



**Three-level Centers of Professional Excellence: Qualification,  
Entrepreneurship and Innovation in the Green Economy**

**Work Package 3, Activity 1.1**  
**Tool for Vocational and Qualification  
Counselling (TVQC)**

**Presentation of the instrument for vocational and qualification guidance for  
the target group "school leavers/young adults" in particular**

Stage 1: Self-assessment tool

Stage 2: Self-assessment analysis - information and guidance for experts

Stage 3: Individual counselling/support by experts

**CONCEPT DRAFT**

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## Stage 1: Self-assessment tool: Introduction Procedure, target group and objective

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For the general vocational and qualification counselling in the project, an instrument for the self-assessment of participants will be developed and used in a first stage, which can be carried out either paper-based or electronically (online). The central target group should be (rather) younger participants of Generation Z (born between 1995 and 2010) who have already completed compulsory schooling and may already have had their first work experience. The individual parts of the self-assessment were developed with this target group of school leavers and young adults in mind. An attempt was made to compile as comparable an intersection of important information of the target group as possible for all project partners in the tool. The possibility for project partners to make their own additions in some places was also taken into account. Some more details are given in the following.

The three-stage tool can also be used for further education and career planning, e.g. for entrepreneurs, employed persons or university graduates, with minor adjustments to the content. According to the current opinion of the authors, no fundamentally new headings or parts A - J (to be explained later) are necessary for this. However, extensions or reductions can be made in the individual parts if necessary.

With the help of this tool, important personal prerequisites, personal and social competences, professional interests and other key data are to be identified in a multistage process for a qualified guidance process. The use of this tool is at the beginning of a possibly longer guidance process. Experts in the field of vocational and qualification guidance are to obtain initial important information about the participants through their self-assessment.

With their self-assessment, the participants provide important information for the experts for a further step. The counselling and education experts analyse the completed self-assessment and evaluate the information especially with regard to possible occupational fields, general occupational interests and ideas.

In the last step, individual counselling/support for the participants is provided based on the previous self-assessment of the participants and based on the analysis as well as evaluation of the self-assessment by the experts.

The aim of this instrument is to give the participants individual and qualified feedback from the experts. In doing so, the experts are to point out concrete possibilities for qualified training or another qualification path (possibly studies) or employment.

### Content and structure

With the self-assessment, a participant should provide information about him/herself in the following areas:

- Demographic information, educational background and personal and social skills and interests (parts A to E).
- Previous professional experience (parts F and G)
- Perception of future professional position and activities (part H)

- Job-related needs and expectations (Part I)
- Vocational visions for the future (Part J)

In the above-mentioned parts, the participants must provide various information in standardised, partially standardised or free-text form.

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Parts A to F contain common questions and items that include a lot of personal information and information on (initial) professional experience.

The participants should also consider in parts H, G and I what ideas, wishes or needs they have for a future professional position. Part I contains many points that characterize Generation Z.

Part J gives the participants the opportunity to discuss their professional goals.

Further information that the participants think is important for the experts can be given in Part K. The participants can also give the experts a list of their career goals.

From this extensive information, the experts get a relatively concrete impression of how the individual participants assess themselves. They can use the information to develop initial considerations for concrete counselling of the participants.

#### Possibility of country-specific additions to individual parts of the self-assessment

Some parts of the self-assessment have an optional field. This field is intended to give the various actors in the project partner countries the opportunity to make their own country-specific additions. In principle, the authors cannot include in advance all points that might be of interest to the individual project partners in a consultation process. With the optional fields, a country-specific adaptation of individual parts of the self-assessment is very well possible.

### Self-assessment tool for vocational and qualification counselling

Development of the self-assessment with the possibility of supplementation by project partners.

#### A. Personal information

My name	
My date of birth	
...	
...	

Individual country-specific addition by project partner (optional):

E.g. home address, name of the last school attended ...

#### B. What is your highest level of education?

No school leaving certificate, basic knowledge	
Some lessons, no degree, conditional knowledge	
School attendance up to the age of 16, good practical knowledge	
School attendance beyond the age of 18, school leaving certificate, solid knowledge	
University or vocational qualification, advanced knowledge or bachelor's, master's or PhD level	

#### C. What do you think of your language skills in addition to your mother tongue?

	No knowledge	Beginner	Basic	Good	Very good, fluent
National Language					
English orally					
English in writing					
Any other languages? Please specify:					

**D. How do you rate your personal and social skills or abilities?**

	++ fully applies	+ partially applies	partially does not apply	- does not apply	- ? - don't know
I am a person you can rely on. (Reliability)					
I like to learn new things. (Willingness to learn)					
I am able to complete work items in a timely manner. (Willingness to perform)					
I also do time-consuming work to the end. (Endurance)					
I cope well with difficulties and problems. (Load capacity)					
I do tasks accurate and carefully (Care)					
I can concentrate very well and do not allow myself to be distracted. (Ability to concentrate)					
I can work well on my own. (Independence).					
I can justify criticism objectively. (Critical ability)					
I can accept criticism of my performance and behavior. (Critical ability)					
I am imaginative and have my own ideas. (Creativity)					
I like to connect with others and present my views to a group. (Communication skills and ability to work in a team)					
I can work well with others. (Ability to work in a team)					
I am polite and friendly to others. (Manners)					
I can handle difficult situations. (Conflict ability)					
I accept the view of other people. (Tolerance)					
Other activity, namely .....					
Individual country-specific addition by project partner (optional):  ...					

**E. What are you particularly interested in... ?**

... in your free time	
... at your school	
Individual country-specific addition by project partner (optional):	
...	

**F. How many years of professional experience in a company do you have?**

No work experience	
Some weeks but less than a half year of professional experience	
0,5 - 1 year of professional experience	
More than 1 year of professional experience	

**G. Have you ever done an internship? If so, when, where and what did you like/not like?**

where	when	I liked...	I did not like...

**H. Professional position in the future.**

1. Which position in a company is interesting for you in the future (multiple answers possible)?

	++ very interesting	+ fairly interesting	- not very interesting	-- not at all interesting	? don't know
ordinary worker					
qualified worker					

ordinary employee	clerk;					
qualified employee	clerk;					
lower manager	executive,					
middle manager	executive,					
high manager	executive,					
Self-employed entrepreneur	or					

2. What kind of job do you find interesting? (Multiple answers possible)

	++ very interesting	+ fairly interesting	- not very interesting	-- not at all interesting	? don't know
Commercial activities.					
Craft activities					
Activity in the social / helping area					
Service activities					
Self-employed					
Other activity, namely .....					
Individual country-specific addition by project partner (optional): ...					

I. What is particularly important to you in relation to a specific position in a company?

Put maximum five of the following topics in order (most important = 1, second most important = 2, etc.)

Item	Rank (from 1 to 5)
Existence of planned and systematic training or induction	
fixed working hours	
Possibility to work independently	



Extensive customer contact	
Clear separation between work and private life	
Presence of a personal contact person at the workplace	
Make a lot of money	
Regular feedback	
Intensive teamwork	
International work	
A company car	
Other topic, namely ...	
Other topic, namely ...	

**J. Professional goals in the future**

What are your long-term goals in the job?

(Free text answer) .....

Individual country-specific addition by project partner (optional):  
...

**K. What else would you like to tell you to people who would like to advise you on vocational training and qualification?**

(Free text answer) .....

**Thank you very much for your self-assessment!**

The transition to the second stage is relatively smooth and should be flexible. At the end of the first stage or before the start of the second stage, the experts should evaluate the self-assessment of a participant. At least 30 minutes should be set aside for this per participant. During this evaluation, the experts should get a first impression of the participant and record particularly important information that will be discussed intensively with the participant in the second stage. This special information can include, for example: clearly recognisable professional ideas, special wishes, but also major discrepancies between wishes and reality with regard to professional ideas.

## Stage 2: Self-assessment analysis - information and guidance for experts

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In the second stage, experts and participants look at the results of the selfassessment together. For this purpose, the individual parts of the self-assessment can be discussed successively and the experts can ask questions. If necessary, the participant explains his answers and information with further information. Overall, there should be a constructive dialogue between experts and participants and not a search for "right answers".

Depending on the participant, the constructive dialogue between experts and participants can vary in length. A larger amount of time should be flexibly planned for the second stage; even though it may vary greatly from person to person, approx. 1 2 hours should be planned for this.

Due to the interlinking of the stages of the tool, it cannot be ruled out that during the second stage the experts already start thinking about the further counselling of the participant. This is especially true if the experts have extensive information and knowledge about the participant's career options.

The information given below is aimed at experts who already have experience and competences in the field of career guidance and/or educational counselling with the target group "school leavers and young adults". The following prerequisites should therefore be present in the experts.

Prerequisites of the experts:

- Skills and experience in vocational guidance
- Knowledge of the training and employment market
- Knowledge of local and, if applicable, supra-regional guidance networks for career guidance and counselling
- Experience in counselling the relevant target group "school leavers and young adults".
- Knowledge of the career ideas of different generations, especially Generation Z.
- Knowledge with the evaluation of surveys, ideally in the context of a selfassessment of the target group

In this second stage of vocational and qualification counselling, the experts (maximum two) should first evaluate and analyse the participants' self-assessment. The aim here is the systematic preparation for later individual consultation with the respective participants.

The reason for limiting the number of experts to a maximum of two is that a larger number could prevent the individual participant from presenting himself or herself as authentically and openly as possible and from engaging in the counselling process without reservations.

In other project contexts with comparable counselling instruments, the experience was made that a larger group of experts on the part of the participants tended to be perceived as a kind of board of examiners or audit committee in the broadest sense.

In the course of planning and organising the entire counselling process and the specific counselling appointment, it must therefore be prevented that a participant develops the

feeling of an examination situation when carrying out the self-assessment. This should be pointed out again and again when contacting the individual participants.

In the analysis of the content of the self-assessment, particular attention should be paid to the concrete points of reference that a participant provides for vocational and qualification guidance through his/her answers or self-assessment.

Particular attention should be paid to analysing whether a participant's statements provide a comprehensible and appropriate picture with regard to his or her previous schooling and - if available - vocational training, his or her competences, interests and own ideas of a vocational activity.

It can be concluded that there has been little or no examination of one's own professional possibilities and limits, for example if

- there are only limited school qualifications,
- few or no professional experiences have been made,
- there are hardly any concrete ideas about one's own competencies and abilities, and
- at the same time, a relatively high management position is desired, for which earning a lot of money is also stated as the highest priority.

As a rule, VET professionals are able to carry out such a consistency check and use it as information in the course of the feedback interview in the third stage to present realistic and feasible proposals for a further VET pathway.

#### Distinction between consistency check and matching (conceptual distinction)

The following distinction is important as an overarching conceptual differentiation for levels two and three, even if level three is only presented in a differentiated manner at the end of this chapter for reasons of presentation.

Consistency is generally understood here to mean a large degree of agreement between two sets of data. Within the framework of the consistency check proposed here, the experts should compare the existing data (i.e. the information provided by a participant from the self-assessment) with other available data that provide concrete information about the prerequisites and job requirements that trainees or skilled workers should have. Depending on the possibilities of the experts and depending on the involvement of suitable networks, a matching process can also be carried out or at least initiated on the basis of a consistency check.

Matching is generally also understood to mean a comparison of data; however, in this case it is in the narrower sense about concrete job requirements that are matched with applicant profiles. In the development and use of self-assessment, however, a concrete job in a concrete company is not yet a mandatory prerequisite for the design of the self-assessment or the subsequent counselling process. Nevertheless, a participant provides important information about him/herself that can be used for VET guidance and possibly also for a matching process.

However, the question of which specific training place or job in a specific company a participant might be interested in must be put into perspective for factual and systematic reasons for the design of an instrument (in the sense of the selfassessment) that encompasses

all project partner countries. This is because the counselling process initiated by the self-assessment for all project partner countries cannot replace specific on-site career counselling in the narrower sense, but can initiate, accompany or supplement it if necessary. The counselling process initiated by the self-assessment can above all offer a well-founded introduction to basic vocational education counselling for all project partners.

It is by no means excluded that at the end of such a counselling process there could also be a concrete placement of a training place in the sense of a successful matching. However, the result could also be that the participant (e.g. school leaver) has not yet developed a concrete idea of a training place in the self-assessment and is rather at the beginning of a dynamic career orientation phase. Only after going through this career orientation phase can a concrete own idea of occupational activities and associated training places be developed.

As a result of an open counselling process, however, placement in training or employment would not be possible, but rather support and counselling with regard to a more in-depth career orientation - both would thus be possible. Even with representatives of Generation Z, it is not unlikely that they have not yet developed a concrete training or job perspective after completing their school career, which would be needed for matching in the narrower sense. This possibility should also be considered by the experts.

Based on these considerations, the information that a participant provides in the context of his or her self-assessment is not necessarily suitable for already being able to determine a concrete training place or a concrete job in a company in the sense of matching. And that is precisely why the available data from the self-assessment should (initially) be subjected to a consistency check and not be viewed as data with which (only) specific training positions or jobs can be identified.

Information on where on-site a participant can receive further support in terms of vocational and qualification guidance can also be part of a result.

If the experts have intensive contacts with training companies, pointing out opportunities to complete a traineeship or, if applicable, to apply for a training place can also be an important part of an outcome of the third-level guidance, which is described below.

## Stage 3: Individual counselling/support by experts

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In view of the above explanations and differentiations, the experts should be able to provide the project partner countries with a suitable, preferably specific offer of support and advice in time for the second stage, oriented towards the individual prerequisites, needs and ideas of the participants in the self-assessment.

As a rule, they will make use of their local contacts and networks. With their support, they will be able to provide the participants with suitable e.g. career guidance offers, training places or jobs or, if necessary, further education or qualification offers.

It is important that this third stage is recognisable as an independent guidance and support process. In the run-up to this process, the experts should get a concrete

picture of which vocational opportunities actually exist for the respective participant. It may be necessary to inform and use known or new contacts in the relevant networks after the second stage. On the part of the participant, this stage should also be perceived as independent counselling and support. Depending on the outcome of the second stage, this process can also include several sub-processes, so that further meetings and exchanges are necessary. The time required for the preparation, implementation and follow-up of this stage is difficult to plan. It can last from a few hours to several days (with interruptions). The project partners will have to develop their own time plans based on their own experience.

### Overview for the evaluation of the results of the second stage and possible results of the consultation of the third stage

After a phase of internal consultation and discussion between the two experts, the participant is informed about the considerations the experts have come to and what further steps they propose.

Ideally, the considerations and further steps are prepared and made available to the participant in an understandable way.

In this part, too, any questions the participant may have about the results and the next steps should be answered. It should also be communicated to the participant that the results of the assessment could be used again at a later point in the guidance and counselling process, especially in the event that a person familiar to him or her from the guidance process either changes or other persons are also involved in the guidance and counselling process.

Furthermore, the issue of data protection and the confidential handling of all personal data in the entire guidance process should be explicitly pointed out to the participants once again.

As a rule, career guidance organisations have their own quality assurance concept or comparable procedures and instruments for the secure handling of personal data. Reference can also be made to this existing quality assurance.

The result of the individual counselling should help the participant to better assess his/her possibilities and limits for his/her further career path.

### Further suggestions on the process and procedure of the consultation as a whole

- At least one expert in career and qualification guidance must know the results of a participant's self-assessment and be able to use them as a basis for entering the guidance process in the third stage.
- The participants should have been sufficiently informed about the procedure and the goal of the guidance process at the beginning of the whole process at the latest. The issues of data protection and anonymity should also have been clarified. Questions from participants on this should have been answered.
- The feedback on the content of the results of the self-assessment should be planned as an explanation with the possibility to ask further questions and questions of understanding. This part is about taking stock and reflecting the results to the participant. If there are any ambiguities, they should be clarified.
- In the further course of the counselling process (in the sense of the consistency check described in the concept), the information from the self-assessment should be checked to see whether or not there are already reasonably concrete and suitable vocational ideas, especially about training or employment in a company.
- In addition, the results that suggest that there are still few or no concrete ideas about vocational training or employment should be discussed and deepened.
- After the detailed feedback discussion and the clarification of open questions as well as any necessary deepening of information, this part of the counselling process is completed.
- In individual cases, it may be necessary to arrange further counselling appointments where points that have not yet been clarified can be discussed and deepened.