

Issues Arising to Date from Meetings of Directors of the Initial Training Programmes for Guidance Counsellors.

1. Guidance Competencies

- Knowledge, skills and attitudes required to undertake the following tasks: the specific responsibility of the guidance counsellor as per *Guidelines for the Practice of Guidance and Counselling in Schools*:
 - counselling
 - consultation
 - assessment
 - information
 - referrals
 - classroom guidance activity
 - vocational preparation
 - guidance programme planning
 - evaluation of school's guidance needs and services
 - guidance and whole school planning
- Competency in the use of ICT for guidance
- Knowledge of current curricular and other developments in Irish education
- Life span perspective in counselling, career development theory, and psychology of human development
- How to assess knowledge, skills and attitudes during the training and beyond training
- Knowledge of non-formal, further and adult education, and labour market services

Common concern: Department of Education and Science, Trainers, Institute of Guidance Counsellors, NCGE

2. Counselling Theory and Practice

- Broad base of theories
- Life span and developmental focuses
- Multi / inter cultural dimension
- Varied means of assessing theory
- Linking theory to counselling skills training and to observations in field practice
- Varied means of assessing counselling skills
- Linking theory to the personal growth and development of trainees
- Career counselling versus educational counselling versus personal counselling
- Individual and group counselling
- Terminology: guidance

*Guidance in school refers to the full range of activities that assist pupils to make choices about their lives and to implement those choices (**Guidelines for the Practice of Guidance and Counselling in Schools**, Dept. of Education, 1996). These choices are focused in a developmental way on three key areas of a pupil's life:*

- ❑ *personal and social;*
- ❑ *educational;*
- ❑ *career.*

The term 'guidance' is synonymous with the terms 'guidance counselling' and 'guidance and counselling'.

Common concern: Department of Education and Science, Trainers, Institute of Guidance Counsellors, NCGE

3. Professional Issues

- Accountability
- Record keeping
- Ethics
- Personal growth / development
- Safety issues in counselling practice

Common concern: Department of Education and Science, Trainers, Institute of Guidance Counsellors, NCGE

4. Field Practice

- Content ?
- How assessed ?
- Pass / fail in field practice: relationship to overall award of a professional qualification?
- Best practice ?

Common concern: Department of Education and Science, Trainers, Institute of Guidance Counsellors, NCGE

5. Supervision

- Supervision of training placements
- Supervision of supervisors
- Training in supervision
- Supervision during training
- Peer supervision
- Guidelines for supervisors
- Supervision and mentoring in school
- Payment of supervisors
- Supervision beyond training
- Induction training
- Meaning of supervision: clinical, line management, mentoring in school

Common concern: Department of Education and Science, Trainers, Institute of Guidance Counsellors, NCGE

6. Accreditation of Training Programmes

- Accreditation mechanism
- Accreditation review mechanism
- Template/yardsticks for training programmes

Common concern: Department of Education and Science, Trainers, Institute of Guidance Counsellors, NCGE

7. Trainer Issues

- Modularisation
- Focus on aims/skills, competencies instead of/as well as content
- Funding
- BPS accreditation for testing
- Post-training induction
- Meeting with IGC to discuss trainer and practitioner perspectives

8. Department of Education and Science Issues

Recognition:

The Department of Education and Science should have a minimum specification for courses for the purpose of recognition. *(13 May 1998 pt 4)*

There should be clearer guidelines on recognition of qualifications obtained outside of Ireland from the Department of Education and Science. There may be state bodies and registration councils in other Member States who could provide some indication of the level and quality of the qualification given. *(4 Nov 1998 pt 2.2.4)*

The Department of Education and Science's agreement to mutual recognition of qualifications through the EU must be taken into consideration. The Department of Education and Science needs to provide a specific set of minimum requirements. *(1 Feb 1999 pt 6.2)*

Responsibility:

The responsibility for provision of funds and recognition of courses as well as of the practice of guidance is the Department of Education and Sciences' role. It must be assumed that in this process it has a responsibility for reviewing both the training and practice and how its money is spent. What is the ideal process for review and recognition? Is it once off or continuous?

Norms / standards / accountability are part of the process and provision of guidance, of course recognition, and of reviewing practice from the Department of Education and Science's perspective. *(1 Feb 1999, pt 6.1)*

Given the importance the Department attached to the use of ICT for guidance in schools, it has a responsibility with NCTE to provide funding for hardware and software for initial training (*April 28, 2000*)

Placement and Supervision:

The implications for the Department need to be emphasised. Placement and Supervision is very important and in terms of Department support of training, these are costs that they need to look at. There is support given to the education departments of universities for the training of teachers. The same support needs to be put in place for guidance counsellors. To develop quality and relevant training, the colleges require the financial support of the Department. (*21 September 1999, pt 4*)