of the career guidance practitioner, let us take a role found in lower secondary schools: that of teachers of The Selection of Education subject.

Teachers of The Selection of Education subject are an example of practitioners who facilitate structured career learning, cf. Section 2.4.5. Having competence in competence area 4 Career learning is therefore important for this role. Also important are areas 1 Guidance, area 2 Ethics, area 3 Career specific theories and methods, area 5 Education and work and area 6 Target groups and context. But this does not mean that the teacher’s subsidiary competences in knowledge, skills and general competence must be the same as those of the career guidance practitioner. As we have already stated, at present, the subsidiary competences have been prepared for the career guidance practitioner, and these subsidiary competences should be used as a basis and adapted to create separate subsidiary competences for teachers of the Selection of Education subject.

However, it is important to point out that this example is only a potential consideration, not a fully studied recommendation for this role in schools. Using the seven competence areas as a basis, the authorities of the sector, school owners and practitioners themselves should work together to assess what the competence standards for teachers of The Selection of Education subject should be.

Competence at system level

With regard to the three working areas at system level, cf. Section 2.4.1, the value of the competence standards and their potential use are connected to the fact that the seven areas provide a good overview of what career guidance entails. They therefore provide a good basis for evaluating what those working with teaching and research in the field should have by way of competence, and which competence areas leaders and policymakers should be aware of, or even have in-depth knowledge of. If higher quality and professionalism in career guidance is the goal, it is very important for leaders and policymakers also to have sufficient adequate knowledge of career guidance. The question of what is ‘good enough’ will depend on what types of tasks go with a position and cannot be answered in the form of a general recommendation across sectors. Our ambition is also for the competence standards to lead to a movement towards higher competence within career guidance for everyone who has tasks and responsibilities in the field.

2.8 Status and further development

The Competence standards – professional career guidance mandate did not ask the working group to decide what kind of status the competence standards should have in individual sectors. Consequently, the term competence standard does not entail a statutory requirement or a requirement in the form of certification. Competence standard is used as a neutral term for a certain content and level of competence that a career guidance practitioner should have. Therefore, as part of its development work, the working group has not provided any recommendations on whether the competence standards should simply be recommended guidelines or whether they should be requirements enshrined in acts and regulations. There are many aspects to weigh up here. This must be decided through other processes.

21 In 2009, the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training prepared ‘Recommended formal competence and guiding competence criteria for advisers in schools’. Here, the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training recommends the starting level of formal education that advisers in schools should have. It also prepared guiding competence descriptions for education and employment advisers.
and should be considered in the implementation phase. Some public career guidance services may wish to enshrine the competence standards in regulations, and others may not.

Requirements or recommendations
However, it is of great significance for the continuing professionalisation of the career guidance field that all the sectors with responsibility for career guidance services look at the opportunity to set clearer requirements as to what those working with career guidance should have by way of competence. This must be done by the authorities in each sector. The competence standards must be linked to the working areas, tasks and roles of each organisation and service providing career guidance.

Each sector or career guidance service can use the competence standards as a starting point from which to identify and assess which tasks and competence practitioners currently have: Who does what? What are the tasks? What roles are associated with these tasks? What competence do the people working with these tasks have, and what competence should they have? The authorities of the sector and/or owner of the service can use the analysis as a basis for considering whether they should initiate more targeted skills improvement measures, whether they should set requirements regarding competence, and if necessary what formal status the standards could achieve. Naturally, practitioners in the sector should be represented and involved in this work.

Education programmes
The development work did not include assessments of what kinds of education programmes should accompany the competence standards. It was not part of the mandate to study future education programmes, but the question has been discussed in the course of the work. A more appropriate time to assess the need for qualifying education, further and continuing education will be when discussing the implementation of the competence standards and level subdivisions. Therefore, as part of its development work, the working group did not propose how many credits should go with the working areas and roles, in the way that NOU 2016:7 did. One of the main reasons for this are the cross-sectoral differences in structure and framework conditions.

There are currently master’s degree programmes available, but no bachelor’s degree programmes dedicated specifically to career guidance. In recent years, further education programmes in career guidance have become more varied, not least following the establishment of a master’s degree in career guidance.

In order to succeed with professionalising and increasing the quality of career guidance services, it is essential to ensure that there are sufficient education and training options possibilities for practitioners. The content of the programmes can be studied in more detail based on the competence standards, descriptions of levels, working areas and roles in the career guidance field. The design of the further and continuing education programmes must also include an ongoing assessment of the need for new knowledge, for example adaptations around the needs of special target groups, career guidance in certain sectors or under certain framework conditions, the use of new technology and/or new types of tools in career guidance, etc.
Career competence

3.1 Background

The development of career guidance services in Norway can be seen as part of the general increase in focus on competence policy. The term ‘competence policy’ denotes the overall policy for development, mobilisation and application of competence throughout the Norwegian labour market and Norwegian society. Among other things, competence policy aims to contribute to coherence and good transitions between different learning arenas. In a competence policy perspective, the population’s capacity to manage transition, adapt to change and enjoy lifelong learning are key to ensuring that society’s collective competence is at all times commensurate to the needs of the labour market.

According to the green paper NOU 2016:7, career guidance can have two objectives: ‘... assist individuals in specific situations of choice and help to ensure that individuals develop the career competence needed to enable them to manage career-related challenges throughout their lives’ (NOU 2016:7, p. 50). The goal for individuals to develop the career competence needed to enable them to manage career-related challenges throughout their lives is the focus of this part of the expert report. This objective for the outcome of career guidance has been less developed from a specialist perspective and has not become as well-established as objectives for practice, such as assisting individuals in specific situations of choice. The model for career learning is intended to contribute to the goal of giving the population sufficient and relevant career competence.

When career competence becomes part of the quality framework, that is also an expression of the fact that a greater and better focus on career learning can increase the quality of the career guidance services
in Norway. If clients and participants\textsuperscript{24} feel that they achieve relevant learning outcomes from the activities in which they participate, the qualitative outcome of overall career guidance initiatives will improve. This is based on an understanding that individuals need competence to manage career-related challenges throughout their lives.

Not all the activities in career guidance have a clear learning goal, and indeed not all of them need to. The purpose of career guidance is often to help give necessary support to people who are in specific situations in which they need to make choices and manage a transition. But by including career competence as another goal of career guidance, we highlight the importance of the career guidance work also helping individuals to develop the competence they need to manage situations and challenges that can occur in education and work. The Career Learning in Context model in the National Quality Framework can help to ensure that we have a common language, a more common understanding and perhaps also a more common practice, and these in combination could help to develop the quality of career guidance in Norway across sectors.

The working group that worked with the subject of career competence developed a model that was given the name \textit{Career Learning in Context}. This model is based on a cross-sectoral perspective and provides a description of the factors that could play a role when one facilitates career learning. The model provides proposals on how to work with career learning and assumes that this can be done in many different contexts. The model also makes proposals for what is called \textit{Areas for exploration and learning}. These consist of 10 words that are put together in 5 pairs of words, called the Career Buttons. The five areas for exploration and learning illustrate themes in career learning and indicates what can be relevant learning outcome from career learning. Working with career learning on the basis of these areas can help to structure the career learning process, while the areas also take into account the fact that people have different starting points, life situations and needs.

The model does not provide an exhaustive description of how practitioners can work with career learning. Nor does it show precisely which competences should be the objectives of career learning. Unlike, for example, a framework or a specific curriculum, a model is more general and tries to describe a way of ‘systematising the world’. Furthermore, the model has not been developed to allow it to be used directly in different sectors and in any situation. One of the model’s basic principles is that how to work with career learning must be adapted to suit the ‘local’ context. However, the model tries to create a more consistent language across sectors regarding key dimensions of career learning. It also tries to take into consideration the fact that different sectors have different target groups, lines of management, framework conditions and structural prerequisites that will affect work with career learning.

In the process of developing the quality framework, we obtained comments on the model from practitioners and others throughout the sectors through a comments process. It emerged that the model was found to be relevant and generated ideas on how this subject could be developed further. One of the goals is for the model to be useful and practically relevant for all the target groups and a range of sectors. On the ‘Quality in career guidance’ website, resources and material will gradually be added that can support work with career learning for a range of target groups in various sectors.

The model has been developed to be useful for organisations and practitioners who work directly with career guidance and career learning, for people who in different contexts work with people’s learning in conjunction with education and work, and for those who develop resources, material or information relating to career guidance and career learning. It is also intended to be relevant for those who own, manage, develop or plan career guidance services, and those who work with policymaking in the field. Ideally, the model will also be of

\textsuperscript{24}In this part of the expert report, we use both the terms client and participant. That is because a person taking part in any kind of career guidance is sometimes a client who has, for example, sought out a career guidance service, while he or she could also be a participant in an education or job-related career learning activity, for example as a student in education, participant on a course, participant on a work placement, etc.
interest for people working with professional development and with the development of research and practice, and with teaching in the field of career guidance.

The model does not represent a truth about how career learning with career competence as a goal should take place. It is intended to provide input for the policy, practice and academic fields that can inspire the further development of knowledge, experience and methods of career learning. The overriding goal is to contribute to professional development and development of methodology in terms of career learning. However, the model should not displace other important and good-quality specialist development work associated with this perspective. Developing a subject and practice in career guidance will always involve interaction between many different parties, with the specialists always acting as a driving force. The model has been developed in a partnership between a party at system level (Skills Norway) and practitioners and experts from the field of career guidance (the participants in the groups). One of the aims is for this work to accelerate and inspire more specialist and practical work and partnerships relating to career competence and career learning, with the goal being higher quality career guidance.

Career competence internationally and nationally
Internationally, in the last 10 to 15 years, there has been an increasing focus on career competence, otherwise known as Career Management Skills (CMS). The perspective has been highlighted at policy level, academically and in the field of practice. Helping the population to develop career competence has been a goal of both the OECD and the EU in their Lifelong guidance policy. Two resolutions from the Council of the European Union recommend furthering the population’s career competence, saying among other things: ‘Career management skills play a decisive role in empowering people to become involved in shaping their learning, training and integration pathways and their careers’ (EU 2008; EU 2004). On the basis of this, work has been undertaken to develop policies and services that support the development of career competence in many European countries. A more solid specialist knowledge base has also gradually been built up. Many countries have prepared different ‘frameworks for career management skills’ (CMS frameworks). It is through the development and use of these that important experience on the use of such frameworks has been gathered in various countries. The ELGPN (European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network) worked with policymaking in relation to CMS in all of the nine years in which the network was active. The ELGPN has made recommendations on how to successfully implement CMS on a national basis (ELGPN 2012; ELGPN 2015). Several of these recommendations have formed the basis of the work on promoting career competence in Norway.

There has also been an increased focus in Norway on the significance of career competence. In NOU 2016:7, career competence was highlighted as one of several measures intended to provide cohesion and drive forward a more comprehensive system of lifelong career guidance. This recommendation in the Official Norwegian Report is the background behind why career competence is included as part of the National Quality Framework for Career Guidance. Skills Norway has previously initiated and been involved in several projects relating to career competence, including a cross-sectoral project that looked into introducing CMS as a perspective for career guidance in Norway (Haug, 2014). There have also been other projects that have involved looking at the use and significance of career competence in the Norwegian and Nordic contexts (Thomsen, 2014; Svendsrud, 2016).

There are several examples illustrating that there has been a focus on career competence and career learning in sectors involving career guidance. One example involves the new curriculum in the Selection of Education subject in lower secondary schools. Through the subject renewal project (Fagfornyelsen), it was decided that career competence should be a core element in the curriculum for this subject. A further education programme has also

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25 See Section 3.4
26 NOU 2016:7, page 50
27 See for example Haug (2014, p. 16)
recently been started for employees of work and inclusion companies, called ‘Guidance – with a particular focus on career competence and career learning’. There has also been work on career learning in projects involving career guidance for refugees and immigrants. One of the new Standard Elements in the introduction programme will include career competence as one of two thematic areas.

Several textbooks have also been written on the subject, including some in Norwegian. There has also been interest in the subject in the field of practice, and in education programmes in career guidance. In recent years, there have also been several specialist conferences in Norway whose central theme was career competence. Several of our neighbouring countries have also been working on developing methods and resources relating to career competence.

The mandate in brief
The working group that worked on this topic had a mandate drawn up by Skills Norway on which to base their work (see Appendices 3 and 5). The group worked according to the mandate as it was given, but during the working process made some interpretations and decisions on which we briefly comment here:

- The working group worked according to the mandate’s assignment to ‘look into and propose the content and structure of what could be called a “framework for career competence”. The group looked at a number of other countries’ frameworks for career competence. These usually consist of some kind of table or matrix that shows a defined number of career competences, ideally structured into areas, and with defined learning objectives and learning levels. The frameworks are often based on a specific learning theory (Hooley et al., 2011). Based on the mandate’s assignment and discussions of the consequences of the intention for this to function in a cross-sectoral perspective, the decision was made not to design a framework based on this logic. The proposal therefore does not describe the solution as a ‘framework’, but develops what is called a Career Learning in Context model.
- It does not provide detailed ‘evaluations of how the proposed “framework plan” can be useful in career learning in different sectors’, as urged by the mandate, but says something about how the model can be used in career learning in a more general context. During the working process, the solutions were discussed with representatives from a number of sectors, and several informal peer reviews were conducted in order to evaluate the solution against the way career guidance is provided in different sectors.
- The proposal briefly touches on some recommendations for the further development and use of the model, but does not go into detail on this.

3.2 What are career competence and career learning?

For the individual, education, job and career play an absolutely key role in the fabric, experience and evolution of their life. These are things that dominate an individual’s situation and life circumstances in a fundamental way, depending on whether they have or do not have qualifications and a job. For society, the population’s level of education, competence, participation in the workforce or exclusion from it, are of vital significance to the fundamental functioning of that society, its collective economy and welfare.

Constant changes in society, working life, technology, the economy, business structure and demographics present individuals and society with new opportunities, but also new challenges. Occupations that previously recruited and needed large numbers of employees are gone. Completely new kinds of jobs and working areas are evolving. Industries that have called for a certain type of competence are undergoing changes that result

29 See for example Buhl (2016) and Katznelson & Lundby
30 See Section 3.4
in a need for different types of competence. However, while changes are happening around us, many of the opportunities and needs in our society are stable and predictable.

It is in this landscape that individuals must make choices and manage challenges in education, work and life in general. They must find out what they want and what interests them, what they can do and what they are good at, and what is important to them. Everyone must identify their own possibilities and limitations, and those of the society around them. People must make a number of decisions regarding their education, job and career, manage change and unforeseen incidents, and if necessary, reorient themselves and make new choices. This is not something that one is done with once and for all at a young age; we must be prepared to experience change and transition throughout our lives. Some people will be well qualified and have the right framework conditions with which to be able to manage this, while others may be starting off in a more challenging life situation, either temporarily or more permanently.

Both for individuals and for the society, it is important that the population has the prerequisites to manoeuvre through this complexity, and to successfully make well-reflected choices and manage challenges in connection to education, job and career. One of the initiatives that can help with this is ensuring that the population has and receives the opportunity to develop career competence. Career competence is a skill that empowers people to manage their life, learning and work, through change and transition. It is the skill to know and understand oneself and one’s context, to act and make choices, and to manage dilemmas and tensions associated with life, learning and work. It involves an awareness that individuals are shaped by their life circumstances and actions, but that they can also influence and shape their own and society’s future.

People develop their career throughout their life. A career choice is not a finite incident, but a lifelong process: ‘In this perspective, career development is a continuous process of formation that continues throughout one’s life, in which one’s choice of occupation and role as a worker is one among many parts of a greater whole’ (Haug, 2018a, p. 26). Different phases of life will involve different challenges in terms of career. One’s career is not something that can be clarified and chosen early in life, since the frames of reference for the decisions one makes will never stop changing. Career guidance should therefore be about empowering individuals to take control of their lives and their choices, and should include a learning perspective, of which a clear objective is to help equip the individual to manage career-related challenges throughout their life (Haug, 2018a).

To promote learning
An overall objective of including career competence in the quality framework is to highlight a perspective that career guidance is about learning. The benefit to an individual of participating in career guidance (in one form or another) can be increased by introducing a clearer learning perspective in career guidance. The intention is not to displace the specialist perspectives that have already been established within career guidance. The intention is for the learning perspective to expand, augment and add nuance to the understanding of the objective and practice of career guidance. The ambition that those who make use of career guidance services should derive benefit in the form of career competences, could improve the quality of career guidance in Norway.

Owners and managers responsible for career guidance services and practitioners working directly with clients are important parties in terms of ensuring that a learning perspective becomes a more natural part of how career guidance services are planned and provided in Norway. A first step is to ensure that those who use the services will achieve a learning outcome, and that career competence is defined as an explicit objective of the service. Managers and practitioners must then look at how the service could be developed and if necessary,
changed in order to achieve this objective. One prerequisite is for managers and practitioners to have a basic understanding of the perspective, and to acquire the knowledge and competence that enable them to develop the services and ultimately to practise career learning.

It is vital for the professional career guidance practitioner to have career learning as one of their competences and to regard it as their task. But other parties can also be key contributors. They can be teachers (such as teachers of the Selection of Education subject, Norwegian language teachers or teachers of other subjects in schools/educational institutions), instructors providing training, or people providing guidance but who do not call themselves career guidance practitioners (such as job consultants in inclusion companies or advisers in PES (Nav). In some contexts, the term careers teacher has been used. This has been used about teachers in schools and educational institutions who have a special responsibility for and the competence to arrange and provide career education and career learning activities. In the following section, we mainly use the term career guidance practitioner, but we would like practitioners who call themselves something different to be able to identify with the designation and gain inspiration as to how they can support career learning in their sector and context.

There are many ways in which a service can be developed if an improvement in learning outcome is the objective. How this is achieved and exactly what could be relevant depends on which type of service is involved. One measure could be to raise the competence of career guidance practitioners to enable them to facilitate career learning in one-to-one consultations. It could also mean having a full review of how the service(s) is/are designed, and to make changes that better facilitate learning processes. An example here could be the content, composition and order of measures and services in a work and inclusion company, or how an annual cycle for the Selection of Education subject in lower secondary school is designed.

The Career Learning in Context model is intended to be used as a resource or source of inspiration for work with career learning. The model serves its purpose if it contributes to:

- an increased understanding of what career competence can be and how career learning can be facilitated,
- giving managers and practitioners inspiration to want to work more systematically with career learning,
- improved awareness of the framework conditions that must be considered when career learning is the goal, including an awareness that working with career learning requires competence and professionalism.

3.2.1 UNDERSTANDING OF CAREER COMPETENCE

Career competence (or CMS) is an internationally recognised term that we encounter frequently in research (Kujipers et al., 2006), politics (Sultana, 2012) and in practice across countries and sectors. The designations career management skills (CMS) or career competence are both used. In the Nordic countries, the designation ‘karrierekompetanse’ (career competence) is used (Thomsen, 2014).

Several different definitions of career competence have been developed. In a European context, this is the definition that has mainly been used, for example by the EU and ELGPN:

> CMS refer to a range of competences which provide structured ways for individuals and groups to gather, analyse, synthesise and organise self, educational and occupational information, as well as the skills to make and implement decisions and transitions. (ELGPN, 2012).

In a report about career competence in the Nordic region, a different definition was prepared:

> Career competence is the skill to understand and develop oneself, explore life, learning and work, and to manage life, learning and work during changes and transitions. It is an awareness
of what one does, but also of what one can do and that individuals are shaped by their way of life and their actions, and at the same time influence their own future opportunities. (Prepared for NVL and ELGPN in 2014; see Thomsen, 2014)

In the work of developing this Career Learning in Context model, a definition of career competence has been prepared, which is partly inspired by these two definitions, but which is worded so as to encompass the principles and perspectives used as a basis for the model:

DEFINITION OF CAREER COMPETENCE
Career competence is a skill that empowers people to manage their career, through change and transition. It is the skill to know and understand oneself and one’s context, to act and make choices, and to manage dilemmas and tensions associated with life, learning and work. It includes the insight that individuals are shaped by their life circumstances and actions, but can also influence and shape their own and society’s future.

The definition is phrased so as to capture essential dimensions in the Career Learning in Context model. It is not intended to replace other definitions of career competence that can also be useful.

In the rest of this section, some key terms from the above definition of career competence are explained. First we present the term career, and then the expressions ‘to manage’, ‘dilemmas and tensions’ and ‘influence and shape their own and society’s future’. We then describe which understanding of the term competence has been used as a basis for the work on career competence specifically, and what is meant by reflection, before finally describing which learning perspective is used in the model.

Career
We have used a broad understanding of the term career. Career is understood to be something that everyone has. It is not just a person’s relationship with education and work, but also other roles and sequences involved in a person’s life. Donald Super defines career as: ‘...the sequence of significant positions occupying the individual through their life – both before, during and after actively attending to their job’ (Højdal & Poulsen, 2017, p.13). This is a broad definition which strives to capture the complexity created when a person lives its life and shapes its premises. The definition also shows that career must be understood in a lifelong perspective, in other words that career does not depend on participation in the labour market, but is also something that an individual has before becoming established in work or after reaching retirement age.

When the word career is used alongside the word competence, it is in order to limit the focus as to which competence areas are referred to, namely competence areas that are significant in connection with education and work. But since education and work are not separate from other areas of life, it means that deliberations about education and work often provide the way into the conversation or form the basis of the guidance or learning activity being provided. From there, the aspects of life that the client brings up as relevant in relation to his or her further development or career management are explored and included.

To manage
The definition of career competence used in this report, and the other two aforementioned definitions all refer
to something active, i.e. about having to manage something. The definitions thereby indicate that career competence is something that people actively exercise in their lives. Words like plan, control, gather, analyse, explore, develop and understand are used. The words refer to the day-to-day management of a range of areas of life. They mainly indicate aspects of life involving education and work, but also refer to learning, transitions, choices and life in general.

Managing means making decisions, making choices, performing actions and ‘running’ one’s life. Managing thereby refers to active actions. However, this also includes actions in the sense of thoughts and reflections. Increased knowledge, changed understanding, improved awareness, clarifications and changes to one’s stance can make a difference to how the individual feels that they manage a situation.

For the individual, the perception of managing their own life is important. Social psychology uses the term ‘conduct of everyday life’ to describe how people manage their lives on an everyday basis. Managing involves making choices and decisions (Holzkamp, 1998 and 2013). Some choices and decisions can be, or can be perceived to be, major and leading to significant changes in one’s life. Others are minor and more routine or repetitive. In other words, these are not decisions made by individuals every day, perhaps because they have previously decided that this is how things should be in my life right now. For example, one may have a stable life situation in which one has already chosen an education or job.

The goal of career competence, as expressed in the definition, is that people should be empowered to manage their career, through change and transition. It indicates that the need to be able to manage a situation increases in situations where change is an option or even a necessity. Such situations mean that an individual emerges from a state where routine is the norm, and that the situation may call for action and choices. The need for career competence, the competence to act, then increases.

It is important to point out that developing career competence not only applies in situations involving choices, or in situations where there will be a transition. Career competence is also relevant for people in work or education and can deal with how one copes with and manages this. Many people who use career centres or guidance services in schools and educational institutions use them because they are in a situation in which they feel that they cannot cope with their job or education. They may be bored, have health problems, or want new challenges, etc. Some of them are on sick leave, but still in employment or in education. They may not always want to or need to move into a different job or education, but nevertheless, exploring career competence areas can help them to cope with the situation in which they find themselves.

Dilemmas and tensions
The Career Learning in Context model defines five areas for exploration and learning (see Section 3.4). These are in the form of pairs of words, with the words put together in a way that aims to draw attention to the potential tensions and dilemmas that could be present in a person’s career.

An individual will encounter various types of dilemmas and tensions during the course of their life, both in transitions and more stable phases, either relating to their own situation or external circumstances. Being able to manage these tensions and dilemmas can be important, and in some cases critical in order for them to feel that they are able to manage their situation. Identifying, analysing and managing tensions and dilemmas are key to the development of career competence, and there needs to be more of a focus on this than there has traditionally been.

A report from the OECD on future competence needs point out that tackling dilemmas and tensions will be an important competence in the future (OECD, 2018). The report recognises that making choices in situations involving dilemmas and tensions is difficult. One must balance various considerations, and obvious solutions
cannot always be found. The OECD points out that it is important to learn to act and make choices in a more integrated way, i.e. that individuals have the ability to take into consideration conflicting positions or even incompatible logics:

…the imperative to reconcile diverse perspectives and interests, in local settings with sometimes global implications, will require young people to become adept at handling tensions, dilemmas and trade-offs, for example, balancing equity and freedom, autonomy and community, innovation and continuity, and efficiency and the democratic process. Striking a balance between competing demands will rarely lead to an either/or choice or even a single solution. (…) To be prepared for the future, individuals have to learn to think and act in a more integrated way, taking into account the interconnections and inter-relations between contradictory or incompatible ideas, logics and positions, from both short- and long-term perspectives. In other words, they have to learn to be systems thinkers (p. 5).

Influence and shape
The last sentence of the definition of career competence states ‘that individuals are shaped by their life circumstances and actions, but can also influence and shape their own and society’s future’. The sentence reflects a view on structure and player and shows how these are in a dialectic relationship with each other. By this is meant an understanding that people influence and change the world for themselves and for others, at the same time creating and shaping the conditions for new actions. Looking at how one’s life circumstances have helped to shape one’s life can make it easier to see how something is out of one’s control and impossible to change, and that this may also be a condition that is shared with others. This insight may influence the perception of managing one’s own situation.

The concept of competence
The concept of competence is multifaceted, it is used in many different ways, and there are several definitions of competence (Illeris, 2012). The concept of competence is also discussed in Chapter 1 of this report. In our work on career competence, we have been inspired by the Danish lifelong learning researcher Knud Illeris’ concept of competence (Illeris, 2012). He believes that competences are developed as capacities, dispositions and potentials in the process of growing up. He also points out that the stage of life a person is in and the context in which they find themselves both play a role in terms of developing competences. Dispositions, potentials, life stage and contexts are important in the work of career learning.

Illeris goes on to say that competence means actions in specific situations. Competence relates not only to the action itself, but also to the assessments and decisions that control and are involved in the action as a whole. We therefore use an understanding of competence in which competence encompasses knowledge, skills, attributes, attitudes and values. In Section 3.4.6 about exploring competence, we argue that this can be a useful way to group these dimensions in order to systematise the exploration of the career competence areas in our model. By differentiating between the dimensions of knowledge, skills, attributes and attitudes/values and evaluating how one can specifically work with these, learning and exploration can become more relevant, and also more ethically responsible (see Section 3.4.6).

As well as knowledge, skills, attributes, attitudes and values, Illeris also points out a number of other dimensions that can be included in what he describes as an expanded understanding of competence. Decision-making, holistic perspective, structural understanding and overview, sociality, ability to collaborate and autonomy can be included. In addition, he believes that imagination, creativity, flexibility, empathy, intuition, combinatorial ability, critical approach and resistance potential are also relevant dimensions in terms of describing competence. Illeris himself points out that not all the dimensions necessarily need to be

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33 See for example Stetsenko (2016, chapter 6)
included in order to identify competence, since competences can change in significance, depending on the context in which they occur or of which they are part. We have not included every element of Illeris’ expanded understanding of competence in the Career Learning in Context model, but it is relevant to mention them because they can inspire the development of career learning activities. Career guidance practitioners and career teachers must all think creatively and expansively here in relation to the Career Learning in Context model.

The concept that competence is action in context also means that a person may feel competent in an area, but that the context may mean that they do not have the opportunity to perform actions that could show their competence, with the result that they are not recognised as competent. This can also apply to career competence. A person may have relevant career competence, but because the situation has not actuated or required the use of this competence, it may be hidden or not recognised. Career learning can therefore involve becoming aware of or activating competence that one may already have.

Reflection

The Career Learning in Context model emphasises that career learning can take place in many different ways, and that the learning activities can both be of a more cognitive nature (reflect, investigate, assess, etc.) and of a more practical nature (various types of tasks, exercises, practice, experiences, perceptions, etc.). The career competence areas in the model can be used as a basis for designing practical learning activities. However, they can also be used as a basis for stimulating reflection relating to many types of activities, such as activities involving experience, learning and teaching. Reflection is therefore an important element in the model.

Illeris defines reflectivity as ‘getting to know oneself, understanding one's own reactions, inclinations, preferences, strengths and weaknesses, etc. as a prerequisite for making meaningful choices and thus to some extent taking control of the course of one’s own life’ (Illeris, 2007, p. 88). Illeris points out that reflection, understood as contemplation and re-evaluation, is characterised by a time delay between the experience or perception that a person undergoes, and subsequently the thoughts that they have about the experience or perception. It is only when we have reflected on the experiences that the learning process is complete (ibid., p. 79). This means that learning processes can be supported by facilitating reflection about previous perceptions and experiences. Reflection about previous experiences and perceptions associated with education and work are a key part of career guidance practice and thereby also of a career learning process. Illeris points out how important it is for the teacher, in their pedagogic and didactic arrangements, to ensure that reflection can take place, both jointly and/or individually.

In the illustrations of the Career Learning in Context model, we use a figure like a figure of eight on its side, which may evoke associations with the symbol of infinity (see the Career Learning in Context model, Section 3.3). This is to illustrate that experience, reflection and learning can be regarded as an ongoing, circular process. The process of career learning is thus regarded as a process in which, via their reflection on previous experiences and knowledge, the person moves around, out of, into and up in a learning spiral.

Understanding of learning

Learning tends to be divided into informal, formal or non-formal learning. The learning that take places through living and experiencing is described as informal learning. During our lives, we also participate in numerous more formal learning situations, for example through schooling/education (formal) and through courses, training and continuing education (non-formal). More structured learning can thereby take place within the framework of a learning situation, but may also be provided in other ways. An example of this can

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34 1) Formal learning takes place in educational institutions and provides formal competence; 2) Non-formal learning takes place outside educational institutions and does not provide formal competence, but can provide learning and competence, such as internal training in the workplace. 3) Informal learning takes place as part of everyday life, and is not necessarily intentional.
be practice-based learning. In this case, the learning takes place through participating in practice, in which practical instruction, participation in specific tasks, progression of responsibility, etc. can be part of a structured learning process. Another example can be learning that takes place through participation in individual guidance, in group guidance or in courses.

The term structured career learning describes the learning that can take place when a person participates in career learning activities provided by a professional party with a goal of developing career competence (see Section 3.3.2). That distinguishes this type of learning from the informal learning of career competence. The focus here is on structured career learning. This is based on an understanding of learning that maintains that learning takes place through participation in a context (Dreier, 2009). We find this understanding of learning in situated learning theory (Lave & Wenger, 2007), but also in social psychology. Learning, including career learning, begins at birth. As we grow up, individuals participate in society, both in their immediate local society and communities and in the greater community of which we are all part. As we grow up, we encounter values, expectations and attitudes associated with education and work, develop the skills to overcome challenges and in some cases experience powerlessness and frustrations: ‘Lifelong learning sees all learning as a seamless continuum “from cradle to grave”’ (Ohidy, p. 48).

Learning is regarded as situated and experience-based, and Kolb’s learning spiral is used to illustrate an understanding of learning as a spiral-like movement (Kolb, 1984).  

**FIGURE 4: Kolb’s learning spiral**

Kolb describes that learning is initiated by a concrete experience or an impulse, which becomes learning and knowledge when one reflects on it through observation of the experience or earlier situation (reflexive observation). Kolb describes this as the first two processes in the learning spiral. The two subsequent processes consist of abstract generalisation (abstract conceptualisation), followed by practical use or experimentation (practical application). The practical use/experimentation then creates new experiences on which one can reflect, and so on.

The five areas for exploration and learning, with the 10 pairs of words (explained in more detail in Sections 3.3 and 3.4), can help to provide a language for what Kolb calls abstract conceptualisation. This is a language that contains known words and well-known dilemmas and tensions associated with receiving an education and going to work. This is elaborated in the presentation of the model in Section 3.3.

Kolb’s spiral thinking provides a good image of career learning and the development of career competence through joint exploration. The spiral is a good metaphor because it shows that the learning process should

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35 See for example Skovhus (2017)
36 The figure has been borrowed from here: http://www.mspguide.org/sites/default/files/tool/experiential_learning_cycle.docx
not be perceived as linear, but as a process that touches on different areas, and with a long sequence of inputs, experiences, knowledge and emotions (Andersen, 2008). The spiral can also be found in Vygotsky’s understanding of learning ‘in the zone of proximal development’: if the process that is intended to support career learning is close to what is already known and learned, new learning is more likely to take place (Bassot, 2012; Vygotsky, 1978).

The spiral metaphor also helps to emphasise that career learning is something that can take place at different ages and throughout a person’s life: ‘It is not clear that the acquisition of CMS has a relationship to age and educational stage. Furthermore, it is very likely that CMS are context specific and will need to be learnt and relearted as life unfolds and offers the individual new challenges and experiences’ (Neary & Dodd 2016, p. 17).

3.2.2 CAREER LEARNING
Career competence can be acquired through career learning. Based on the understanding of learning used for the model, every individual already has career competence and has experienced career learning. Career learning is a continuous, ongoing learning process that takes place in an informal and unstructured way, simply through living and experiencing. However, career learning, like all other learning, can be facilitated and structured. This structured career learning can involve learning something new, but also becoming aware of and activating the competence that one already has. It is the opportunity to support career learning through a range of structured learning activities that is the focus of the model.

Structured career learning can take place through the provision of various career learning activities. These activities can be in a range of forms, and can be part of individual career guidance interviews, group guidance, teaching and training and digital interaction. The learning can be provided through the use of various measures, methods and tools, exercises and tasks. Digital resources can also be included, either in the form of learning tools (such as various digital tools) or as the form of e-guidance. The activities can be of a more cognitive nature, for example including the exploration of information, knowledge and theory, reflection and raising awareness, or can be of a more practical nature, such as assignments and experience, learning in practice or work placements. The career learning activities can be specially designed with career competence as the explicit goal, or they can be part of other learning activities in which career competence is an additional learning outcome. In principle, there are no limitations as to the type of activities that can work, and imagination and pedagogic creativity can be used, provided that the activities are designed with career competence as the explicit goal and outcome.

If one is to be able to describe an activity as a career learning activity, one of the goals of the activity must be for the individual to develop career competence. If the activities are thus intended to support career learning, the person organising the activity must consider the pedagogical aspects and analyse and assess how the activity can contribute to the development of career competence. The career competences which can be beneficial for an individual to develop and put to use will vary, depending on the individual’s starting position, personal situation, goals and external circumstances. In other words, the person facilitating this has a pedagogic responsibility to assess whether the activity could result in a learning outcome that is relevant for the participant.

Career learning can be structured as teaching, for example as part of a subject, or as a dedicated training programme, known as career education. Thomsen & Skovhus (2016) suggest karriereundervisning as the Nordic translation. Career education is thus a designation for the career learning that takes place in a defined teaching situation, typically in schools or on other training programmes. Career education can have independent reading lists and separate curricula, or it can be integrated into other subjects or activities. In many countries, career learning has become part of compulsory education, both in primary and secondary education and higher education. In Norway, career competence is now defined as a core element in the Selection of
Education subject at lower secondary school. Another example is Denmark, where they have the subject ‘Education and work’ at primary and lower secondary school, which is also about career competence.

In career education in a school or training setting, career learning can often be part of the school’s other programmes. Colleagues can then be important contributors to the career learning. For example, subject teachers have the chance to facilitate career learning within their subjects and learning activities. For example, this may be in the form of a class visit to a farm as part of biology teaching. The teacher can encourage the students to investigate what made the farmer interested in his profession, what is important for him in his day-to-day work, the different avenues into farming, what function the farmer has in our society, etc. All these are questions that are not about the animals and their living conditions, which may be the aspects of the subject covered by biology, but that can provide a valuable form of career learning.

Teachers may also explore a broader spectrum in various subjects, and students may thus learn that there are many different ways of working as an engineer, nurse or hairdresser, in the same way as different industries employ a wide range of people with different educational backgrounds.

Career learning can be integrated into other types of courses or training. These may be jobseeker courses, courses organised by the PES or work and inclusion companies, training of newly arrived immigrants in the introduction programme, etc. Facilitating career learning in these types of courses means that the organisers need to have a conscious objective for participants to acquire career competence. Those responsible for a course must structure it so as to allow career learning to take place, and they must allow space for reflection on the significance of the learning from the participant’s perspective.

Individual career guidance and group guidance can also have career learning as a goal. Such activities will often be organised and performed by a person with guidance qualifications and within the frameworks of a guidance institution. This institution may well be an organisation within an organisation, such as a guidance service in an educational institution.

In services that work with or are associated with career guidance, it may be the case that career learning is already being provided in a way that benefits the participants in terms of career competence, but where the leaders and/or practitioners are not aware of this. The career guidance is not explicitly designed to contribute to career learning, but may still have a good learning effect. In these cases, there is great potential to ‘get more learning out of’ what one is already doing. Leaders and career guidance practitioners/career teachers can analyse the activities they already provide, and assess whether, with some modifications, these could be performed with a clearer learning goal. This requires those organising the activities to define that learning is an objective of the activity. It also needs to be made clear to those participating in the activity that one of the objectives is career learning. In this way, one may be able to achieve more career learning, without necessarily restructuring the whole service. This was the objective in the Danish project Udsyn i udskolingen (Insights and Outlooks. Career learning in the final years of compulsory school) (Buhl et al., 2016).

3.3 Model: Career learning in context

When facilitating career learning, there are several factors that come into play and that will have a bearing on how the learning can or ‘should’ take place, and that will affect whether it is to be successful. The model...
emphasises that career learning always takes place in a context. Career learning must therefore be dynamic and take into consideration the context in which it will take place. The context consists of various factors that can affect the implementation of structured career learning.

The model is centred on situated and experience-based career learning. Learning is a process that involves the learner and the teacher, engaging in different forms of learning and specific learning activities, which all go together to form a whole. This whole is informed by the career competence areas (the career butto), which can provide a language for discussing and reflecting on areas that have a bearing on education and work.

The model proposes an understanding of career learning which illustrates that career learning takes place in a specific context, and that this plays a vital role in terms of how the learning process is designed, how career learning can be supported and what the outcome of the learning will be. The model has been developed on the basis of some principles.

The principles for the Career Learning in Context model:

- Every individual already has career competence, even though they might not be fully aware of it.
- Career competence can be learned.
- In principle, career learning takes place all the time. Structured career learning can help people become aware of the career competence they already have and to learn new competence.
- Career competence is something that people exercise actively – manage – in their lives.
- The need for career competence is actuated at times of change and transition.
- There is no single set of career competences that everyone needs. An individual’s career competence is affected by their background, situation and future goals.
- The career guidance practitioner must use the individual’s background, situation and future goals as the basis when assessing competence needs and facilitating relevant career learning.
- Career learning can be both a cognitive and a practical learning process. Reflection and activity can complement each other.
- The context affects the prerequisites for career learning. Contextual factors must be included in the planning and implementation of career learning.
- Exploring of career competence can be achieved through many types of learning activities and the use of different learning resources, methods, tools and measures.
- Practitioners have freedom of method when implementing career learning.
- The career guidance practitioner is the professional part and is responsible for arranging learning and outcome.
- The career guidance practitioner must be sufficiently competent to work with career learning in a qualitatively good and ethically responsible manner.
- The model is cross-sectoral and not specific to sector, target group or age.

The figure below is an illustration of the model:
In this section, we present the model by reviewing the different components. We start by presenting the context of career learning, i.e. the framework conditions that can affect one’s success in facilitating career learning in different contexts. The themes organisation and form, structured career learning, client and practitioner will also be discussed in more detail.

In Section 3.4, we review Areas for exploration and learning – the career buttons (illustrated by the coloured circles in the middle), which are the way the model describes areas for exploration and learning that can support career learning and the development of career competence.

In practice, all the components are closely interlinked, although they are separated in the model and text. This is in order to be able to explore, describe and present each of them to make it clearer, to practitioners and those responsible for career learning activities, which aspects must be taken into consideration when one is to facilitate relevant career learning.

3.3.1 ORGANISATION AND FORM
When discussing the context of career learning, the focus is primarily on the significance of organisation and form, i.e. the external framework conditions that are involved in setting the terms for the learning that will take place, and that must be included in the considerations of anyone in charge of facilitating relevant learning paths.

Career learning can take place in any sector and in many different kinds of services, including services that are specially designed for career guidance (such as a career centre, school advisory service, or digital guidance service) and services that have a different overall objective, but in which career guidance forms part of the service (such as a work inclusion scheme organised by PES, the introduction programme for refugees, or the follow-up service). The sectors will have their own defined mission or mandate, and they may be subject to specific acts and regulations, leadership and governance. The sector, service and surroundings in which the career learning takes place will affect how it can and should be facilitated.
In each sector, the career learning will take place within an organisation with a given structure and organisation. This organisation will have a management and access to a certain amount of resources in the form of the practitioners’ competence, time available, guidance formats, availability of the services, etc. For example, the lower secondary school has a compulsory subject (Selection of Education) with its own learning objectives and a set number of teaching hours, with teachers who have a certain level of competence, managed by a head teacher who makes prioritisations and sets targets. Or the career centres that offer individual career guidance to the public, but which may be limited in terms of the number of guidance sessions that an individual may receive.

Most organisations will have different acts, rules, guidelines and procedures that directly or indirectly affect career learning. In the Framework for Ethical Practice, which is presented in Section 4.5, this is highlighted as one of the framework conditions of which one must be aware in career guidance. We point out that such framework conditions can sometimes be incompatible with the desired practice and can result in ethical problems and dilemmas. It is important to be aware of this in career learning.

Another framework condition is target group. Sometimes the person arranging career learning will be very familiar with the ‘typical’ target group for the activities. If the participants are from the same target group, they may have some common features that provide a useful background and information that can be used when planning activities. For example, all the participants may be the same age, they may all be students, newly arrived refugees, unemployed persons, etc. Obviously, people within the group will differ in many ways, but in terms of planning activities, knowledge of the target group can be useful. In other cases, one will have no such knowledge of the target group (such as in a career centre or an e-guidance service). One does not then have the same opportunity to plan activities on the basis of characteristics in the target group.

For the people working in a certain sector/organisation/structure, the need to include and evaluate the significance of such framework conditions will be obvious. But if one sets a target of developing the career guidance services with career learning as the ambition, one must be aware of and actively operate within the framework conditions of the service. This is partly because there is a connection between how one works with the specialist aspects of career learning, and in which setting it will take place. What can be easy to achieve in one context can be very difficult in a different setting. One example can be that within the limitations of a subject (such as the Selection of Education subject), it is possible to facilitate a learning process in which the students can spend time exploring and learning, where the group itself can be a learning resource, and where the school’s career guidance practitioner can contribute with individual guidance. The teacher knows the students, they are all the same age, and the number of teaching hours available is set and distributed over several years. However, it may be more difficult to achieve such a learning path within the limitations of a career centre, where clients can be of varying ages and in different life situations, where the practitioner and the client may meet for between one and three sessions, and where it is not possible to set up a longer learning process.

### 3.3.2 STRUCTURED CAREER LEARNING

The learning perspective used for the model maintains that every individual already has career competence and has experienced career learning. Career learning is thereby a continuous, ongoing learning process that takes place in an informal and unstructured way, simply through living and experiencing. However, career learning, like all other learning, can be facilitated and structured. It is the

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40 In the ethical framework in Section 4.5, target group is also mentioned as one of the categories that the career guidance practitioner must take into consideration and understand in order to provide ethically responsible career guidance.
structured career learning that is the focus of the model.

Structured career learning can take place through the provision of learning processes with career competence as their goal. Any type of learning activity may be used. The learning can take place in many formats: individually in individual guidance programmes or in groups, for example as part of mainstream education or on a course. It can take place in small groups or large educational communities. It can be discussion-based, it can take place through various career learning activities, digital formats can be used, learning can take place more practically during activities such as visits to workplaces, during schoolwork experience weeks or during work placements.

As we have described in Section 3.3.4, career guidance practitioners and other people working with career learning can exercise freedom of method in terms of developing and arranging activities, which creates an opportunity for exploration and learning from the career competence areas. It will therefore be one of the responsibilities of the guidance practitioner/career teacher to perform an analysis and assess which formats and types of learning activities could be most relevant for a specific target group in a specific setting. In order to find a method of performing this design work, one may look at the reflection model for Vejledning i fællesskaber (Career Guidance in Communities) (Thomsen, 2009). This model recommends assessing the target group and partners and looking for existing activities that could act as the driving force of the work. It recommends enlisting the help of the participants to generate ideas for potential new activities and settings for the implementation of these activities, and also recommends that these activities be documented and evaluated.

Exploration and learning
Career guidance has often been defined as a joint exploration process in which client and career guidance practitioner participate together. This is what Peavy (2004) talks about when he describes sociodynamic guidance as a joint exploration of the client’s life space. Thomsen (2009) also describes career guidance as a framework for ‘exploring and creating new opportunities in times of change and transition’. In the model, exploration and learning are highlighted as a central approach, or method, that can contribute to the development of career competence. Exploration is seen here as one of several possible ways of structuring a learning process. The career competence areas (the career buttons) described in the Career Learning in Context model (see Section 3.4) provide both career guidance practitioners and clients with a language and a way of organising relevant areas of exploration and learning. Such an approach, with an emphasis on exploration and learning, can address both the need for openness (for the client’s individual learning needs) and the need for the learning process to be structured.

By exploring, examining and describing one’s own career competence, the individual can also ascribe significance to the competence that he or she already has, for example when considering change of jobs or taking further education. This then becomes more about becoming aware of and starting to use these competences, than about learning something new. It can involve looking at barriers and structures in society. The goal can also be to obtain and process information about education or the labour market, and to reflect on and decide what this information means for the individual and for society. Finally, the goal can be to create support in phases of decision-making and transition.

Resources for career learning
The Career Learning in Context model highlights the significance of freedom of method. This means that career guidance practitioners/careers teachers are free to, but also have a responsibility to, assess how they should facilitate learning for individuals or groups. The guidance practitioner task will be to plan a learning path that can achieve career competence. This includes assessing the individual’s need for career competence, what the relevant learning activities could be, and on a continuous basis, assessing whether the activities result in the desired learning outcomes. This also includes being familiar with and capable of using different methods
and resources for career learning.

There are essentially no limits as to which types of resources can be used in career learning; the essential element is what the career guidance practitioner does by way of adapting the resources in a way that can promote learning for the individual. These may be resources that are specially designed to support career learning, or they may be resources that have been developed for other purposes, but which can be adapted for career learning. There may also be methods, tools, programmes and systems that one is already using, that can be modified and adapted in order to make a greater contribution to learning. Irrespective of whether one uses existing resources or starts using specially designed resources, they must be adapted to ensure that they work and are perceived as relevant by the individual or target group.

Examples of resources for career learning can include a method for identifying one’s own competence, instruction on group guidance with a focus on choice skills, a website providing information about different job opportunities or educational pathways, a digital tool for exploring work interests, a description of a scheme for organising visits to companies, or a text describing local competence needs. Career guidance practitioners may develop specially adapted resources themselves or may use other sources. Several of the frameworks for career competence, such as the Australian or the Scottish frameworks, can also provide support and inspiration on how specific career learning can be designed. These frameworks provide real and specific details about what career competence can involve. Common and well-known measures and tools that are used in individual career guidance can also be considered and used as resources for career learning. The essential thing is for the career guidance practitioner to be aware of the activity’s potential learning outcome for the individual client. In the work of finding and organising learning resources, it can be useful to lean on and find inspiration in existing specialist literature on practical career learning. One may also look to other literature on pedagogic facilitation of learning processes.

An organisation providing career guidance may already be offering several activities and services as part of its operation. When developing career learning in such an organisation, it can be useful to link the career learning to pre-existing activities. Thinking through and analysing learning activities that are already being provided, and how a clearer focus on career learning can contribute to career competence, makes it possible to get more learning out of activities that are already part of an organisation’s operations.

If career learning is to take place within the framework of a specific sector and for defined target groups, one needs to use learning resources that are adapted and have been operationalised for the context. One must then consider framework conditions, such as who is the target group of the activity, time available, resources available and the competence of the personnel facilitating the learning. It may also be necessary for specialists and experts from the sectors to contribute with gathering, adapting or developing resources especially for the target group in their particular sector. There are already examples of this. The book *Utdanningsvalg. Karrierelæring og livsømstigning* (Educational choices. Career learning and life skills) (Kleppestø & Jåstad, 2018) presents resources and methods for career learning in lower secondary schools. The trade association Work and Inclusion has for a long time had a focus on career competence and has worked to bring together experiences and resources in order to provide customised career learning in conjunction with work inclusion.

Many resources have already been developed for career learning, both nationally and internationally. When developing such resources, there are some factors that should be taken into consideration. As part of a European review of work on frameworks for career competence, ‘The Leader Project’ emphasises the significance of developing good resources to use in career learning (Neary, 2016, p. 6). It makes the following

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41 For example Kleppestø and Jåstad (2018), Haug (2018a), Seville (2017), Seville and Eide (2018), Skovhus et al. (2016), Svendsrud (2015)
42 https://www.arbeidoginkludering.no/kompetanse/karriereveiledning/karrierekompetanse/
recommendations that may be relevant in the further work of preparing resources for career learning:

- Resources and tools developed will need to take into consideration the context and stage that learners are at
- The priority for resource development should be on one-to-one and group work related activities.
- Produce guidelines focusing on best practice in assessment and observation of CMS activities
- Collect examples of local CMS materials and promote these on the project website
- Map and utilize generic existing CMS resources and prioritise the development of new CMS resources

In the career learning model, practitioner(s) and client(s) are included in what is described as context. Both bring something to the career learning, and what they bring with them will affect the career learning. It will affect how the career learning is organised, how it unfolds and what kind of learning outcome it may achieve.

3.3.3 CLIENT
The goal and purpose of the career learning is to give the client a learning outcome in the form of career competence that better enables him or her to manage career-related challenges. The goal is for the individual to gain insight into themselves, their opportunities and the reasons behind their choices, and to make new discoveries on matters that they did not understand or learn in the past. Another goal will be for the process to enable the individual to feel more competent in terms of managing their life, learning and work in periods of change and transition. The goal is long-term learning, meaning that the competence can be used again the next time it is needed.

The client brings their life to the career learning process. They have a certain background and history, they are in a given life situation, and have certain attitudes, values, goals and wishes for life. They may come with specific expectations, questions or problems. When these are used as a basis, a logical consequence is also that whatever competences they may benefit from working with are not defined in advance, but must be investigated and determined for each person.

A guidance practitioner must use these as a basis when facilitating relevant and rewarding career learning. As in all career guidance, the practitioner must, to use Kierkegaard’s well-known words on the art of helping (Kierkegaard, 1994), find the client where he or she is and begin there. An important place to start is then to appreciate that the person participating in the career learning will already have a certain degree of career competence that they have acquired through their life and experience. Focusing on and examining what the client already knows and can do is one of the prerequisites for good career learning. The career guidance practitioner uses their knowledge of career competence in order to investigate what the individual is already capable of, and this gives them more insight into what further competence that individual needs. The areas for exploration and learning (the career buttons) are intended to help with this. It is also necessary to understand the client’s position and life situation. For example, the career guidance practitioner can look at what type of transition the individual is facing and can try to understand the person’s life and the conduct of their life. We will now look at this in more detail.

The individual’s situation – the significance of transitions
When a career guidance practitioner or a career teacher sets out to assess what the potential objective of the career learning could be, he or she must examine the client’s specific situation. It will then be useful to take a closer look at what type of transition the individual is facing. It is often said that career guidance is associated with transitions (Cedefop, 2014). In most CMS-frameworks, including the well-known DOTS model, transitions

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43 Career learning can take place individually or in groups, and the career guidance practitioner can either work alone or with other career guidance practitioners/career teachers or other people helping to facilitate career learning. For the sake of simplicity, in our text we refer to these in the singular
and transition learning are highlighted as a key career competence (Law, 1981). In the definition of career competence that we have developed, it also says that ‘Career competence is a skill that empowers people to manage their career through change and transition.’

We thus recognise that career competence is particularly relevant when an individual is facing some form of transition. These may be transitions between lower secondary school and upper secondary school, between upper secondary education and higher education, between education and work, transitions between different kinds of jobs or from unemployment into work. Career guidance can be relevant, important and necessary in all these transitions, which can be described as visible transitions or system transitions. As a rule, it is these kinds of transitions of which we are most aware in career guidance. However, a client may experience several kinds of transition in their life. Transitions can be:

- visible or invisible
- self-elected or imposed
- short-term or long-term

The visible transitions are those which tend to be recognised and acknowledged, both by the individual and the system. Many careers guidance services have been developed with the aim of supporting people in these kinds of transitions (such as career guidance in the final year of secondary school, career guidance for students leaving higher education, guidance for the unemployed in PES, career guidance for newly arrived refugees). This is career guidance that tends to be designed to assist in specific situations of transition and choice faced by individuals. One of the main reasons for providing career guidance is that it can be difficult for people to manage such transitions. Career competence can be useful in these visible transitions, and the thinking is that it can help individuals to become better equipped to manage transitions.

A person will often feel that they are in a transition long before the transition has been “identified in the system”. It is also relevant to identify and manage these invisible transitions. These can be transitions that are more subjectively experienced changes in life and situation. They can be linked to changes in life circumstances or values and preferences, which cause individuals to gradually change their wishes and goals for education and career. They can be linked to assessments of how changes in future competence needs may affect their own job opportunities, or they can involve an individual’s assessment of their health and chance of staying in a job in the long term.

A transition can be self-elected and desired and may be a consequence of the individual making a conscious choice to initiate change. For example, this may involve changing the direction of one’s education, leaving a job or making a major career change. The transition may also be imposed from outside. This may involve losing one’s job, developing medical problems, having to move, etc. These can be transitions that someone did not want and that did not form part of their personal plan.

Transitions can be perceived as short, such as a summer between two levels of education, or a sudden change of job. They may also be in the form of a longer transition phase, for example relating to retraining or a career change, or to long periods of integration being undergone by newly arrived refugees. In these cases, a transition phase can last for several years, and include several ‘short’ transitions such as completing the introduction programme, starting work towards a qualification and starting/leaving different jobs.

The fact that transitions can differ in nature and be both visible and invisible to the system is significant,

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44 See for example Cort & Thomsen (2014)
because it highlights the need to have an open and accessible guidance service in which staff are aware of the significance of transitions. Work with career learning and career competence is work with the objective of providing individuals with the competence that allows them to feel equipped to deal with all the different types of transitions that they may experience in the course of their life.

Conduct of everyday life
In order to understand and examine the subject of transitions in more depth, an understanding of the term conduct of everyday life may be useful. Conduct of everyday life can be understood as a ‘…mediating category between the subject and societal structures’ (Holzkamp, 1998, p. 24). The statement that conducts of everyday life is a mediating category between a person and the societal structures around them means that in the course of a day, people participate in several contexts at the same time, such as education or work, family, friends, leisure activities, digital interaction, etc. Although people cannot be in two places at once, all of these contexts are represented in a person’s life at the same time and affect his or her decisions. The contexts are present in our everyday lives and can make different and sometimes contradictory demands of us. Participation in different contexts has an impact on our everyday lives and our career. The definition of career competence emphasises managing one’s life, learning and work. Conduct of everyday life is understood to be the active management of all the contexts that make up a person’s life. The definition also acknowledges that occasionally, dilemmas and tensions arise in connection with transitions and changes.

The concept of conduct of everyday life is a holistic concept that shows how, on a daily basis, people must coordinate and integrate their participation in different aspects of their life and across contexts. Conduct of everyday life is an activity that takes place every day with the objective of organising, integrating and structuring one’s everyday life in such a way that the different and contradictory demands that one faces can be reconciled and dealt with. One’s conduct of everyday life is often ‘automatic’, without any need for major assessments. This is described as the cyclicism of the conduct of everyday life. It means that there are always questions and demands on which a person is not required to make decisions every day. However, it does not mean that the person is not troubled by them; they may be expressed as the challenge of balancing work and family life, sport and education, friends and education, etc. In the subject of career guidance, there are a number of theories and models that emphasise this kind of holistic understanding. For example, there is constructivist or sociodynamic guidance (Peavy, 2004), which describes the mapping of life space, there is systemic guidance (Patton & McMahon, 2006) and there is emancipatory guidance (Bassot, 2012).

Peavy’s (2004) theory of jointly mapping one’s life space shows us the routine nature of the justifications that keep our everyday lives together. These routines and this kind of cyclicism and continuity can also be interrupted and disrupted. For example, this happens when one loses one’s job, falls ill, becomes pregnant, moves or becomes a refugee. These interruptions can be visible to other people, such as certain illnesses or a termination of employment. However, there may also be changes that are far less visible, such as changes in one’s fundamental values or a feeling of inadequacy or boredom and lack of challenge in one’s work. Changes in fundamental values, for example due to starting a family, may cause a person to reassess the actions and prioritisations that they make on a daily basis. This is absolutely normal, and for most people, occurs several times in the course of their life. Career competence becomes relevant when a person experiences change and transition, but will also be of significance in the more everyday conduct of life, as a resource for managing life, learning and work on an everyday basis.

3.3.1 Career guidance practitioner
In career guidance, it is always the career guidance practitioner who is the ‘professional party’, and thereby the one with the responsibility for facilitating learning. In the following section, we describe this professional party as the career guidance practitioner, but there are several specialist groups that may work with career guidance in sectors and organisations in which they meet people who need to make considered decisions
regarding their education and job. Facilitating career learning involves having the professional responsibility for planning and implementing learning processes that give the participants the opportunity to develop career competence. But how this is best developed will vary, depending on where and for whom the career learning will take place.

It is the guidance practitioners' task to consider where the activities will take place, i.e. to consider how organisation and structure play a role in setting the terms of the career learning, and adapting the activities around these (see 3.3.1.). It is also the practitioners' task to perform an analysis of who the participant(s) is/are. It is absolutely vital here to evaluate the individual client's starting position, personal situation, goals and any external circumstances that may have an impact. As emphasised in Section 3.3.2 on structured career learning, this is the starting point and prerequisite for the learning.

This model operates with career competence areas – areas for exploration and learning (the career buttons). One of the reasons for this is to ensure that the model is relevant in all sectors, and thereby for all age groups and target groups. Another reason is that the model is based on an understanding of learning which emphasises that individual clients will already have career competence, and that there is thereby no one standard indicating which competences an individual needs to learn or activate. This will depend on the person's background, situation and the purpose of the learning. This principle has some consequences in terms of how the model can be applied, and obviously in terms of how the learning process is structured. One of these consequences is that for every case, one must assess which areas for exploration and learning one must concentrate on in the learning process. Selecting the focus for the learning should be based on who will participate in the learning, which competence they may already possess, what the individual's situation is, and what the aim of the course of guidance is. As part of some activities, the practitioner and client may sit down together and clarify what the aim of the career learning will be. In other activities, the guidance practitioner will already have analysed the client's or clients' situation and circumstances, and made decisions regarding the activities, but always with the outcome for the participant(s) in mind. Although the client must naturally be involved in these assessments, it is the guidance practitioner/career teacher who is the professional party, and who is responsible for investigating and assessing which may be the most relevant areas to focus on.

It is thus the guidance practitioner/career teacher who is responsible for considering how they may design a best possible learning process, what the learning goal will be, which learning activities may be relevant, and which tools, measures and methods may be used. An important principle in this model is therefore the career guidance practitioner's freedom of method. This means that it is the person or persons who are responsible for the career learning who will evaluate and decide how best to facilitate the learning. The model thereby gives no direct indications as to which is the correct or best method of implementing the career learning. This is partly due to a principle that the practitioner/teacher will always be the natural party to be able to evaluate this, both on the basis of their knowledge of the participant's situation and of the context of the learning. It is also due to a principle that, as for other pedagogic activities, there is no single, particular, correct and recommended method of career learning. Maintaining the principle of freedom of method is also based on the fact that it must be possible to use the model in multiple sectors and a variety of situations in which the context of the learning is absolutely unique.

When we emphasise that the career guidance practitioner/career teacher is the professional party who is responsible for the learning, and we insist that there must be freedom of method, this means that the person who is leading and facilitating the career learning must have enough competence to assess how the

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45 For example, they can be teachers (such as teachers of the Selection of Education subject, Norwegian language teachers or teachers of other subjects in schools/educational institutions), instructors providing training (such as in a vocational rehabilitation enterprise or training organised by a career centre), people providing guidance but who do not call themselves career guidance practitioners (such as advisers in NAV, job consultants in vocational rehabilitation enterprises or programme advisers in the introduction programme).
career learning can be structured so as to ensure that the learning outcome is good and relevant. The work on the quality framework involved preparing competence standards, which are described in Chapter 2. In that chapter, career learning is one of seven areas of competence (Section 2.5.4). It describes what professional competence persons who facilitate career learning should have. For example, anyone facilitating career learning must be knowledgeable about career competence and career learning, about learning and learning theory, and must also be familiar with and able to use a wide range of career learning activities and relevant methods, tools and resources. They must have ethical awareness and an understanding of the context in which the individual lives and be aware that career learning must be based on the individual’s situation. They must be able to identify the client’s need to develop career competence, articulate goals for learning and exploration, and understand the complexity involved in managing life, learning and work in times of change and transition.

The code of ethics presented in Section 4.4 emphasises that anyone working with career guidance must be competent. This is also the case for anyone working with career learning. It is the manager’s responsibility to ensure that practitioners have sufficient competence, while the career guidance practitioner have an ethical responsibility to ensure that they themselves are sufficiently qualified to work with career learning in a professional and competent manner.

The code of ethics also goes on to say that: ‘In relationships and partnerships with clients, I demonstrate humility and base my work on the clients’ understanding of their situation and opportunities.’ Naturally, this also applies to anyone working with career learning. It is important to remember that this model is not designed around the idea that career learning has one specific goal, but should rather be thought of as a framework for the client’s and guidance practitioners’ joint exploration of the career competence areas. These explorations do not necessarily have set answers, but must be open to the answers arrived at by the client. This means that the client is involved in the process of selecting what the areas of focus will be. This is a way of approaching career learning that is based around the code of ethics.

3.4 Areas for exploration and learning

In this section, we present Areas for exploration and learning. The areas have been identified through the discussions in the working group, and through input from career guidance theory, other theories, other CMS frameworks and the group members’ own practical experience.

One of the assumptions of the model is that the competences that an individual needs to develop or activate will vary, depending on the person’s starting position, situation and goals. The model maintains that through exploration and learning based on the proposed career competence areas, the individual will be able to develop or activate the relevant career competence for them. The areas for exploration and learning are to be understood as general and generic indications of themes that could be relevant for exploration, and the objective is for the client to be able to develop and activate the career competences required by them at the time and in the situation when they are needed. The career competence areas provide practitioners/teachers and clients with a common language and a potential structure for exploration and learning.

Another reason we are proposing a model that states more general career competence areas and not a list of specific career competences is that the intention is for the quality framework to be applicable across sectors. Frameworks for career competence that have been developed in other countries that we have studied tend to be developed for a specific target group or sector. Although there are variations, many of them have been designed and structured in a similar way to curricula: more specific competences are stated, and they tend to be specified in the form of more detailed learning objectives that may be stated in levels of learning. Some
are also based on a specific learning theory. Preparing such a solution was regarded as less relevant, partly because career guidance takes place in many different contexts in which there is no tradition of working on the basis of a curriculum-type structure with specific competence goals.

As yet, there is no research-based agreement on which career competences are needed by the population in order to manage career-related challenges. One project which reviewed a range of CMS frameworks observed that: ‘There is no universal agreement as to what skills are needed to effectively manage a career. Consequently, CMS frameworks are not defined by a particular set of learning areas, but rather by the attempt to state a series of learning areas that collectively describe CMS’ (Neary, 2016, p. 15). This was the basis for the decision to describe general career competence areas. These are open enough to allow the inclusion of many different competences that could be relevant to the individual.

The career competence areas are intended to contribute to the development of activities that support career learning in all sectors, for people of all ages and in different situations. Since the intention is for the model to be applicable in different sectors, this means taking into account the fact that career learning may take place for students in lower secondary schools, upper secondary schools and higher education institutions, for the unemployed, for people excluded from the labour market, for adults with jobs, for newly arrived and long-stay immigrants, etc. The areas are therefore open and designed so as to be able to accommodate a range of different dimensions in terms of career competence.

In the following section, we present the proposed areas, and describe which themes may be included in each area by those working with exploration and learning.

The five career competence areas are:
1) Me in context
2) Opportunities and limitations
3) Choice and chance
4) Change and stability
5) Adaptation and resistance

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46 See descriptions in Haug (2018a, p. 63–83), Hooley et al. (2011) and Neary (2016).
FIGURE 6: Areas for exploration and learning – the career buttons

Each competence area is described with two words. The model has a total of ten words, each of which represents potential areas for exploration and learning. The ten words, which go together to form five pairs of words, are intended to illustrate potential dilemmas and tensions that can be present and of significance when a person sets out to manage their life, learning and work in times of change and transition. The ten words can also be combined in different ways, to form different pairs of words. Combinations of words and pairs of words provide the opportunity to explore specific areas in which the individual may need competence, and the pairs of words also provide the opportunity to explore potential tensions and dilemmas. We have named the five areas for exploration and learning the career buttons.

In the model, the career competence areas are arranged in a circle. The circle illustrates the situation in which the clients may find themselves, and shows a situation of transition when career guidance and career learning are particularly relevant. Working with pairs of words is not unknown in career guidance. The theories Planned Happenstance (Mitchell, Levin & Krumboltz, 1999; Krumboltz, 2009) and Positive Uncertainty (Gelatt, 1989) are both made up of pairs of words that provide an opportunity for new understandings when they are put together. These theories share the feature that they can be regarded as oxymorons, or combinations of words that can be perceived as contradictory. After all, by its very nature, chance is not planned. And uncertainty is certainly perceived as negative more often than as positive. Oxymorons help to provoke our curiosity, but also refer to dilemmas or tensions, to problems that cannot easily be solved. The pairs of words in the model refer to areas for exploration and learning, where there is no expectation that they will be definitively solved. Rather, the expectation is that the joint exploration and learning will contribute to reflection, allowing the individual to see new opportunities for how to manage dilemmas and tensions, and for them to find their own way forward. This may be in the full knowledge that the dilemmas and tensions are still present and part of one’s conduct of everyday life, and are something that can become relevant in the next transition between education and work, or in life in general. An expectation is that career competences are built through the experience of managing something, leaving the person better equipped to manage it the next time tensions or dilemmas intrude.

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47 Oxymoron, as a rhetorical or stylistic device, is a combination of terms that logically exclude each other, resulting in a striking contradiction in terms, a concentrated paradox (Store norske leksikon)
The career competence areas are not to be understood as final qualifications or very specific learning objectives. They may be regarded as a space for learning and exploration, a metaphor illustrating that in a guidance process, they are something that one may dip in and out of, something open. The open element comes from the fact that the Career Learning in Context model does not define career competence as predefined ways of managing one’s career, such as a requirement for a person to be interested, open, open to change, flexible, etc. Obviously, these are important competences and qualities, but not in every situation or for every person. The career competences that it may benefit an individual to learn or be aware of and start using, will vary, depending on the person and their situation, as well as on what the person wants to achieve in the course of their education and work. It will depend on the context in which the person lives, and on what competence they already possess. It will also depend on how this person wants to live their life. It is therefore the individual client/participant and the individual career guidance practitioner/teacher who, in partnership, are in the best position to explore, evaluate and decide on which more specific competences the individual may benefit from learning or becoming aware of (find the best fit). For example, it may be difficult to decide in advance whether a person must become better at adapting, or whether they need to develop competence in resisting.

The choice of areas for exploration and learning is based on key theories and methods from the field of career guidance. The working group has looked at:

- career theory and methods
- other theory from related subject areas
- other CMS frameworks
- other types of analyses of future competence needs
- the working group’s own practical experience and competence

Some of these are mentioned in this review, but it is outside the scope of this work to include the specialist discussions from the group’s meetings and all the sources that the working group has discussed in its evaluation of which career competence areas should be included in the model, and how the pairs of words are put together. Please refer to the bibliography that summarises the specialist inspiration.

However, the DOTS model (Watts & Law, 1977) is a central theory that appears to have inspired most of the other CMS frameworks that have been developed, and that is also well-known and extensively used in Norway. It is with good reason that this model has become so well established. It is easy to understand, easy to apply as the basis for work on career learning, and easy to communicate to the client/participant. The reader will recognise all four of the competences that are highlighted as learning objectives in DOTS in this model: Decision Learning in Choice, Opportunity Awareness in Opportunities, Self Awareness in Me. Transition Learning also has a familiar quality, in that managing change and transitions is the goal of the learning.

We present the five career competence areas below. The text is structured so that each area is first described in general terms, with individual words and terms then explained and described, followed by a description of the words when they are seen in context. Below each of the competence areas, we have also drawn up some suggested questions that may be used in the exploration of the competence areas. These are not necessarily questions that one would directly ask clients or participants. They are designed to make it easier for the reader to understand which (possibly familiar) themes it could be relevant to work with under each of the competence areas.

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48 Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, Scotland, Netherlands, Norway (click on the name of each country for direct access)
50 For a brief presentation of DOTS, see Haug (2018a, chap. 3).
3.4.1 ME IN CONTEXT

Me in context shows that people are always in a frame of reference, known as context. The context includes a person’s close contacts in a family, in a local community or other community, and in a greater society (such as the Norwegian society or the global society). Every person has a unique existence in the world. Every person’s presence can be explored, and this is what is in focus in this learning and exploration area. In career guidance, education and work form the pathway into the exploration, after which the exploration broadens, and in principle can include those aspects of a person’s life which they feel are important in relation to education and work.

Me
This area of learning and exploration is about self-awareness, about getting to know and understanding oneself. This can mean exploring and putting words to one’s knowledge, skills, qualities, values and attitudes. It can also mean identifying one’s own interests, desires and needs, expectations, goals, dreams and motivations, conditions and limitations. Or it can mean becoming aware of one’s own typical behavioural patterns and choice strategies. It involves learning what one can do and is good at, and it means being able to put one’s own competence into words. It can also be about exploring where one feels that one belongs, and with whom one feels a sense of community. It is about seeing and understanding one’s own background, the limits within which one lives one’s life, and how these limits can affect one’s specific situation. It is also about looking back at one’s past, analysing one’s current situation and forming a perspective on one’s future.

The classic DOTS model uses the term self-awareness. Watts and Law describe that the aim of exploring this in guidance work is for the individual to learn how to feel like a unique individual – an individual who in some respects is like other people, and in other respects is absolutely unique (Watts & Law, 1977). They also point out the importance of promoting self-awareness in guidance work, because the individual’s understanding of themselves is highly significant to their desires in terms of education and work, and to the choices they make throughout a career.

Context
Context is about seeing, analysing and understanding the world of which one is part. This may be a person’s immediate circle: family, friends, colleagues, local community and other communities, or greater contexts of which they are part, such as their culture or society. It is about seeing and understanding the structures with which a person comes into contact in different contexts, what significance these have had, but also what significance the structures influencing their life may have in the future.

Several career guidance theories and methods have been criticised for omitting the significance of the individual’s context in their development of theories and models, for example Collin (1997) and Leung (2007). Collin emphasises that people and their careers must be understood as...embedded in contexts. As a consequence of this, it does not make sense to separate people from their environment, or analyse each aspect individually, as traditional methods do, these should be contextualised (p. 442). Patton and McMahon (2006) emphasise that people do not live in isolation, but are part of local social systems and greater societal systems. They believe that the development of theory, methods and models in career guidance must take this into consideration. The Career Learning in Context model does just this, both by emphasising the contextual dimensions that affect career learning, and through the Me in Context area, which emphasises that an understanding of the context in which a person’s life unfolds must be included when a person sets out to
understand their own situation.

Me in Context
Essentially, this is about seeing and understanding that as people, we live our lives in a given context. It can mean seeing, analysing and understanding oneself and the interests, preferences, motivations and needs that one develops as part of greater communities in a society made up of different cultures. This provides the opportunity to understand how one’s own background can influence one’s life and choices in relation to education, work and career wishes. It can also help a person to see and understand how their surroundings, and the structures of which they are part, can affect how their life unfolds. It can also mean assessing how one can affect one’s surroundings and structures, and deciding whether one must challenge the limits within which one lives one’s life.

Possible questions:
• Who are you, what can you do, what do you want to do?
• What interests, values, attitudes, motivations and needs do you have? Which have you developed so far, and which would you like to develop?
• How do your interests, values, attitudes (continue the list as appropriate) influence your life in terms of education and work?
• Which contexts and communities are you part of?
• How do your background and the communities of which you are part influence your choices and your career?
• Which social structures affect you and your situation?
• Would you like to affect how these structures have consequences in terms of your life? Is that possible and desirable?

3.4.2 OPPORTUNITIES AND LIMITATIONS

Opportunities and limitations is about the individual’s opportunities and the horizon of opportunities within which they operate. Horizon of opportunities means what lies within an individual’s horizon, i.e. what they are aware of and consider in terms of opportunities for education and work. This horizon may be wide or narrow. It can be limited by knowledge of and previous experience with education and work, by ideas and notions about education and work, and by the norms and expectations in the context of which one is part. Limitations are also explored in this area. We can evaluate the individual’s situation with a view to clarifying limitations, and we can examine social conditions that can impose limitations on the individual’s choices, actions and participation (such as admission requirements, language skills, access to jobs in an industry, etc.). It may be relevant to examine whether perceived limitations, upon closer investigation, are not real limitations. The area provides the opportunity to examine limitations with a view to expanding alternative courses of action.

Opportunities
This area is about exploring opportunities that exist in real terms, and external as well as internal factors that influence what one sees as possible in terms of education, work and career, i.e. one’s own horizon of opportunities. Examples of external factors can be the situation in the job market, and what opportunities there are in education and work. Internal factors can include finding out whether opportunities are relevant to the individual, and considering whether they should be pursued. The horizon of opportunities can be mapped and expanded through joint exploration.
In the DOTS framework, opportunity awareness is one of the four career competence areas highlighted. In the same way as the term ‘horizon of opportunities’ is intended to draw attention to the individual’s perspective on their own opportunities, the term ‘opportunity awareness’ also highlights the importance of which opportunities the individual knows about or is aware of. Career learning will therefore often involve expanding the individual’s knowledge of and awareness of opportunities – i.e. expanding their horizon. The term ‘horizon for action’ is used by Hodkinson, Bowman and Colley (2006). Horizon for action means the opportunities that people have, and the opportunities they envisage for themselves, relative to their position in society, background, upbringing, culture, etc. The fact that the opportunities, and thereby also the actions that a person can envisage, have a horizon, means that we can explore not only what is within the horizon, i.e. what the person is aware of, but also what lies beyond the horizon.

Limitations
The area of limitations involves exploring, analysing and evaluating the limitations that are present at a given time. What or who sets the limitation? Is it real, or only perceived – is it a mind trap?

The limitations can involve factors in oneself or in one’s life, and they can involve factors in one’s immediate circle or factors in society in a greater sense. Limitations can also be found in the form of acts and regulations, such as access restrictions to education. Educational opportunities can also be limited by the combination of subjects and exams that one has previously taken. Some people experience physical limitations in the form of disability and illness. In these situations, it can be about clarifying how the limitation can affect a person’s ability to cope with work, comparing this to job and career wishes, and assessing what the person needs by way of support and assistance in order to get where they want to go. Hodkinson et al. (2006) explain how, through their upbringing, people narrow their potential choice of education due to factors such as gender, ethnicity and class (habitus). It can also be relevant to examine whether one’s opportunities and choices are influenced by such limitations.

Horizon of opportunities and limitations
This is about seeing opportunities and limitations in context, and investigating the alternative courses of action that a person has, seen against these. It means examining limitations and how a person understands these, in order to potentially expand their view of which opportunities they perceive as applicable. Some limitations can be changed through specific choices and actions, such as taking a subject that one is lacking, or completing a course. Other limitations are more difficult to change, such as access to vacant positions in the part of the country where one lives, or health-related limitations. When opportunities and limitations are analysed together, this can provide an opportunity to make a more realistic evaluation of which choices and actions may be relevant.

Possible questions:
- What opportunities are you aware of and envisage for yourself; in other words: What is your horizon of opportunities?
- Are the opportunities realistic?
- What is ‘included’ or ‘excluded’ from what you consider to be relevant for you?
- What wishes and goals do you have, and which of them would you like to pursue so that they can become opportunities?
- How could the people or parties within your circle support you in actions that could realise opportunities?
- What limitations are present in your situation?
- Which limitations can you influence, and which are beyond your control?
- Are the limitations real, or are they mind traps?
- Which limitations can you do nothing about?
- How can you deal with real limitations in a way that you can live with?
• Is it possible to take steps to remove, reduce or change the limitation?
• If there are limitations, is it possible to achieve a goal/desire using a different strategy?

3.4.3 CHOICE AND CHANCE

Choice and chance focuses on making choices. The focus here is the competence that a person needs in order to manage choices and choice processes. A person will experience many different situations of choice throughout their life and career. Sometimes there will be expectations that a choice must be made, such as the choice of education, choice of specialisation, choice of job. At other times, the choices will be less influenced by external expectations. Making choices is an absolutely essential part of career development, and something that an individual needs to manage. This area also draws attention to the elements of chance that may influence how a person’s life unfolds in terms of education and work. There are many elements of chance in a person’s life; life is not lived independently of other people or events. Chance may be perceived as ‘wrong’, but it is also possible to examine how chance may positively influence the path someone takes through education and work.

Choice

This perspective draws attention to the fact that choices are not made in a vacuum, but will be made under the influence of external factors, or chance. When exploring choice and chance, we emphasise that the reasons behind choices can come from several sources, and that chance may have played a part in earlier choices. We also draw attention to the fact that when there is an element of chance, the choice may lie in how one chooses to act. Traditionally, choice has been regarded as an individual matter, including in career theory. This perspective has been challenged, and there is an increasing focus, also in career theory and literature, on recognising that individual choices are made within the restrictions of a given social context. Exploring choice and chance together can allow us to have a greater focus on this.

Choice is a central theme in career guidance theory, and is described both as a process and as a more concrete result of guidance. At the same time, guidance theories and activities that focus heavily on choice are criticised for indicating a short-term effort, in which much of the learning potential in guidance activities is overlooked, because the guidance is considered to be complete once the person has identified their next choice. Particularly for young people, a one-sided focus on choice can determine whether or not guidance activities are meaningful (Skovhus, 2017). Career guidance theory also describes how what a person wants is

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51 Decision learning represents the D in the DOTS framework, and choice skills are included in various ways in most of the other frameworks for career competence that have been developed.
52 See for example Hejdal & Poulsen (2017)
shaped by their upbringing and surroundings (*habitus*) (Hodkinson & Sparkes, 1997), while the individual’s choices also affect the world around them. This area can therefore also allow for reflection on how much freedom a person has, or feels that they have, in a choice situation, and on whether their choices can have an impact on communities and society.

**Chance**

Chance is considered to mean events that lie beyond the individual’s control, that were not planned, but that can still have an effect on how their career develops. Chance can mean an encounter with a person, an experience, an event or something completely different. The area of exploring chance is about being aware that chance can play a role in how one’s life unfolds. It can involve examining which elements of chance have affected previous life events, and also exploring what one can do to allow chance to have a positive effect on one’s life, such as acting to ‘be in the right place the right time’. It also involves being aware that one can choose to act or not to act if chance occurs.

Most people are able to point to elements of chance that played a role in incidents and choices in their life. In his career guidance theory, Krumboltz (2009) wrote about what he calls *planned happenstance*. Krumboltz sees career development as a learning process, in which both planned and unplanned events play a role. Other guidance theories have also highlighted the significance of recognising that chance plays a role in an individual’s career development. For example, Patton and McMahon say that there is ‘[…] an increased recognition of the part chance plays in career development’ (Patton & McMahon, 2006, p. 154).

**Choice and chance**

This is about seeing and analysing how life unfolds in the interface between choice, or what you can influence yourself, and chance, or what happens to you. It is about an awareness that not everything in life can be controlled by one’s own free will, but that sometimes other, external forces will play a role and influence the situation. The challenge then can be to find ways of managing chance, and adapting one’s actions and choices to ensure that the chance becomes constructive.

Possible questions:

- How do you make choices, and what has been/is your typical choice strategy?
- How have you approached making choices in the past?
- Which choices have had an impact on your career development?
- What has helped you in choice processes (people, knowledge and experiences)?
- What do you believe influences your choices?
- What do you believe influences other peoples’ choices?
- Which chance events have had an impact on the choice of education and work in your life?
- How can chance, or elements that are out of your control, affect your life?
- How can you stimulate the element of chance that may have a positive influence in your life?

### 3.4.4 Change and Stability

*Change and stability* is based on the theory that living means being in a state of change and experiencing transitions. Quite simply, people experience change because they are people; a person’s biology develops, they age and go through different phases in their life. For example, a person’s values and wishes can gradually change as a consequence of what they experience in their life. Change also occurs as a consequence of deliberate choices, external events and various types of institutional transitions. Change occurs in our lives or our minds, and change occurs
outside ourselves, in external circumstances that can affect our situation and conditions. In the labour market, change can occur as a result of such things as technological developments, changes in the way work is organised, organisational changes, etc. These changes can also affect the individual’s situation and opportunities.

We can also experience stability in our lives and working lives. Sometimes, life alternates between periods of change and stability. For example, being in a long-term institutional context, such as a school, may be perceived as stable, while a perception of change made be felt in the transitions between different institutions (such as the transition to a new school level). At other times, while change may occur in one area, a person may still find stability in other areas, for example if they change employer and working environment, but still perform similar tasks.

To manage change is a competence that is often highlighted in reports and research about future competence needs. Managing change is a challenge that many people face, both now and in the future. However, there can also be too much focus on change, at the expense of an awareness of factors that remain stable. In this model, change is deliberately linked to stability, in an attempt to balance out a focus on change that can be too one-sided.  

**Change**

This area is about exploring changes in one’s life and surroundings. It is about looking at how changes in one’s life or one’s surroundings can change the conditions for choices that one must make. It can mean analysing which changes one has experienced in the past, and looking at how one managed these. Which consequences have the changes had? What changes are taking place in one’s immediate environment that one should be aware of, and what consequences could these have? Which changes are taking place in one’s society, and what consequences could these have?

In the course of a person’s life, they will go through many transitions, which can lead to changes. Some changes occur as standard ‘system transitions’ (such as from one school level to another, or from education to work). Some changes may be initiated by the person (such as switching to a different education programme or changing jobs), while other changes are externally imposed or unplanned (such as terminations or medical problems). Some changes are obvious and visible (such as completing one’s education and looking for one’s first job). Other changes can be more invisible (such as a change in values that results in a desire to make changes to one’s career, for example from one type of job to another type of job). Regardless of the type of change, the significance of the change can be explored with the aim of understanding and managing change.

**Stability**

The area of exploring stability focuses on factors relating to continuity. It is about looking for what is stable in one’s life and surroundings. It can involve discovering that not everything is changing all the time in every area of one’s life. For example, when there are changes at work or in one’s education, there may at the same time be stability in one’s relationships, family life, leisure activities and health. It is also about assessing what one’s needs are in terms of stability in different situations, and weighing this against one’s desire for change.

The area can also be used to focus on weighing up factors such as how an individual can achieve/maintain stability of employment, if that is what they want. There can also be a focus on how people, individually and together with employers, can create sustainable jobs, for example by finding a balance between the employer’s need for restructuring and the employee’s need for predictability and security.

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53 See Hooley (2018) for a reflection on how too much of a one-sided focus on change can result in a distorted picture of the current situation, also in career guidance.
Change and stability
The area of change and stability is about considering the balance between the desire or need for change in a situation, seen against the desire or need for stability. Sometimes these can conflict with each other, which then results in a need to find out how to manage the potential dilemmas that thus arise. The area involves looking at the current situation/state of one's life and environment. It involves considering where and how change and stability are present, and how one wants things to be now and in the future. It also involves examining and understanding how one has managed the balance between change and stability in one's career in the past, and how one would like to manage this in the future.

Possible questions:
- What changes are taking place in your life?
- What changes are taking place around you?
- How do the changes affect you, what consequences could they have?
- Do you like or dislike change? Do you need stability?
- In the changes that are taking place, what do you feel to be stable?
- Are there expectations of either change or stability, for example from society, your family, your immediate circle, yourself?
- Right now, what is stable in your life? What do you feel about this stability?
- If the desire for change is in conflict with the desire or need for stability, how may you make good choices and balance the two considerations?

3.4.5 ADAPTATION AND RESISTANCE

Adaptation and resistance focuses on the balance between adaptation and resistance in education and work. The area for exploration provides the opportunity to examine whether there are conflicts in the balance between adaptation and resistance, and to look for ways of managing these. Individuals are often expected to adapt, for example to the education system or to the conditions, expectations and requirements of the labour market. This may not be a problem. However, in some situations individuals may need to demonstrate resistance to expectations of adaptations that go against their own wishes, needs, values, attitudes or integrity. In education, the labour market and career, there can be a continuous ‘negotiation’ between adaptation and resistance. In some situations, the two can come into conflict with each other, and a choice must be made. It can then be necessary to assess whether one should, for example, adapt to new requirements in a job or leave the job, or whether one should complete a course of education in which one has lost interest.

Adaptation
This is about seeing and understanding which adaptations a situation requires. A situation in education or work will often involve a certain amount of adaptation, and this may not be a problem. At other times, the requirement to adapt is more challenging. It can mean evaluating what consequences a particular change could have (on one's own and others' lives). Does the change require some form of adaptation? If so, what kind of adaptation, and in which way? If there is a need or requirement for adaptation, who and what does it involve? What could the consequence of adapting or not adapting be? Is the adaptation that may be required possible for and/or acceptable to the individual?
According to Bill Law’s (1981) *Community interaction theory*, adaptation occurs in the interaction with the surroundings, communities and relationships of which the individual is a part. This adaptation often occurs slowly and imperceptibly, while at other times is more arduous and in a manner that requires deliberation and input. He highlights types of interaction that can provide inspiration to explore the adaptation. These are expectations, feedback, support, modelling and information.

**Resistance**

Resistance can describe both a feeling and an action. Resistance can be about acting to safeguard one’s autonomy and about knowing roughly where one’s limits of adaptation lie. In extreme cases, it can involve safeguarding one’s health. Good health and the potential for sustainable career development can lie in finding the balance between adaptation and resistance. A potential for *empowerment* can also be involved here. We can gain a feeling of control by becoming more aware of our wishes, needs and limits in a situation where change is necessary and required. This also applies in situations where decisions that affect a person are well out of their own control. In some cases, it will be impossible to offer resistance in the sense of being able to change the conditions. For example, the choice may lie between adapting to change or leaving or losing one’s job.

Resistance as a concept is described in detail in psychology and management theory, but also in modern philosophy. One example is Svend Brinkmann’s (2014) book *Stand Firm*, in which he articulates resistance to modern life’s calls for continuous adaptation and change.

**Adaptation and resistance**

The area for exploration of adaptation and resistance is about examining where the limits of adaptation can lie, seen from one’s own perspective. The examination also provides the opportunity to weigh up the positive and negative consequences of opposing change. It can mean clarifying the possible need for stability in a situation in which change is expected or required. It can be knowing how one can demonstrate resistance to change, what can be an appropriate action/choice/strategy in a given change situation, what can be done alone, and what can be done as a community.

Possible questions:

- Does the situation you are in require any form of adaptation, and if so, in what way?
- Does the situation call for resistance, and if so, what kind?
- What could the consequence of adapting or resisting be?
- Who and what does the requirement or need for adaptation involve?
- How do you justify your resistance?
- Is it possible to stand firm and not be part of an essential adaptation/change, and if so, in what way?
- Can you accept and live with adapting without this having unreasonable consequences for you or others?
- What could the consequences of showing resistance be?

### 3.4.6 EXPLORING THE CAREER COMPETENCE AREAS

In the concept of competence used as a basis for this model, competence is divided into five dimensions: knowledge, skills, attributes, attitudes and values. It may be useful to use this division as a basis when exploring the career competence areas. The idea is that this division can function as a methodology for working more systematically and in a more ethically responsible manner with education and learning in the different career competence areas. One of the reasons for using the concept of competence in this way is that these five aspects of competence have different qualities, and must therefore be treated differently in a learning process:

For example, acquiring *knowledge* is something different from learning a *skill*. We can look upon this as the
difference between ‘knowing’ and ‘doing’. The similarity between these two is that both are something that one can ‘learn’. Attributes are of a different nature, and are about who you are, and about your personality. It is acknowledged that this is a more constant part of a person, and is not regarded as something that one can just ‘learn’ or change. Personal attributes can be explored, and they can be challenged. However, it can be ethically problematic to aim to teach a person new or different attributes. This can be perceived as asking a person to be somebody different than who they are, which is not without problems from an ethical perspective.

Values and attitudes are also part of the competence that must be managed with care, with the aim of respecting the individual’s absolute autonomy and inviolable freedom to think as they want, as described in Section 4.2 on how career guidance is based on humanist ethical principles. Values and attitudes can have varying degrees of stability in the individual, but the individual is always entitled to define their own values and attitudes. Like attributes, they can be explored and challenged, but this must be done in an ethically responsible manner. In the report The Future of Education and Skills 2030, the OECD also points out that attitudes and values must be included as part of the understanding of competence: ‘The concept of competency implies more than just the acquisition of knowledge and skills; it involves the mobilisation of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values to meet complex demands’ (OECD, 2018, p. 5).

In the table below, we present examples of questions that can be used when performing systematic exploration of the career competence areas, separated into knowledge, skills, attributes and attitudes/values. The model is based on the assumption that the answer to which competences are needed by the individual has not been given in advance. The questions in the table are therefore open, and are intended to encourage answers by the individual. Using the questions can be a way of clarifying which competences could be relevant in the person’s or group’s specific situation. Some of the proposed questions concern the individual’s situation, while others concern the individual’s environment/community. These can serve to draw attention to how the individual’s environment and community (the context in which the individual lives) can also be relevant and of influence when exploring a competence area. The questions can provide an approach to working with the areas, and inspiration to use the various learning activities, from discussions and reflection to more practical learning activities. It will be the task of the career guidance practitioner to design relevant learning processes, based on an evaluation of which areas of exploration and learning could be relevant and applicable to the individual or group.

An example of how the questions can be used could be when one intends to work on exploring the area Change and stability, with a focus on change. One can then work at finding out what knowledge about change (in their own life or in their environment) the individual may benefit from acquiring. One can explore what knowledge/resources are available in the environment/community, or obtain knowledge about how the particular change is perceived by others. In addition, one can work on which skills may be useful in order to manage a specific change, and use relevant learning activities to become proficient in these skills. One can also explore how other people have managed similar situations. One can also explore which attributes the individual has in relation to change. Do they have attributes that can support them, or do they have some attributes that could be challenged? Do the people around them have attributes that have supported them in a similar situation? One can also look at which of their attitudes and values could play a role when a change is taking place. Is there anything that will come under pressure? Are there values that one feels may be threatened by the change? What is important for other people when this change takes place?
### 3.5 Evaluation of the further development and use of the model

The Career Learning in Context model has been developed as part of the National Quality Framework for Career Guidance. The fact that career competence has been included in the framework is an expression of an attitude that more and better career learning could improve the quality of the career guidance services in Norway. This is related to an understanding that the population could benefit from career competence in order to manage their careers at times of transition and change.

The model has been developed to contribute to this goal. It is important to have a clearer focus on career learning in contexts involving career guidance. This could be very important to the individual, giving them the opportunity to examine, explore and act, and to develop relevant and essential career competence. It is also important to society as a whole, since the prerequisites and opportunities for the individual to receive support to manoeuvre in the complex environment of education and work is vital for the development, mobilisation and application of competence throughout Norwegian society and the labour market.

The Career Learning in Context model provides a description of factors that are important to consider when the goal is more and better career learning. Several of these framework conditions will be important in the future task of driving career learning forward, and it will be important to continue working on them in order to successfully give the population more and better access to career learning with the goal of career competence:

- The owners or those responsible for the various career guidance services should include career competence as one of the targets of the desired outcome of their guidance services.
- If career competence is defined as a goal, then owners and managers must take steps to ensure that the service can provide career learning. Existing activities and services should then be analysed in order to adapt and modify them to obtain more of a learning outcome. It may also be necessary to develop new activities and services to promote career competence.
- Practitioners who are responsible for facilitating career learning must have competence that is sufficient and relevant in terms of providing relevant and ethically responsible career learning.
- Owners and managers must be responsible for ensuring that practitioners have sufficient competence.
• Practitioners must have framework conditions that enable them to work with career learning.

• When setting out to facilitate career learning in a specific sector and for a specific target group, the career learning activities must be adapted to ensure that they are relevant to each participant.

• Access to good learning resources is essential. Existing resources may be used, but resources that are specially adapted to the individual context and target group should also be developed. Learning resources for use in career learning should be made readily available, for example on a website.

• Different organisations providing career learning should work together to develop relevant resources, since these can often be used for more than one group.

• Further professional development and discussions concerning career learning and career competence should be facilitated. Practitioners, experts and those responsible for career guidance services should participate in this.

In the report *Lifelong Guidance Policy Development. A European Resource Kit*, ELGPN (2012) provides advice on policy development in the field of career guidance and points out some key questions that a country must consider if it is to succeed in implementing a career learning perspective (p. 22):

1. What are the competences that citizens of all ages need in order to effectively manage their career in a lifelong perspective?
2. How can such competences be taught in educational and other contexts?
3. Which pedagogical strategies and resources are most effective in enabling the mastery of career management competences?
4. How can different providers work together to offer CMS-programmes more effectively?
5. Who should provide CMS training?
6. What strategic policy decisions need to be taken in order to widen access to CMS provision?

In the work of developing this model, the main focus has been on questions one to three. The report comes with recommendations as to which career competence areas are relevant to career learning (question one). We have developed a model for career learning that describes career learning taking place in different contexts (question two). We have also written a description of learning and looked at types of learning and learning resources (question three). The last three questions highlighted by the ELGPN as important for the success of implementing a career learning perspective are questions that have been outside the working group’s mandate for its work. However, in future work, it will be important to look closely at how different parties in career guidance can work together in order to provide more and better career learning (question four). The question as to who should improve the competence of those who will work with career learning is also a very important one (question five). The question of which general and strategic decisions should be taken in order to provide more inhabitants with the opportunity to acquire career competence must also be considered (question six).
4

Ethics

4.1 Background

Everyone has an ethical responsibility in their dealings with other people. Career guidance is no exception. Career guidance takes place in various forms and in various arenas, but what all of the different types have in common is personal interaction, either face-to-face or digital. In career guidance, career guidance practitioners tend to meet people who are in a transitional situation, and who are seeking or have been referred to career guidance for support in managing their situation. Career guidance is provided to non-professional clients by professional practitioners. This interaction between people makes career guidance an ethical act.

In the following section, we mainly use the term ‘career guidance practitioner’, although it is desirable that practitioners who call themselves by another name and others who have tasks associated with the provision of career guidance should also identify with the designation and gain inspiration for how they can use the code of ethics and increase their awareness of ethical problems.

The mandate in brief
The working group referred to Skills Norway’s mandate Ethics – principles and code for good practice as it stood (see Appendices 3 and 6), but made some interpretations and choices which are commented on here.

The working group discussed and studied values and norms in career guidance. The group reviewed which values are used as a basis for the code of ethics, in the form of ethical core values. In accordance with the description of the task in the mandate, the code of ethics was made specific
to the career guidance services, and was also designed so as to be relevant to career guidance across sectors and institutions. During the work, it was recognised that in some sectors, it is not possible to provide career guidance that is neutral and independent, and that, depending on the context, career guidance can and should be designed in different ways. In order to illustrate that at any given time there will be a range of framework conditions specifically influencing career guidance, and possibly contributing to different ethical challenges in the different sectors, the group created a model that shows the framework for ethical practice. To promote good ethical practice in career guidance, the working group also developed a reflection model to use when ethical challenges are encountered. The working group also created an illustration of an ethical pledge that can show clients how they can expect to be received in career guidance processes.

The working group also discussed which status the core values could have in various sectors, but did not conclude with specific recommendations. For the moment, the core values and code of ethics should be regarded as a supplement to the norms, rules and guidelines already present in the various sectors.

The working group did not take a position on the need for competence-raising in order to improve ethical competence in career guidance.

4.2 Professional foundation – ethics and values in career guidance

NOU 2016:7 states that a common code of ethics is part of a desire to professionalise career guidance. It is difficult to create a code of ethics that is specific to career guidance and that cannot be interpreted simply to apply to any professional practitioner whose job involves interaction with other people. It has been important to maintain a focus on career guidance as a separate professional field, and to maintain the thinking that a common code of ethics could have the effect of unifying practitioners in the professional field, as well as reinforcing their professional identity and professional sense of community. However, it did not make sense to significantly differentiate the values and code of ethics for career guidance from other codes that regulate similar or equivalent types of practice.

The code of ethics was created on the basis of career guidance practice in various sectors. The work on the code of ethics brought important questions of common values to the surface, and it therefore seemed appropriate to create the code of ethics in line with the core values for career guidance. It is likewise important to practise career guidance on the basis of a set of fundamental values approved by career guidance practitioners. These values should be in accordance with values supported by a democratic society, but should also provide a basis that allows career guidance practitioners to promote and defend these values when they are threatened or at risk in that society. The core values legitimise the social mandate of the profession of career guidance and its reasonable professional autonomy (Grimen, 2008, p. 71–86). The core values shall also provide a basis for the norms and reflections that must be exercised when ethical problems and challenges are encountered (Lingås, 2019).

4.2.1 A HUMANIST PERSPECTIVE

The humanist perspective should define the norms of career guidance. This puts the person at the centre and elevates them to an intrinsic objective, and does not regard them as a means to an extrinsic end. This view has its roots back in renaissance humanism’s launch of the concept of human dignity (Frost, 2013); this view was continued through the humanism of enlightenment philosophy, including the philosopher Immanuel Kant’s categorical imperative (Kant, 1999), and on to the development of the philosophy of universal human rights when confronted with the crimes against humanity committed during the Second World War.
In our context, a humanist perspective is not associated with the humanities or secular humanism, but is understood as a *shared humanist view* of the person. The concept is also used in this way in the humanist psychology of Abraham Maslow (1970) and Carl Rogers (1961), and in the teachings of philosophers such as John Dewey (2005). A humanist perspective thereby means putting clients at the centre of the work, for clients to be perceived as subjects in their lives, possessing a free will that they can exercise subject to responsibility for themselves and others, and having an innate human dignity that cannot be altered by external attributes such as gender, age, skin colour or level of function, or internal attributes such as faith, philosophy of life, language, sexual orientation or other categorisation criteria that could result in unfair differential treatment.

4.2.2 RESPECT FOR THE CLIENT’S INHERENT WORTH AND AUTONOMY
The humanist perspective maintains that everyone has an innate human dignity and thereby inherent worth. This inherent worth gives people the right to self-determination or autonomy, provided that this autonomy does not limit the same right in other people. In career guidance, this means that clients themselves have the right to make their own fundamental life choices and career choices within certain social limits. The opposite of self-determination is force, oppression and slavery. For career guidance, the central norm that arises from this value is the requirement to respect the client. Respect comes from the Latin word *respectare*, which means to look round or back, and to look again. Consequently, the value of showing respect lies in interacting with others without ignoring or disregarding them, and without treating them with prejudice and immutable pre-judgement.

4.2.3 PROFESSIONALISM AND ETHICAL COMPETENCE
The requirement for professionalism in career guidance expresses the value of career guidance practitioners knowing their subject and its limits. Professionalism is about being qualified to do what you do, and doing what you are qualified to do. A key requirement for a good level of professionalism and quality of work is the requirement for ethical competence (Nerland, 2011). In other words, the individual must work at developing their awareness and judgement in order to deal with all the challenges and tensions involved in practising career guidance. The code of ethics that has been created as part of the National Quality Framework contains binding norms that can best be met when career guidance practitioners have an awareness of norms and values ‘under their skin’ and are able to convert this awareness into considered assessments of what should be done when facing difficult choices.

4.2.4 EQUALITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE
The requirement for equality is an important value, and both a prerequisite and goal of good career guidance. The requirement for equality is intended to counteract discrimination or differential treatment without good cause. In practice, it must obviously not prevent career guidance from making prioritisations that may be perceived as challenging in view of such a goal. Enough for someone or a little for everyone is of course a constant dilemma.

In the work on the code of ethics, the goal for career guidance to contribute to social justice has also been important. Social justice as one of the goals of career guidance must be converted into practical work and measures, the results of which can be perceived as fair or unfair. In this context, justice can be understood as equal treatment irrespective of social position, as advocated by the philosopher John Rawls in his contract theory (Rawls, 1978), and it can be understood as justice being the result of social equalisation and the redistribution of wealth, as advocated by the ethical consequentialist John Stuart Mill (Storheim, 1970).

In the field of career guidance, there have been some strong voices in the work towards social justice, including Sultana, who encourages career guidance to find approaches that are ‘critical, combative and emancipating in purpose and scope’ (Sultana, 2018, p. 50).
4.2.5 OPENNESS, CURIOSITY AND WONDER
The norms that are expressed in the category Relationships and cooperation in the code of ethics require career guidance to be performed with openness and humility towards clients. The philosopher Søren Kierkegaard expresses this in his principle of humility towards the person one sets out to help (Kierkegaard, 1962, volume 18 p. 97f). This means that all career guidance must start from the position of the other person. The value assumes that the guidance provided by career guidance practitioners is based on their ability to receive clients without biased attitudes, to practise active listening and to see the value of understanding the clients’ understanding of themselves and their own situation. The ability to be curious and to wonder then becomes ‘a virtue of necessity’ in the effort to realise this value.

4.2.6 ETHICAL JUDGEMENT AND REFLECTION
The exercise of good ethical practice depends on context, and ethics and codes of ethics can only be understood within that context, and viewed from the perspective of a particular society at a particular time (Henriksen & Vetlesen, 2006, p. 21ff). The ethical responsibility involved in the provision of career guidance is articulated through the code of ethics for career guidance. The code normatively relates to three perspectives concerning the provision of career guidance: competence, relationships and collaboration, and reflection. Based on these three perspectives, the code creates a connection between action and the general features of a situation on the one side, and a given ethical quality on the other (Vaags, 2004, p. 25). Since no two situations are exactly alike, the code will therefore be subject to context and can only highlight what may be the common, general features of a situation. The code of ethics for career guidance allows for and assumes that each career guidance practitioner exercises judgement in situations involving ethical challenges and dilemmas. Judgement is exercised on the basis of competence and experience, and exercised in the grey zone between legislation and the autonomy of the individual.

The code of ethics for career guidance only has value when it is expressed in action in the field of practice. Ethics is a subject that comes into its own if the person really wants to do what is right and exercises conscious reflection in relation to this (Vaags, 2004, p. 16). Reflection is a prerequisite if ethics are to become part of every career guidance practitioner’s actions and work. There are no set answers as to what is ethnically correct in career guidance. We can use different perspectives and theories to evaluate what is right or appropriate in our interaction with clients. The code of ethics presented in the National Quality Framework includes several perspectives, and the reflection model encourages practitioners to consciously look at ethical challenges from different perspectives, in order to evaluate what is the right or appropriate action.
4.2.7 CORE VALUES

The core values that are used as a basis for the code of ethics are articulated as follows:

Career guidance is based on a humanist perspective. Clients are accorded respect for their inherent worth and autonomy. Professional practitioners have ethical awareness and judgement, and act in accordance with the code of ethics for career guidance. Career guidance shall promote equality and social justice. Career guidance shall be characterised by an open, curious and wondering attitude to the client and their life situation as perceived by the client.

4.3 What codes of ethics are already available?

In our neighbouring countries of Sweden and Denmark, career guidance practitioners have been abiding by common codes of ethics for some time. In Sweden, the *Etisk deklaration og etiska riktlinjer för studie- och yrkesvägledning* (Ethical declaration and code of ethics for educational and vocational guidance) was created by Sveriges Väglederforening (the Swedish Guidance Counsellors Association) and in Denmark, Fællesrådet for uddannelses og ervervsvejledning (Council for educational and vocational guidance) has created *Principer for etik i vejledningen* (Principles of ethics in guidance). In addition to such national codes, international codes of ethics have also been developed, such as by the International Association for Educational Guidance (IAEVG).

As mentioned in the introduction, the career guidance for which codes of ethics are to be provided must be seen in the light of the context within which the career guidance is being provided. Although our neighbouring countries’ codes of ethics are not without relevance, it is the Norwegian code of ethics that has been our main focus in this work.

In its development work, the working group conducted detailed reviews of various codes of ethics that have been created in fields or by parties that are relevant to the field of career guidance. Of particular relevance were *Professional ethics for the teaching profession* and the *Ethical Guidelines for the Public Service*. This is because a large proportion of career guidance in Norway takes place in schools and in NAV, and people working within these sectors are generally expected to practise in a way that is also subject to these codes.

In the work on the new cross-sectoral code of ethics for the field of career guidance, it was both useful and necessary to evaluate related, existing codes of ethics for career guidance in Norway. Three codes of ethics have so far been created for career guidance practitioners in different sectors:

1. **Etiske retningslinjer for fylkesvise karrieresentre** (Code of ethics for county career centres) was developed in 2016 by Skills Norway, with the assistance of representatives from the county career centres, career guidance partnerships and ethics experts.
2. **Etiske retningslinjer for veiledere** (Code of ethics for advisers) was developed by the Norwegian Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance, last revised by the national board in 2017.
3. **Etiske retningslinjer for karriereveileddning** (Code of ethics for career guidance) was adopted at a management meeting of Forum for karriereservice i høyere utdanning (Forum for Careers Services in Higher Education) in 2017.

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54 See [www.vaglederforeningen.org](http://www.vaglederforeningen.org) and [www.fue.dk](http://www.fue.dk)
56 See [https://www.utdanningsforbundet.no/lærerhverdagen/profesjonsetikk/om-profesjonsetikk/lærerprofesjonens-etsiske-plattform/](https://www.utdanningsforbundet.no/lærerhverdagen/profesjonsetikk/om-profesjonsetikk/lærerprofesjonens-etsiske-plattform/) and [https://www.regjeringen.no/no/dokumenter/etiske-retningslinjer-for-statstjenesten/id88164/](https://www.regjeringen.no/no/dokumenter/etiske-retningslinjer-for-statstjenesten/id88164/)
In conjunction with the other codes mentioned, these three codes have had an impact on the content, scope and form of the code of ethics. Studying and comparing the existing codes made it easier for the working group to form a qualified opinion about which aspects of the codes of ethics it deemed to be less or more relevant.

4.4 Code of ethics for career guidance

The purpose of the cross-sectoral code of ethics for career guidance is to create common support for core values in the practice of the profession, as well as to legitimise the practice of the profession of career guidance. Ethical challenges associated with the actions and attitudes of the career guidance practitioner shall be managed professionally and shall comply with the norms given in the code. The code of ethics shall also help to illustrate what the client, client’s immediate contacts and partners can expect from the career guidance.

The code has been created for the activity of career guidance, not just for the job title of career guidance practitioner. This is with a view to ensuring that the code of ethics can be used both by those facilitating and by those providing career guidance. It applies regardless of whether or not a person has a job title or role defining them as a career guidance practitioner. It means that the code of ethics has been created for people such as receptionists at career centres, follow-up service contacts, educational psychological counsellors, Selection of Education teachers, advisers in NAV and career guidance practitioners in schools. It can also be relevant to managers of career guidance services, policymakers in the field of career guidance and institutions providing education and research in career guidance.

The code of ethics is intended to be general enough to be able to function across sectors, institutions and workplaces, but specific enough to be applicable to and meaningful for those practising career guidance. The code of ethics has been designed to be relevant to every type of career guidance, such as face-to-face interviews, group guidance, career learning, career education, digital career guidance, etc.

The articles of the code are intended to act as a supplement to other codes of ethics to which the field of practice is subject, ethical principles, such as those in the Public Administration Act and other legislation that set out guidelines for career guidance practice.

The objective is for the code of ethics to be as close to practice as possible, to be specific, to have a limited scope and to reflect aspects of career guidance. The code is intended to make sense to anyone who has to abide by it, and it should not be difficult to understand how it should be upheld in practice. We also want it to be easy to communicate, both verbally and in writing.

We have used the first person in order to create a sense of immediacy for those who will use the code of ethics. We also attempted to avoid excessive use of normative modal auxiliary verbs such as ‘shall’ and ‘should’, and instead use the present tense to express expectations of the career guidance practitioner. The goal is for there to be as little distance as possible between the code and an individual’s practice.

The 12 articles in the code of ethics have been divided into 3 categories: Competence, relation and collaboration, and reflection and read as follows:

57 For example Professional ethics for the teaching profession and the Ethical Guidelines for the Public Service, which applies to NAV staff
58 See the full code of ethics in Appendix 2
The code of ethics is shown below in plain text.

**When I provide career guidance**

1. I do this on the basis of up-to-date and evidence-based knowledge of the field of careers
2. I handle cases for which I have the competence and mandate. I recognise my professional limitations and inform clients about other relevant bodies and services
3. I use methods and approaches that are suitable for the client’s situation and opportunities

**Relation and cooperation**

4. I respect the client’s inherent worth and equality
5. I show interest in the client’s background, current situation and future
6. I show humility and use the client’s understanding of their situation and opportunities as a starting point
7. I am aware of the power that is entrusted to my role, and do my best to exercise that power for the benefit of the client and the process that we are going through together
8. I observe confidentiality and other provisions regarding data protection

**Reflection**

9. Being aware of what the core values and goal of career guidance are
10. Having a conscious approach to my attitudes and how they can affect my practice of career guidance
11. Having a critical view of my competence and continuously assessing the need to improve my competence
12. Being aware of the limits of professional practice and if necessary challenging these
Competence
When I provide career guidance

1. I do this on the basis of up-to-date and evidence-based knowledge of the field of careers

2. I manage cases for which I have the competence and mandate. I recognise my professional limitations and inform clients about other relevant bodies and services

3. I use methods and approaches that are suitable for the client’s situation and opportunities

Relations and cooperation
When relating to and cooperating with clients

4. I respect the client’s inherent worth and equality

5. I show interest in the client’s background, current situation and future

6. I show humility and use the client’s understanding of their situation and opportunities as a starting point

7. I am aware of the power that is entrusted to my role, and do my best to exercise that power for the benefit of the client and the process that we are going through together

8. I observe confidentiality and other provisions regarding data protection

Reflection
I reflect on my practice by

9. being aware of what the core values and goal of career guidance are

10. having a conscious approach to my attitudes and how they can affect my practice of career guidance

11. having a critical view of my competence and continuously assessing the need to improve my competence

12. being aware of the limits of professional practice and if necessary challenging these

4.4.1 IN-DEPTH REVIEW OF THE CODE OF ETHICS
Norms for good professional ethics are an important part of the National Quality Framework for Career Guidance. The 12 articles of the code assume that career guidance practitioners have a social mandate that gives them autonomy in the practice of their profession. This autonomy gives practitioners a certain level of flexibility, and the norms are intended to ensure that this flexibility is exercised responsibly. It grants flexibility subject to responsibility, and this responsibility will always oblige each career guidance practitioner to make good choices with respect to their clients, environment and ethical challenges.

Competence

1. When I provide career guidance, I do this on the basis of up-to-date and evidence-based knowledge of the field of careers

There is a long tradition in professional ethics to require professionals to have a high level of competence. They shall be qualified to do what they do, but shall also do what they are qualified to do – and refrain from
doing what they are not qualified to do. The first article in the code of ethics therefore deals with keeping oneself up-to-date and basing one's activities on relevant knowledge. This requires a continuous and proactive attitude in terms of being familiar with research and professional development in career guidance.

2. When I provide career guidance, I manage cases for which I have the competence and mandate. I recognise my professional limitations and inform clients about other relevant bodies and services.

This is about being aware of one's professional limitations and not undertaking tasks and functions that require competence other than what one possesses in the exercise of career guidance. The code also requires knowledge of the competence possessed by other relevant partners, and to invite these to participate when needed to provide clients with a good service.

3. When I provide career guidance, I use methods and approaches that are suitable for the client's situation and opportunities.

This guideline requires the choice of methods and approaches to be based on the client's interests and needs. It means that in career guidance, one must not allow one's own preferences to control needs; instead, needs must be tackled with professional activities that are as relevant and suitable as possible.

Relations and cooperation
Proximity ethics have many norms to ensure that relationships and cooperation constitute a prerequisite for reaching clients and helping them to become active, willing subjects in their own lives (Vetlesen, 1996). There is a strong tradition in career guidance for the relationship between career guidance practitioner and client to be based on equality, with the focus on the client's interests and needs (Peavy, 2011).

Several important ethical principles are expressed in articles four, five, six, seven and eight of the code of ethics.

4. When relating to and cooperating with clients, I respect the client's inherent worth and equality.

This is about the perspective on humanity, which requires career guidance to be based on the fundamental assumption that everyone has an innate human dignity, and that this dignity is equal, irrespective of external attributes (such as gender, age, skin colour, etc.) and internal attributes such as beliefs, cultural affiliation, political opinions and other opinions.

5. When relating to and cooperating with clients, I show interest in the client's background, current situation and future.

Living up to the fifth article of the code requires the career guidance practitioner's attention to be focused on the client's position and opportunities.

6. When relating to and cooperating with clients, I demonstrate humility and base my work on the clients' understanding of their situation and opportunities.

This article means that the partnership must be based on the client's understanding of themselves, their self-perceived situation and self-perceived opportunities, including wishes and dreams. Career guidance is not intended to crush dreams, but neither must it avoid including conversations about realism in a client's wishes. The point is to start at the client's position, and to show humility and respect for them.

7. When relating to and cooperating with clients, I am aware of the power that is entrusted to my role, and do
This article acknowledges the asymmetry involved in a relationship in which a service provider who has a position, standing and experience encounters a service receiver who depends in some way on receiving good service. Consciously acknowledging the balance of power has an ethical value as the starting point from which to strive for equality and a subject-subject relationship. This in turn affects how the relationship can be used in learning and development, and the need to make the client aware of possible choices of direction and the implications and consequences of these choices.

8. When relating to and cooperating with clients, I observe confidentiality and other provisions regarding data protection

Data protection is an important aspect of all professional ethics. Data protection means that personal and sensitive information must not go astray or fall into the wrong hands. Confidentiality is thus an important norm for which exceptions can only be made when values more important than data protection are at risk. This could involve a threat to life and health, when the duty of disclosure takes precedence over the duty of confidentiality, for example if a child is neglected or abused. The career guidance practitioner must be aware of all the relevant statutory provisions concerning data protection and the processing of personal data, and comply with them.

Reflection

Being confronted with ethical challenges is complex. For a career guidance practitioner, this can involve being in doubt as to what one should do, what one should prioritise, and how to manage real dilemmas which have only unwanted outcomes, or how to achieve a goal through responsible means (Henriksen & Vetlesen, 2006). Challenges such as these require the ability to reflect properly and exercise ethical judgement (Lingås, 2019). The norms for reflection are described in articles 9, 10, 11 and 12 of the code of ethics.

9. I reflect on my practice by being aware of what the core values and goal of career guidance are

The first requirement for reflection is for the career guidance practitioner to not only be familiar with the core values of good career guidance, but to have a conscious awareness of these values, in the sense that the values are ‘owned’ by each practitioner. The values themselves form the basis of reflection. However, defending and promoting these values is an ethical task in itself. The core values for good career guidance involve general and specific goals and rights, as well as a responsible methodology.

10. I reflect on my practice by having a conscious approach to my attitudes and how they can affect my practice of career guidance

In practising career guidance, one must know oneself and one’s strengths and weaknesses. One must also be aware of how one can influence the practice of one’s profession, and how one’s attitudes, preferences, reluctance and bias can also influence one’s ethical choices in difficult situations. This awareness can play a role in developing one’s own ethical judgement.

11. I reflect on my practice by having a critical view of my competence and continuously assessing the need to improve my competence

Career guidance practitioners must also know themselves in the sense that they recognise when they fall short and need to improve and develop their competence in order to do their job well enough. This also includes the competence to tackle ethical challenges of various kinds. See also the first
norm under Competence.

12. I reflect on my practice by being aware of the limits of professional practice and if necessary challenging these.

There will sometimes be ethical challenges that can only be tackled and dealt with at system level. These may include resource issues, when there are insufficient resources to achieve stated goals. They may also include political and administrative guidelines on the content and objectives of the work that are not compatible with the core values of good career guidance. They may also include attempts to influence the work, by financial stakeholders or other authorities that should not have such influence on clients. In these cases, it is important for career guidance practitioners, individually and as a professional group, to show courage and resolution in defending the bounds of professional practice. In this type of work, it is important to employ ethically responsible means, and to avoid strategies such as hiding behind clients.

4.5 Model for ethical practice

The code of ethics has been designed to provide guidance for choices and actions in career guidance. In addition to the fact that every client participates in career guidance from the position of their unique life situation, every career guidance activity takes place in a context. This means that no two career guidance processes are alike. The code is intended to be cross-sectoral, meaningful and applicable to everyone practising (or facilitating) career guidance, irrespective of sector or institution. This has been addressed by creating a model which acts as a framework for career guidance and thereby also for the code of ethics for career guidance. The framework is an expression of the context in which the career guidance takes place. The model illustrates how the code of ethics must at all times be seen in relation to the context and framework conditions in which the career guidance takes place. This model therefore contains a degree of flexibility to allow for variation and diversity in career guidance activities, but also an acknowledgement that career guidance can and should be designed in different ways, depending on context.

The interface between the code of ethics and the framework in itself can give rise to potential ethical challenges and dilemmas. From time to time, career guidance practitioners will find that the quality of career guidance is challenged by the framework conditions. The final point of the code of ethics therefore highlights the importance of being aware of the limits within which one operates, and the context in which career guidance takes place. All career guidance practitioners have an ethical responsibility to abide by the limits and context, and if necessary challenge the limits that have been set, if the existing limits lessen the quality and professionalism of the practice of career guidance.

The model around the code of ethics can be illustrated thus:
FIGURE 8: The framework for ethical practice. The context of career guidance can be divided into four categories:

Organisation and form
This category considers how the career guidance is organised: time, place, physical conditions and environment, recruitment to career guidance and other organisational factors. It also concerns the form of the career guidance, such as individual or group, face-to-face or digital, static or dynamic information (such as information brochures or websites), education, etc.

Acts and procedures
Every career guidance practitioner works in a field of practice that is also governed by other formal and informal guidelines, in the form of acts, regulations, guidelines and procedures. These will also have an impact on ethical action and reflection. In some cases these will override the code of ethics, and in other cases will be overridden by the code of ethics. Ideally, pre-existing guidelines and the code of ethics as presented here will complement each other for the benefit of the client and the field of practice.

Society and environment
In this category, we find the factors that at any given time form a ‘live’ part of the context of career guidance. The concepts of society and environment encompass learning opportunities, education programmes and the labour market. They also include local, national and international policies that affect the field, and discussions and trends in the field. In a more immediate perspective, this category also includes the client’s immediate environment. The category encompasses the landscape in which the career guidance must orient itself.

Target group
When career guidance services are designed, the common features of the target group may be what determine the service that is designed. The target group has common features that for better or worse also apply to interaction with the individual. The context affects our pre-judgement, and this category acknowledges this.
4.6  Model for ethical reflection

The code of ethics for career guidance is not a formula. Ethics are not about providing absolute answers, but about asking questions that can shed light on challenges that we encounter in career guidance. Ethical reflection is required for ethical awareness, and is therefore a key part of the code of ethics. By bringing experience into the professional community, we can create a culture of ethical reflection in our workplace. Ethical reflection takes place both consciously and subconsciously, both in informal and more formal arenas, and both in individual career guidance practitioners and groups of colleagues. A desired result of the code of ethics is a greater degree of joint ethical reflection in the profession. Ethical reflection models can be used as an aid to giving a structured and systematic form to one’s reflection.

Ethical reflection can be exercised on a general basis, starting from one’s practice. It can also be based on specific challenges, such as situations in which values must be defended, or situations in which we face difficult prioritisations. In the following section, we present a model to use when faced with ethical challenges. The reflection model was inspired by existing reflection models, and has been adapted to suit the practice of career guidance.

4.6.1  ETHICAL REFLECTION MODEL TO USE WHEN FACED WITH CHALLENGES
When we have to deal with ethical challenges, a model like this can be a good starting point. The purpose of the model is to provide a structure and system that can be used to discuss an ethical challenge. We recommend that the reflection model be used by groups of colleagues, but it is also suitable if one needs to reflect individually. The idea of the model is that the person or persons who want to reflect or discuss go through the model step by step, and discuss the questions that are generated by each perspective of the model. The reflection model has been visualised in cartoon format, so that anyone using the model does not have to relate to a document in which all the questions are set out, but instead can allow each panel to present a structured opportunity for reflection based on the particular challenge.

The reflection model looks like this:
How the ethical reflection model can be used:

1. The challenge
The first step in the process of reflection is to decide what kind of ethical challenge one is facing, and to identify the nature of the challenge. Is it a dilemma, is it a different type of conflict, or is it a challenge? Who does it affect? This can help to clarify things. Being able to recognise the characteristics of a particular challenge makes it easier for us to avoid acting according to habit (Lingås, 2019). What kind of challenge or dilemma are we facing?

2. Framework
When we have identified the challenge we are facing, it can be helpful to look at it in relation to context and framework conditions. In some cases, it can be very important to challenge the limits that have been set, if these create ethical challenges in one’s career guidance. In other cases, it can be just as important not to be despondent about factors that one is unable to change.

3. Obligations
In some cases, when ethically challenging situations arise, acts and regulations or local guidelines will indicate what one must or should do. Sometimes this can lead to challenging situations, because what one must or should do feels wrong in the situation. In other cases, it can be very helpful to have regulations providing the answers, and in the best case scenario, these can assist one in making the right decision.

4. Alternatives
Most ethical challenges and dilemmas present a variety of alternative courses of action. What are these? The fourth step in the reflection model looks at this: finding, sorting and identifying the various
alternatives for actions and choices.

5. Consequences
The various alternatives for action each come with consequences. When we need to solve an ethical challenge, it is a good idea to evaluate what the consequences of the various alternative courses of action could be, and for whom.

6. Intuition
Sometimes we get a gut feeling that gives us an idea of what feels right. Intuition is a recognised part of every choice, since intuition is based both on experience and competence (Eneroth, 1990).

7. Support
It is important not to underestimate the opportunities one may have of seeking help or support from others. Is there any information that could be helpful or clarify matters? Is there anyone you could talk to who may be able to help with useful reflections? Are there any other bodies that know more about this and that should therefore be invited to cooperate across disciplines?

8. Debrief
After dealing with ethically challenging situations, it can be useful to reflect retrospectively with others. There are some situations that one can manage perfectly well by oneself, while others have more of an impact, and may require a debrief.

4.7 An ethical pledge

One of the most important functions of professional ethics is to inform service recipients and society of what kind of competence can be expected from the practitioner (Lingås, 2016). In this context, it means that the client and client’s surroundings should know how they will be received in a career guidance situation.

Many businesses, both public and private, have written service declarations providing information about such things as the business’s tasks, services provided, rights and obligations, rights of access and appeal. In Norway, all public services are required to create a service declaration. A service declaration can be fairly extensive in form and scope, but it can also be presented in a simpler format that suits the business and its users and purpose. As part of the work on the code of ethics, we have prepared a type of service declaration that may illustrate the ethical responsibility involved in career guidance. The term ‘service declaration’ is a wide one, and in this context we have therefore prepared an ethical pledge. The ethical pledge is a summary of the code of ethics. The code is in a form that is adapted to suit the client.

By providing an ethical pledge to those using a career guidance service or participating in a career guidance activity, quality can be improved in a number of ways:

- Clients receive information about what they can expect. This also gives them the opportunity to form an expectation about the person responsible for the career guidance.
- If an ethical pledge is followed through, it can help to build trust in the relationship between the client and the person responsible for the career guidance.
- An ethical pledge is binding, and sets requirements for quality and professionalism at all times in the career guidance.

59 https://www.difi.no/nyhet/2016/07/serviceerklaeringer
The ethical pledge looks like this:

**FIGURE 10:** An ethical pledge

**You can be confident that**

- You are in capable hands and that and I will use my competence in your best interest
- I respect you and your situation
- I handle all information confidentially
- Together we will assess whether the career guidance is working in your best interest
- While we work together, I will be interested in and eager to learn about you
- I want the best for you

**Welcome to career guidance!**

The ethical pledge illustration can be displayed in places like an office or waiting room. It can be included in information brochures or be part of an invitation to a career guidance activity. It can also be displayed on relevant websites or home pages administered by career guidance providers.
4.8 Evaluations and conditions for good ethical practice

In Section 1.8, which looks at the quality framework in a wider context, we mention that the professionalisation of a field may be defined by features such as ‘a common ethical superstructure and a collective set of values that clarify the profession’s social mandate and provide guidelines for the work’ (Nerland, 2011, p. 182). This part of the National Quality Framework for Career Guidance, with the code of ethics and core values, will be a contribution to just such a common ethical superstructure. More systematic work and a clearer focus on ethics will improve the quality of career guidance in Norway.

Work with ethics is a process that requires continuous efforts. Twelve articles in a code of ethics do not in themselves ensure good ethical practice, nor does a reflection model in itself create reflection, and an ethical pledge is no more than broken expectations if it is not followed through. The various models and elements are intended to help identify, understand and manage the complex ethical challenges that career guidance practitioners in the various sectors face in their work. In addition to systematic work and a greater focus on ethics, there are some conditions that should be present if good ethical practice is to be promoted:

- Owners, managers and practitioners must recognise that ethics are very important in terms of quality in the career guidance services.
- Managers and practitioners must have sufficient and relevant ethical competence.
- Practitioners must have framework conditions that encourage them to exercise good ethical practice.
- Ethical reflection should be a prioritised and planned part of professional work.
- The code of ethics should form the basis of practice in career guidance, and be part of systematic quality development in the workplace.
- If one is to make the code of ethics for career guidance an integrated part of practice, one needs to know and understand it.
- The code of ethics should be part of the information and training provided to new employees in the workplace.
- Work with ethics in career guidance must be adapted to suit local conditions, and must be a supplement to other ethical work which the field of practice must observe.
References


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Taken from https://myfutureproject.eu/resources/


Appendices

Appendix 1: Participants in the groups

Participants in the groups, by sector/area of work:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector/Area of Work</th>
<th>Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary and secondary education</td>
<td>Reinhardt J. Røyseth, Ruth-Wenche H. Vinje, Tove Ann Hustveit, Liv Hofgaard, Ivar Landmark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career centres</td>
<td>Tone Vassbotn, Marija-Christin Jurin, Birgitte Daae (meetings 1 and 2), Clare Seville (meetings 3 and 4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAV/integration</td>
<td>André Johansen, Ingjerd Rindal, Faten Lubani</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour and Welfare Directorate</td>
<td>Marie Refseth, Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, Lone Lønne Christiansen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult education/integration</td>
<td>Helene Fredriksen, Labour and Welfare Directorate, Bodil Inset</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career services in higher education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partnership for career guidance in the counties</td>
<td>Kjell Helge Kleppestø .</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research and education at universities/university colleges</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work and inclusion companies</td>
<td>Monica Sivertsen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Experts from universities and university colleges:
Erik Hagaseth Haug (discipline coordinator)
Torild Schulstok
Anne Holm-Nordhagen
Rie Thomsen

Participants from Skills Norway:
Line Wiktoria Engh
Tonje F. Gravås
Gry Ellen Bakke
Marianne Almbakk
Anne-Lene Andresen (meetings 3 and 4)
Ingjerd Espolin Gaarder
Appendix 2: Distribution and involvement

Skills Norway has taken part in various events at which the National Quality Framework for Career Guidance was presented. We have also used some of the events to obtain comments on the work during the work in process phase. We also prepared a PowerPoint presentation, which some of the experts and participants in the groups used at various events, but we do not have a summary of this.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Skills Norway</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 March</td>
<td>Lecture, Inland Norway University of Applied Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 April</td>
<td>Open day, Østfold Career centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 April</td>
<td>Advisers’ seminar organised by Rogaland Career centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 April</td>
<td>National Forum for Career Guidance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 April</td>
<td>National Coordination Group for Career Guidance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 May</td>
<td>Advisers’ seminar organised by Oslo Career Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 June</td>
<td>National seminar for adviser coordinators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 June</td>
<td>Career competence conference (JobbAktiv)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 August</td>
<td>Arendalsuka – workshop on career competence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 August</td>
<td>Kick-off – digital career guidance services, Skills Norway and Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 September</td>
<td>Presentation of new Skills Norway section in Tromsø</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 September</td>
<td>Advisers’ seminar organised by Nordland Careers Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10–11 October</td>
<td>Workshop on career guidance for integration, University of South-Eastern Norway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 October</td>
<td>Workshop for the county career centres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 November</td>
<td>Open day with new Skills Norway section in Tromsø</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 November</td>
<td>Meeting of the National Council for Vocational Education and Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 November</td>
<td>Presentation for the Directorate of Integration and Diversity (IMDI) and the expert groups in Skills Norway (integration)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 November</td>
<td>Teaching, Career guidance for advisers in Oslo schools (Anne)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 October</td>
<td>Teaching, master’s programme in career guidance at University of South-Eastern Norway, class of 2018 (Anne)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 October</td>
<td>Teaching, master’s in career guidance at University of South-Eastern Norway, class of 2019 (Anne)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 September</td>
<td>Presentation to expert group, master’s programme in career guidance at University of South-Eastern Norway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 November</td>
<td>Ministry of Children and Education, Denmark. Research seminar, ** Nordic Research Network on Transitions, Career and Guidance (Rie Thomsen)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 November</td>
<td>Presentation, master’s programme in career guidance – course 3 (Torild)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 November</td>
<td>Presentation at workshop for the school services for pupils in Oppland (Torild)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 October</td>
<td>Informal peer review, master’s programme in career guidance – course 1 (Torild)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 October</td>
<td>Informal peer review, further education course in NAV guidance (Torild)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 August</td>
<td>Lecture, master’s programme in career guidance, Inland Norway University of Applied Sciences (Erik)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 August</td>
<td>Lecture, counselling studies, Inland Norway University of Applied Sciences (Erik)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 September</td>
<td>National study guidance seminar (Erik)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 September</td>
<td>National course, Norwegian Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance (Erik)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 September</td>
<td>Advisers’ seminar, North Rogaland (Erik)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 October</td>
<td>Advisers’ seminar, South Rogaland (Erik)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 3: General introduction to the three mandates

1. Background
Official Norwegian Report NOU 2016:7 Career Guidance for Individuals and Society recommends the development of a National Quality Framework for Career Guidance. In the follow-up of this, in its letter of allocation for 2017, Skills Norway was commissioned by the Ministry of Education and Research to study and initiate the development of a quality framework for career guidance services, in partnership with other parties involved in career guidance. The assignment was specified in more detail in a letter dated 16 March 2017: Further details on Skills Norway’s assignment – the preparation of a quality framework for career guidance. The assignment was further ratified in the national budget for 2018, which stated that: ‘Skills Norway has been commissioned to start work on reporting on and developing a quality framework for career guidance. The aim is to provide all the inhabitants of this country with equitable career guidance services. The quality framework must be cross-sectoral, and among other things must define quality criteria for the services and competence standards for career guidance personnel’.

The overall, long-term goal of the project is to achieve career guidance services of a high quality in all sectors in Norway. The specific goal of the quality framework is for it to provide an instrument for a more comprehensive system of lifelong career guidance and to become a tool for developing quality, both in the field of practice and in governance and management. While the framework is not a goal in itself, the processes of developing and implementing it will be important factors in achieving the goal of career guidance of a high quality in Norway.

The assignment has four defined deliverables:

1) Competence standards – professional career guidance
2) Career competence – learning outcome from career guidance
3) Ethics – principles and code for good practice
4) Quality assurance – quality indicators, evaluation, statistics and research

There is also a requirement for broad involvement, and the Ministry of Education and Research emphasises that Skills Norway must ‘facilitate a broad and inclusive process in which all parties, state agencies tasked with career guidance, the municipal sector (municipalities and county authorities) and other relevant parties are included in the development work’.

2. Organisation and timeframe
The first phase of the project has a timeframe of two years (2018–2019). In 2018, groups made up of experts from the field will perform specialist development work. The groups will prepare proposals for solutions within their subject. In 2019, relevant parties will be given an opportunity to provide feedback on the proposals, and amended versions will be launched towards the end of 2019. In the second phase of the project (2020–2021), the focus will be on implementing the framework.

The specific task of the groups is to carry out an expert study and present a proposal for solutions within their subject. The proposals from each working group will be presented in a final report that will be submitted in December 2018. The proposals will then be passed on to a ministerial reference group made up of representatives from the Ministry of Education and Research and the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. Other key players in the field will have the opportunity to provide feedback during the first half of 2019. The proposals will be revised and amended on the basis of this.
Appendix 4: Mandate for the working group Competence standards – professional career guidance

Professional career guidance practitioners with good, relevant competence are essential if the goal of high quality career guidance is to be achieved. Other people working with and in relation to career guidance should also be sufficiently competent to undertake their roles in a manner that improves quality of service. There are currently no formal requirements for specialist career guidance competence or qualifications in order to work with career guidance in any sector. Nor are there any common descriptions of which competence career guidance practitioners should have to ensure that they deliver professional services, which was pointed out in NOU 2016:7 Career Guidance for Individuals and Society.

The working group Competence standards – professional career guidance will study and propose competence standards for career guidance practitioners and others who, in various roles, work in the field of practice of, or are responsible for, career guidance/career learning. The working group will describe the various professional roles, based on which tasks and functions the various professional practitioners have. The working group will also study and describe which competences should be possessed by the professional practitioners in the various roles. It is up to the working group to evaluate what level of detail the competence standards should have. They should be generic enough to be able to function across sectors, but detailed enough to be used in practical assessments and descriptions of competence needs and levels.

The work is to be based on the recommendations from NOU 2016:7 Career Guidance for Individuals and Society, other existing knowledge bases, examples from other countries and/or other fields in Norway, and possibly other relevant sources. A particularly key role will be played by the work that NICE (Network for Innovation in Career Guidance & Counselling in Europe) has done in developing European competence standards for career guidance.

The working group will be headed by Skills Norway in cooperation with a specialist. Each group will have six members. The groups will hold four working seminars in 2018, two in the spring and two in the autumn. The working group will submit its proposals for competence standards by December 2018. The delivery will be described in a final report that provides, at a minimum, a description and justification of the chosen solution. The working group may need to meet in 2019 to work on the feedback to the proposal, and to prepare a final version.

Limitations
Although the assignment from the Ministry of Education and Research is an element of the work of developing a more comprehensive system of lifelong career guidance, it does not include examining how better access to career guidance services could be provided in Norway. Access and quality are closely related, but in this project, it is the quality of career guidance that will be in focus.

The working group Competence standards – professional career guidance will present proposals for competence standards that can be useful and applicable in all sectors. In other words, the group will not propose sector-specific standards, but generic standards that can function across sectors. However, the working group will ideally evaluate possible challenges relating to the use of the standards in the different sectors, and describe these in the final report.

The working group will not present proposed solutions as to what formal status the proposed standards will have in the various sectors. However, the group will ideally present their assessments regarding problems and considerations on which there should be a focus, as these may be of benefit in later discussions on the status of the competence standards. Nor does the assignment include calculating the potential costs associated with the

60 Some county authorities have chosen to define the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training’s ‘Anbefalt formell kompetanse og veiledende kompetansekriterier’ (Recommended formal competence and guiding competence criteria for advisers in schools) as requirements for competence needed to work as an adviser in schools.
61 European competence standards for the academic training of career practitioners in Europe
introduction/implementation of competence standards.

A natural extension of discussions about competence will be to look at the need for qualifying education, further education and continuing education. This is not part of the group’s mandate, but the group can touch on such questions in its final report if it so desires.

Appendix 5: Career competence – learning outcome from career guidance

The ELGPN (European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network) says in a report from 2010 that: ‘The career guidance reviews carried out by the OECD, the World Bank, and a range of EU agencies (…) have all underlined the need for the citizens to be well equipped with skills to manage the complex and non-linear transitions that mark contemporary education, training and working pathways.’ This focus on career competence (CMS) is based on two EU resolutions from 2004 and 2008. Boosting the competences and qualifications needed by the population to manage career-related challenges in terms of education and work is highlighted as one of four main focus areas when a country sets out to develop a comprehensive system of lifelong career guidance. Partly on the basis of this, the ELGPN and several countries have been working on schemes to ensure that career guidance, in addition to providing users with support in specific choice situations, helps to improve the career competence of the population.

NOU 2016:7 Career Guidance for Individuals and Society touches on this dual focus of the purpose of career guidance. Regarding career guidance, it states there that it must both: ‘… assist individuals in specific choice situations, and help to ensure that individuals develop the career competence needed to enable them to manage career-related challenges throughout their lives’.

In the report Designing and Implementing Policies Related to Career Management Skills (CMS), the ELGPN makes 11 recommendations as to how a country can work to advance career competence. The first recommendation is that the country should perform a national review, in which it asks the question: ‘What are the competencies that citizens of all ages need in order to effectively manage their career in a lifelong perspective? How can such competencies be organized within a framework that is meaningful in their substance and in developmental terms?’ NOU 2016:7 recommends that ‘… a framework for career competence be developed’. However, the committee did not make any detailed recommendations about the content and form of such a framework.

The working group Career competence – learning outcome from career guidance will present proposals for a description of which career competences the group believes are key to ensuring that the population will be able to manage career-related challenges in terms of education and work on a lifelong basis. The working group will look into and propose the content and structure of what could be called a ‘framework plan for career competence’. The working group may decide on another suitable name/term. The group is free to decide on the form and content of the ‘framework plan’, but this should be designed to be able to function as a tool for career guidance/career learning with career competence as the goal.

The group will justify and reflect on the choices it makes in relation to the career competence and structure of the ‘framework plan’. Ideally, the group will also present some assessments of how the proposed ‘framework plan’ can be of benefit in career learning in different sectors. These can include a reflection of which views of learning/learning theory are used as a basis for the ‘framework plan’. It may also be useful for the group to

63 CMS – Career Management Skills is the term used for career competence in this report.
indicate which types of learning resources could be relevant and useful when the ‘framework plan’ is to be adopted for career learning.

It is up to the working group to assess what level of detail the ‘framework plan’ should have. It should be generic enough to function across sectors, but detailed enough to be used as a tool in practical guidance and career learning. The group may present assessments of modifications that are needed for use in different sectors or for different target groups.

The work should also examine existing knowledge bases and experience from other countries. For example, the ELPGN has organised pan-European work on career competence/career management skills (CMS), on which the group can draw. There are examples of ‘framework plans’ that have been developed in other countries and in Norway that may be relevant. The group should also look at specialist literature and discussions, both nationally and internationally, relating to the field of career competence/CMS. It will also be useful to look at experiences of career learning/career education from the field of practice.

Limitations
Although the assignment from the Ministry of Education and Research is an element of the work of developing a more comprehensive system of lifelong career guidance, it does not include examining how better access to career guidance services could be provided in Norway. Access and quality are closely related, but in this project, it is the quality of career guidance that will be in focus.

The working group will present proposals for a ‘framework plan’ that can be useful and applicable in all sectors. In other words, the group will not propose a sector-specific ‘framework’, but one that can function across sectors. However, the working group will ideally evaluate possible challenges relating to the use of the ‘framework plan’ in the different sectors, and describe these in the final report.

The working group will not present proposed solutions as to what formal status the ‘framework plan’ will have in the various sectors. However, the group will ideally present their assessments regarding problems and considerations on which there should be a focus, as these may be of benefit in any later discussions on status. Nor does the assignment include making specific calculations of the financial and administrative consequences associated with introduction/implementation.

A natural extension of discussions about career competence and career learning will be to look at the need to improve the competence of practitioners and other key players. This is not part of the group’s mandate, but the group can touch on such questions in its final report if it so desires.

Appendix 6: Ethics – principles and code for good practice

*NOU 2016:7 Career Guidance for Individuals and Society* states that a common codes of ethics is part of the professionalisation of career guidance, and it recommends the development of a common code of ethics that is specific to the career guidance services.

Ethical principles and a code of ethics for the career guidance services will help to:

- improve the quality of career guidance services
- provide support in ethically difficult situations for those providing career guidance services
- maintain and strengthen the ethical competence of those providing career guidance services
- facilitate systematic ethical reflection in the specialist communities.

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67 European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network
The working group *Ethics – principles and code for good practice* will look into and propose common ethical principles and a code for career guidance. The group will assess whether it is expedient to create more general ethical principles and a more detailed/limited code of ethics. The group will present proposals for ethical principles/a code of ethics that can be useful and applicable in all sectors. The group must assess what must be taken into consideration to ensure that the principles/code can be applicable in all sectors. Ideally, the group will also design the principles/code with a view to their applicability and relevance for every form of career guidance, such as face-to-face interviews, group guidance, career learning/education, digital career guidance, etc.

The group’s work should be based on a professional ethical foundation. The work is also to be based on the recommendations from *NOU 2016:7 Career Guidance for Individuals and Society*, other existing knowledge bases, examples from other countries and/or other fields in Norway. For example, the group should look at what ethical principles/codes there already are in the field. Three different codes of ethics have already been developed for career guidance in the Norwegian context, and all three relate to guidance in a limited part of the field. 68 There are also general codes of ethics by which some of those working with career guidance must abide, such as Union of Education Norway’s *Professional ethics for the teaching profession*, and *Ethical Guidelines for the Public Service*, which applies to Labour and Welfare Administration (NAV) staff.

Limitations

Although the assignment from the Ministry of Education and Research is an element of the work of developing a more comprehensive system of lifelong career guidance, it does not include examining how better access to career guidance services could be provided in Norway. Access and quality are closely related, but in this project, it is the quality of career guidance that will be in focus.

The working group *Ethics – principles and code for good practice* will not present proposed solutions as to what formal status the principles/code will have in the various sectors. However, the group will ideally present their assessments regarding problems and considerations on which there should be a focus, as these may be of benefit in later discussions on the status of the principles/code.

A natural extension of discussions about ethics and ethical competence will be to look at the need to improve competence. It is not part of the group’s mandate to look into this, but the group is welcome to touch on such questions in its final report if it so desires. The assignment does not include calculating any financial or administrative costs.

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68 These are ‘Etiske retningslinjer for veiledere’ (Code of ethics for advisers) (Norwegian Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance), ‘Etiske retningslinjer for karriereveiledning’ (Code of ethics for career guidance) (Forum for Careers Services in Higher Education) and ‘Etiske retningslinjer for fylkesvise karrieresentre’ (Code of ethics for county career centres) (Skills Norway/county career centres)