

**PROFESSIONAL STANDARD**

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**CAREER INFORMATION SPECIALIST III,  
IV**

## FOREWORD

There are five levels in the Estonian professional qualification system for determining requirements for professional qualifications. The first level is the lowest and the fifth level is the highest (see Annex A – Terms in the professional qualification system). It is not presumed that professional qualification levels are determined from level I to level V for all professions. Each specific professional qualification level, including requirements for education, is determined by the professional council.

The present professional standard includes requirements for the professional qualification of a career information specialist III and IV agreed upon between appropriate institutions.

The professional standard was compiled by the work group formed by the Professional council of business servicing and other business activities in the following membership:

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A public opinion poll regarding the draft of the professional standard was carried out from 31 October to 10 November 2005. In compiling the final wording of the professional standard, the work group took into account the proposals and notes from the public opinion poll.

The present professional standard has been compiled as a primary work.

The present professional standard of career information specialist III and IV has been approved by decision No 24 of the Professional council of business servicing and other business activities on 2 December 2005.

Professional qualifications determined in the present professional standard have been entered in the register of professions.

## **1 AREA OF APPLICATION**

The area of the professional standard is the following:

- 1) Determining requirements for professional qualifications of employees
- 2) Drawing up curricula and training syllabi
- 3) Drawing up requirements for examinations, interpreting and assessing professional qualifications
- 4) Providing basis for comparing documents certifying international professional qualifications

## **2 STATISTICAL CODES RELATED TO THE PROFESSIONAL STANDARD**

According to the Estonian Classification of Economic Activities<sup>1</sup> career counselling belongs to the area of other business activities, code 74.5.

According to the Classification of Professions<sup>2</sup>, career information specialists belong to the main group of Top Specialists, code 2412.

## **3 NAME OF THE PROFESSION AND LEVEL OF PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATION**

In Estonian:	Karjääriinfo spetsialist III, IV
In English:	Career Information Specialist III, IV
In German:	Karriere information Spezialist(in) III, IV
In Russian:	Специалист по информации о планировании карьеры III, IV

## **4 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROFESSION**

Career information is ordered data that is used for career planning and providing career services. Under a general agreement, career information is divided into three groups: education, labour market and professions.

The aim of the work of a career information specialist is helping to fulfil the target groups' (both specialist and end users) need for information concerning education, labour market and professions (including determining the need for information, supporting the search etc.).

A career information specialist mediates information to people of different ages, social and cultural backgrounds, in the form of individual discussions and in groups. The specialist uses different methods and mediation resources (databases, questionnaires,

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<sup>1</sup> Estonian version of the Statistical classification of economics activities in the European Community (NACE)

<sup>2</sup> Estonian version of the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-88)

websites, library catalogues etc.) on the basis of a client's needs. Clients can be students and also parents, teachers, working adults, unemployed people, etc.

### **Nature of the work**

The work of a career information specialist requires analytical thinking and generalisation skills, but it is also creative, presumes persistence, tolerance, good communication skills, co-operativeness, good adaptability, broad mindedness and the capability to be aware of the constant changes occurring in society, including in the labour market.

A career information specialist co-operates with the school career co-ordinator, career counsellor and other specialists, and guides clients depending on their needs.

Main work tasks of a **career information specialist III** are the following:

- Instructing clients' career information search, including using electronic and other resources (information systems, homepages, library and other information media), and guides the clients', if necessary
- Mediating career information to individuals and groups
- Creating co-operation networks and co-ordinating information movement (including schools, companies, centres etc.)
- Organising thematic events (career days, fairs)
- Managing regional career library
- Managing databases
- Conducting satisfaction surveys among the clients of the centre and analysing feedback

The profession of a career information specialist gives competence to work in information and counselling centres, youth institutions, educational institutions, local government authorities, private companies and labour market institutions. The most common job titles are information desk consultant, information employee, youth information employee, information specialist, etc.

Presuppositions for applying for the **professional qualification of a career information specialist III** are higher education in information sciences and one year of professional work experience or higher education in any other speciality, and two years of work experience as a career information employee. In addition the applicant for the professional qualification of a career information specialist III shall have passed further training in career services.

### **Work tasks of a career information specialist IV**

Work tasks of a career information specialist IV include the work tasks of career information specialist III, but a national dimension is added to creating co-operation networks and co-ordinating information movement, and development activities are added to managing career libraries and databases in case of the higher level. The following new tasks are added:

- 1) Conducting studies concerning career services and related areas and analysing the results
- 2) Developing information work skills of the specialists in the field of career services

Prerequisites for applying for the **professional qualification of a career information specialist IV** are higher education in information sciences and three years of professional work experience or higher education in any other speciality, further training in the field of information sciences and two years of professional work experience. In addition, the applicant for the professional qualification of a career information specialist IV shall have passed further training in career services.

## **5 REQUIREMENTS FOR PROFESSIONAL SKILLS OF A CAREER INFORMATION SPECIALIST**

### **5.1 General skills and knowledge**

- 5.1.1 Basics of economics, administration and entrepreneurship – basic level
- 5.1.2 Legal acts regulating education and employment relationships – basic level for III, intermediate level for IV
- 5.1.3 Safety of working environment and occupational health – basic level
- 5.1.4 Communication skills – advanced level
- 5.1.5 Stress management
- 5.1.6 Basics of management and organisational behaviour – basic level
- 5.1.7 Language skills (see Annex C)
  - 1) Estonian – C2
  - 2) One foreign language – B2
  - 3) One foreign language – A2 – requirements not applicable for III
- 5.1.8 Computer skills: AO1 – AO7 (see Annex D)
- 5.1.9 Administration – intermediate level

### **5.2 Main skills and knowledge**

#### **Common main skills and knowledge for all professions in the area of career services (career counsellor, career information specialist, school career co-ordinator)**

- 5.2.1 Career planning, theories and paradigms
  - 1) Career term and different approaches thereof
  - 2) Process and stages of career planning
- 5.2.2 Career services
  - 1) History of career services, trends in Estonia and elsewhere
  - 2) Overview of the content and forms of career studies
  - 3) Principles of career information and mediation thereof
  - 4) Principles of career counselling
  - 5) Connection of career services to other information and counselling services
- 5.2.3 Educational system, labour market and connections thereof
  - 1) Structure and content of education in Estonia
  - 2) Current situation of the labour market, prognoses and trends
  - 3) Possibilities of learning and working in the context of lifelong learning and free movement
  - 4) Knowledge of specialities, occupations and professions
- 5.2.4 Professional ethics<sup>3</sup>
- 5.2.5 Co-operation with specialists of other areas – intermediate level for IV, advanced level for V
  - 1) Team and network building
  - 2) Working in a team and a co-operation network
  - 3) Guiding cases beyond the specialist's competence

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<sup>3</sup> Code of ethics of IAEVG Code of Ethics (International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance).

Approved by the General Assembly of IAEVG, in Stockholm, Sweden, 08.08.1995

Direct link to ethical standard <http://www.iaevg.org/iaevg/nav.cfm?lang=2&menu=1&submenu=2>

Documents in Estonian are available at the Information Centre website

<http://www.innove.ee/ee/?p=2&op=page&pID=29>

- 5.2.6 Basics of research
- 5.2.7 Information retrieval skills and use of career information sources

**Main skills and knowledge necessary for career information specialist**

5.2.8 Information retrieval skills and use of career information sources – advanced level

- 1) Determining information needs and assessing search results
- 2) Instructing, consulting and guiding clients' information retrieval

5.2.9 Creating and developing career information sources – intermediate level for III, advanced level for IV

5.2.10 Managing career library and databases – intermediate level for III, advanced level for IV

- 1) Describing and cataloguing information media
- 2) Appropriate entry of data into databases

5.2.11 Principles of forming career library, filing sources and manners – requirement not applicable for III; IV

5.2.12 Research in the field of career services – basic level for III, intermediate level for IV

5.2.13 Client service – advanced level

5.2.14 Basics of project management – basic level; intermediate level for IV

5.2.15 Basics of pedagogy – basic level; intermediate level for IV

- 1) Learning styles
- 2) Methods of active learning and group work
- 3) Planning and conducting trainings
- 4) Individual professional instruction

**5.3 Additional skills and knowledge**

5.3.1 Basics of sociology

5.3.2 Ability to take into account the special needs of people

**5.4 Personal characteristics and abilities**

- 1) Positive attitude towards life
- 2) Analysis and generalisation skills
- 3) Creativity and openness
- 4) Verbal skills
- 5) Adaptability
- 6) Emotional stability
- 7) Attentiveness
- 8) Ability and readiness for co-operation
- 9) Decisiveness and responsibility
- 10) Tolerance and empathy
- 11) Independence and self-organising skills
- 12) Personal maturity (adequate self-assessment, balance, set system of values)
- 13) Persistence

**6 TERM OF VALIDITY**

The Professional Standard shall be valid for 4 years. The professional standard can be amended, if necessary, before its expiry.

**LEVELS OF PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS**

Level I- employee performs work tasks under similar circumstances; has acquired professional skills and knowledge through professional training mostly; may need some supervision in the course of the work; is responsible for performing his/her work tasks;

Level II - employee performs work tasks under dissimilar circumstances; has obtained, in addition to skills and knowledge obtained through professional training mostly, proficiency and experience; works independently; is responsible for performing his/her work tasks;

Level III - employee performs work tasks under dissimilar and variable circumstances; has obtained, in addition to skills and knowledge obtained through professional training mostly as well as proficiency and experience, mastery in and readiness for communicating professional skills and knowledge; organises allocation of resources as well as the work of other employees, and is responsible for the work;

Level IV - employee performs, under changeable circumstances, work tasks, which require analysis and decision-making; has obtained professional knowledge and skills; organises allocation of resources as well as the work of other employees, and is responsible for the work;

Level V - employee performs, under changeable circumstances, work tasks, which require knowledge extension, problem solving, application of scientific theories and definitions, analysis, systematisation, further development and teaching of knowledge obtained; has obtained wide professional knowledge and skills; organises allocation of resources as well as the work of other employees, and is responsible for the work.

## **PROFESSIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

General skills and knowledge - requirements for general skills and knowledge in the fields of activity.

Main skills and knowledge - requirements for skills and knowledge necessary for the profession.

Special skills and knowledge - requirements for skills and knowledge related to specialisation.

Additional skills and knowledge - recommended skills and knowledge, which support and extend professional skills or are related to additional qualification.

Personal characteristics and abilities - requirements for personal and individual characteristics and physical abilities necessary for the profession.

## **LEVELS OF PROFESSIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

Basic level – knowledge of concepts, facts and principles; mastering of basic work methods.

Intermediate level – interpretation and comparison of concepts and facts, creation of connections; mastering of diverse work methods.

Advanced level – analyzing on the basis of connected facts, prognosis, conclusions, generalization, assessment; mastering of diverse and complicated work method

		<b>A1</b>	<b>A2</b>	<b>B1</b>	<b>B2</b>	<b>C1</b>	<b>C2</b>
U N D E R S T A N D I N G	L I S T E N I N G	I can understand familiar words and very basic phrases concerning myself, my family and immediate concrete surroundings when people speak slowly and clearly.	I can understand phrases and the highest frequency vocabulary related to areas of most immediate personal relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local area, employment). I can catch the main point in short, clear, simple messages and announcements.	I can understand the main points of clear standard speech on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. I can understand the main point of many radio or TV programmes on current affairs or topics of personal or professional interest when the delivery is relatively slow and clear.	I can understand extended speech and lectures and follow even complex lines of argument provided the topic is reasonably familiar. I can understand most TV news and current affairs programmes. I can understand the majority of films in standard dialect.	I can understand extended speech even when it is not clearly structured and when relationships are only implied and not signalled explicitly. I can understand television programmes and films without too much effort.	I have no difficulty in understanding any kind of spoken language, whether live or broadcast, even when delivered at fast native speed, provided. I have some time to get familiar with the accent.
	R E A D I N G	I can understand familiar names, words and very simple sentences, for example on notices and posters or in catalogues.	I can read very short, simple texts. I can find specific, predictable information in simple everyday material such as advertisements, prospectuses, menus and timetables and I can understand short simple personal letters.	I can understand texts that consist mainly of high frequency everyday or job-related language. I can understand the description of events, feelings and wishes in personal letters.	I can read articles and reports concerned with contemporary problems in which the writers adopt particular attitudes or viewpoints. I can understand contemporary literary prose.	I can understand long and complex factual and literary texts, appreciating distinctions of style. I can understand specialised articles and longer technical instructions, even when they do not relate to my field.	I can read with ease virtually all forms of the written language, including abstract, structurally or linguistically complex texts such as manuals, specialised articles and literary works.
S P E A K I N G	Interaction S P O K E N	I can interact in a simple way provided the other person is prepared to repeat or rephrase things at a slower rate of speech and help me formulate what I'm trying to say. I can ask and answer simple questions in areas of immediate need or on very familiar topics.	I can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar topics and activities. I can handle very short social exchanges, even though I can't usually understand enough to keep the conversation going myself.	I can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. I can enter unprepared into conversation on topics that are familiar, of personal interest or pertinent to everyday life (e.g. family, hobbies, work, travel and current events).	I can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible. I can take an active part in discussion in familiar contexts, accounting for and sustaining my views.	I can express myself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. I can use language flexibly and effectively for social and professional purposes. I can formulate ideas and opinions with precision and relate my contribution skilfully to those of other speakers.	I can take part effortlessly in any conversation or discussion and have a good familiarity with idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms. I can express myself fluently and convey finer shades of meaning precisely. If I do have a problem I can backtrack and restructure around the difficulty so smoothly that other people are hardly aware of it.
	Production S P O K E N	I can use simple phrases and sentences to describe where I live and people I know.	I can use a series of phrases and sentences to describe in simple terms my family and other people, living conditions, my educational background and my present or most recent job.	I can connect phrases in a simple way in order to describe experiences and events, my dreams, hopes and ambitions. I can briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans. I can narrate a story or relate the plot of a book or film and describe my reactions.	I can present clear, detailed descriptions on a wide range of subjects related to my field of interest. I can explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.	I can present clear, detailed descriptions of complex subjects integrating sub-themes, developing particular points and rounding off with an appropriate conclusion.	I can present a clear, smoothly-flowing description or argument in a style appropriate to the context and with an effective logical structure which helps the recipient to notice and remember significant points.
W R I T I N G	W R I T I N G	I can write a short, simple postcard, for example sending holiday greetings. I can fill in forms with personal details, for example entering my name, nationality and address on a hotel registration form.	I can write short, simple notes and messages. I can write a very simple personal letter, for example thanking someone for something.	I can write simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. I can write personal letters describing experiences and impressions.	I can write clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects related to my interests. I can write an essay or report, passing on information or giving reasons in support of or against a particular point of view. I can write letters highlighting the personal significance of events and experiences.	I can express myself in clear, well-structured text, expressing points of view at some length. I can write about complex subjects in a letter, an essay or a report, underlining what I consider to be the salient issues. I can select a style appropriate to the reader in mind.	I can write clear, smoothly-flowing text in an appropriate style. I can write complex letters, reports or articles which present a case with an effective logical structure which helps the recipient to notice and remember significant points. I can write summaries and reviews of professional or literary works.

**European Level. Self-assessment grid**

## **COMPUTER SKILLS**

The computer driving licence – AO (ECDL/ICDL – The European Computer Driving Licence/The International Computer Driving Licence) verifies the practical skills of its holder upon using consumer software (AO license holding is not obligatory upon applying for a professional qualification)

The 7 modules are:

AO1 – Basic Concepts of Information Technology;

AO2 – Using the Computer and Managing Files;

AO3 – Word Processing;

AO4 – Spreadsheets;

AO5 – Database;

AO6 – Presentation;

AO7 – Information and Communication

### **AO1 BASIC CONCEPTS OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

1. Main definitions
2. Hardware
3. Memory
4. Software
5. Computer networks
6. Computers in daily life
7. Information technology and society
8. Security, legal protection and legislation
9. Information technology and Estonia

### **AO2 USING THE COMPUTER AND MANAGING FILES**

1. Basic skills
2. Desktop
3. File administration
4. Basic file editing
5. Print administration

### **AO3 WORD PROCESSING**

1. Getting started
2. Main operations
3. Formatting
4. Document revision
5. Printing
6. Other skills

### **AO4 SPREADSHEETS**

1. Basic skills
2. Main operations
3. Formulas and functions
4. Formatting
5. Diagrams and objects
6. Printing

**5 AO5 DATABASE**

1. Getting started
2. Creating a database
3. Formatting
4. Data search
5. Reports

**AO6 PRESENTATION**

1. Basic skills
2. Main operations
3. Formatting
4. Graphics and diagrams
5. Printing and publishing
6. Slide show effects
7. Viewing a slide show

**AO7 INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION**

1. Basic web skills
2. Web navigation
3. Web search
4. Bookmarks
5. Basic e-mail skills
6. Correspondence
7. Letter addressing
8. Mailbox administration
9. Lists and newsgroups

## CONCEPTS OF THE FIELD

**A well-functioning system of career services is one of the most important factors, which enables making lifelong training a reality to all. It enables to employ the society's human resources on the labour market in a best possible manner by connecting skills and interests of people with possibilities to work and learn. Career services have a very important role in implementing active labour market politics and enhancing social well-being.**

*Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) 2001*

**CAREER** means a person's lifelong development, roles in life related to the person's work and other intertwined roles. In a narrower meaning career is a sequence of professions or jobs.

**CAREER PLANNING** is a lifelong process of changes, learning and deciding, managing the large number of events and roles in life that form a person's career and support achieving his/her goals. **Choice of profession** is an important part of that process.

In planning their career, people can use the following **career services**:

- Career training
- Career counselling
- Mediation of career information

The purpose of **CAREER TRAINING** is to help students develop their self-awareness, acquire knowledge of the employment world, professions and learning possibilities and form their attitudes and capabilities of coping, which support entering the modern employment world, making career decisions and self-determination.

**PROFESSIONAL ORIENTATION** is a part of career training that focuses on themes of professions, incl. the nature of work, working environment, requirements for skills etc. In case of general education school, examples of professional orientation are both **professional classes** (acquiring basic skills for a specific profession) and **pre-vocational training** (in co-operation with vocational educational institutions, learning about various specialities in the institutions).

**CAREER COUNSELLING** is an activity that supports a person in making conscious decisions about the development of the person's career and implementing these decisions. The topics covered during this process are mainly related to professions, training and employment choices.

**CAREER INFORMATION** is structured data about education, labour market, professions and their mutual connections.

**CAREER SERVICES** are provided in educational institutions (in all levels of education), employment offices, work places and in state and private sectors and as

public activities. Activities can take place individually and in groups, directly or at a distance (incl. as phone or Internet services). Services include mediation of career information (oral, on paper, electronically and in other formats), interviews, tests and self-assessment resources, career training programmes (to help an individual develop his/her skills in career management and increase self-awareness and his/her own possibilities), programmes that introduce choices or are related to job search and transitions.