Academic Guidance

Counselling in education from early childhood, usually from two years, up to the higher education institution level includes a wide range of services to support and broaden the effectiveness of children’s, pupils’ and students’ education. Counselling in education is provided in close cooperation with schools, teachers, parents and adult pupils/students. Counselling includes psychological, special educational and career services. These activities include diagnostics – psychological diagnostics, special educational diagnostics, diagnostics concerning supporting measures for pupils with special educational needs, specification of recommendations of relevant supporting measures, assistance in their implementation in practice and continuous monitoring of their effectiveness. They also cover consultation, interventions, coordination and career counselling.

Counselling is provided on the basis of an informed consent of the applicant (legal guardian of the pupil/adult student) in accordance with ethical principles.

Counselling in the Czech education is a complex system. The institutions are only partly specialized, most of them work in all three areas – educational (study), psychological and career. Professional competence for the area is required. Somewhat separately stand institutions focused on the needs of children, pupils and students with health disabilities and some institutions that deal only with career counselling.

School counselling is targeted to boost knowledge and skills of children, pupils and students, including social skills, all-round personality development, career decision making and life-long learning.

Consulting services also concern the prevention of school failure, dropouts from the study, risky behaviour, relationship and personal issues, and targeted interventions to solve these problems.

The consulting services are also focused on providing direct psychological and special pedagogical interventions for children, pupils and students with special educational needs, assistance in solving their risky situations, methodological support to parents, teachers and school facilities.
School counselling includes also **social consulting services** providing namely social and legal counselling, social interventions, and collaboration with public authorities (bodies of social and legal protection of children) to promote the interests of the pupil.

A very important task of the school counselling consists in finding out suitable **supporting measures** for pupils with special educational needs, gifted pupils, pupils from different cultural backgrounds, finding particular supporting measures according to the needs of the pupils and taking part in their implementation in the pupils’ education process to increase its success. An integral part is also the monitoring and effectiveness of the supporting measures and their functioning in practice.

The **task of counselling** is to recognize in good time a risky pupil in terms of their development and education, identify their educational needs and, in collaboration with all relevant workers and behavioural analysis, to specify targeted supporting measures to improve their learning results and support their personal development and career orientation.

Supporting measures include a broad spectrum of special educational, psychological, and pedagogical and organizational, and personal measures and technicalities, which are provided for students **free of charge** from the State budget.

Counselling is provided for **pupils**, their **legal representatives**, **schools** and **school facilities**, and in close cooperation with them.

Consulting services are provided by:

- **schools** by means of education staff (school advisor, prevention specialist in counselling centre, school psychologist, special educational needs specialist) and non-education staff (social worker)

- **school counselling facilities**, i.e. pedagogical and psychological counselling centre and special educational centre through senior assistants (psychologist, special educational needs specialist, prevention specialist in pedagogical and psychological counselling centre and non-education staff (social worker)

Consulting services may be also provided by other natural or legal persons within the specified range and conditions.

**Methodical and professional platform** is represented by associations that deal with various areas of education and higher education institutions (department of psychology and department of special education). (See also [Carrier Guidance](#).)

The [National Institute for Education](#) [1] is authorized to **review** the recommendations of school counselling facilities concerning the requirements of pupils with special educational needs, proposals of their successful education, and specification of supporting measures to enhance educational effectiveness of children, pupils and students with special educational needs. Adult pupils, legal guardians of under-age pupils, a public authority, the school or school facility, the [Czech School Inspectorate](#) [2] may ask for a revision of the recommendation issued by the school counselling facility.
if there are doubts about its accuracy. (See Special Support Measures [3].)

Legislation and Bibliography:


Education Act [5]

Counselling Services at Schools

Schools provide consulting services for their pupils and their legal representatives. Their substantial part is giving support to the pupil’s personality, their educational results, setting suitable education conditions, prevention of risky behaviour, and assistance in the pupil’s decision-making process on their careers, specification and implementation of the education plans support.

The schools provide the consulting services through a school guidance and counselling workplace (školní poradenské pracoviště), in which usually works a school advisor (výchovný poradce), provides consulting services in selecting education route, jobs i.e. career counselling, participates in solving educational or relationship difficulties of the pupil, mediates contact to specialists), a school prevention specialist (školní metodik prevence, coordinates specification and implementation of the school preventive programme that primarily concerns prevention of risky behaviour (school skipping, self-harm, drug use, sexual abuse, racism and xenophobia), support of multicultural values, contact with specialists).

Providing consulting services can also be ensured by a school psychologist (školní psycholog, he/she is particularly involved in creation of the inclusive climate at school, participates in formation of the education plans support, individual education plans, consults issues of education with legal representatives, assists in matters of education, helps pupils in solving their problems, participates in education support of the pupils, including the gifted ones, identifies the pupil’s developmental risky factors in time, performs indicative psychological diagnostics, gives direct help to pupils with special educational needs in accordance with the content of the supporting measures) and a special educational needs specialist (speciální pedagog, he/she is particularly engaged in creating the school inclusive climate, education support of pupils with special educational needs, mainly pupils with health disadvantages, timely identification of risk factors in the pupils’ developments, performing pedagogical interventions in accordance with pupils’ supporting measure recommendations, participation in elaboration and fulfilment of the plans of pedagogical measures, participation in creation and fulfilment of individual educational plans, methodological help to school staff during education of pupils with special educational needs, methodological assistance and support to pupils’ legal representatives in matters of education). The decision on casting the school guidance and counselling workplace falls within the competence of the school head.

Counselling at levels of education (compulsory level and post-compulsory level)

In providing consulting services, the school counselling staff of the school guidance and counselling
workplace (school advisor, school prevention specialist, school psychologist and special educational needs specialist) cooperate with the education staff, particularly with class teachers and the school counselling facility in the matter of pupils’ education and adjustment of suitable education conditions.

The school collaborates with a pedagogical and psychological counselling centre, a special educational centre, or other institutions which participate in education support of the pupil and protection of their interest, or with authorities for social and legal protection of children and non-governmental organisations working in the field of social inclusion. The school also collaborates with the Labour Office [6] within the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs [7].

A basic document concerning school success in relation to counselling services is a plan of education support that defines supporting measures of the first stage. The plan of education support is drawn up by the school to support the pupil’s achievements in some subjects through pedagogical means. The plan of education support describes the pupil’s difficulties towards which the support should be directed, pupil’s strength, ways to achieve the targets required, effectiveness assessment. (For the Plan of education support, see Chapter Specific measures within mainstream education).

Based upon recommendations by the school counselling facility, schools draw up an individual education plan of the pupil, to support education of pupils with more special educational needs and pupils needing supporting measures of the 2nd to 5th stage. The individual education plan includes pedagogical, organisational, content, personal and technological modifications to the education process and examinations. At the upper education level, the school head may allow education according to the individual education programme also for other reasons than the existence special educational needs or the talent of the student.

See also Special Support Measures [3].

Counselling at level of nursery schools

Nursery schools, which are intended mainly for children from three years of age (no sooner than 2 years of age), provide counselling services to parents in the field of pedagogical support concerning their children developments, give the parents information on professional consulting and other available services that focus on supporting the children interests, developments and preparation for compulsory education.

To provide consulting services, the nursery school can set up a school guidance and counselling workplace.

The nursery school collaborates with pedagogical and psychological counselling centre, special educational centre, or other institutions which take part in education of the child and protection of his/her interests. In case the child’s interests are at risk, it collaborates with an authority for social and legal protection of children. Nursery schools collaborate with basic schools to prepare a child’s smooth transition from preschool to compulsory education, cooperate with organizations ensuring early childhood care within the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs to ensure the child’s smooth transfer from preschool to compulsory education.

Nursery schools provide specific support to children with special educational needs through the supporting measures. The supporting measures are implemented by professionally trained
education staff (educator, special educational needs specialist, school logoped, and others) in
accordance with children educational needs and recommendations by the school counselling centre.

The key document, which is drawn up by the nursery school to use its consulting services, is a plan of education support. The plan is intended for children who need supporting measures of the first stage for their education.

Based upon recommendations by the school counselling facility, nursery schools draw up an individual education plan, to support education of pupils with more special educational needs and pupils needing supporting measures of the 2nd to 5th stage. The individual education plan includes pedagogical, organisational, content, personal and technological modifications to the preschool education process at nursery schools.

See also Special Support Measures [3].

School counselling includes in particular:

- support in establishing school inclusive climate
- assistance in solving relationship problems in class
- support of learning success and failure prevention
- primary prevention of pupil’s risky behaviour, creation and implementation of school preventive programmes, education for healthy lifestyle
- starting at basic education, career counselling is employed, integrating educational, information and consulting support in selecting education route and career opportunities
- professional support to education of pupils with special educational needs (including gifted pupils, foreigners and national minorities)
- screening of pupils to find their learning effectiveness, strong and weak points, suggest recommendation to solve their problems
- develop the Plan of education support comprising supporting measures of the 1st stage and its fulfilling to help pupils facing school failures, dropouts, or risky behaviour
- on-going and lasting support to education of gifted and exceptionally gifted pupils
- methodological support to teachers in applying psychological and special pedagogical know-how to education
implementation of supporting measures of 2nd and 5th stage in co-operation with school counselling facilities (pedagogical and psychological counselling centre, special education centre) provision of interventions for pupils with special educational needs

coordination in providing supporting services at school, participation in work on education plans for pupils with special educational needs

providing information and opportunities to make use of services related to education support of pupils

providing basic information on social and other professional services available

methodological assistance to teachers in applying supporting measures to school educational activities

**Legislation and Bibliography:**

[Act on Social and Legal Protection of Children](#) [8]


[Education Act](#) [5]

**Counselling Services at School Counselling Facilities**

**Special education centres** (*speciálně vzdělávací centra*) are primarily focused on supporting pupils with hearing, visual, physical impairments, speech defects, multiple disabilities, autism or mental disabilities.

**Pedagogical and psychological counselling centres** (*pedagogicko-psychologická centra*) as codified in the Education Act specialize rather in providing counselling for pupils with developmental disorders of behaviour and learning. Another target group consists of pupils with personality or relationship problems, students-foreigners and disadvantaged pupils due to their cultural background or other bad situations in life.

For more information, see [Psychological Counselling](#).

**Legislation and Bibliography:**

Psychological Counselling

Pedagogical and psychological counselling provided for children, pupils and students is an integral part of their education and harmonious development, including those with special educational needs.

Pedagogical and psychological counselling and special educational support for children, pupils and students are provided by school guidance and counselling, i.e. pedagogical and psychological counselling centres (pedagogicko-psychologická poradna) and special education centres (speciálně pedagogické centrum).

Diagnostic institutes (diagnostické ústavy) and centres of educational care (střediska výchovné péče) provide consulting services within the institutional or protection education and the preventive educational care.

Legislation and Bibliography:

Education Act [5]

Pedagogical and Psychological Counselling Centre

The pedagogical and psychological counselling centres (pedagogicko-psychologické poradny) are school counselling facilities (školská poradenská zařízení) established by regions, or other legal entities or natural persons (both religious and private guidance and counselling centres). There must be at least one centre in every district.

The services of guidance and counselling centres are provided by psychologists (psychologové), special education needs specialists (speciální pedagogové) and social workers.

Individual or group work of the experts with pupils, their legal guardians and teachers includes diagnostic, interventional, methodical and information activities. It is provided on a non-residential basis at the centre premises and through visits of expert counsellors to schools and school facilities.

Common activities of the pedagogical and psychological counselling centre include above all:
• Determines whether pupils are ready for compulsory school attendance and submits report and recommendation.

• Determines special educational needs of pupils using methods of psychological and special education diagnostics.

• Draws up recommendations and proposals of supporting measures for pupils with special educational needs and gifted pupils.

• Provides pupils with direct psychological and special education support and intervention.

• Give support to pupils facing increased risk of school failure or having problems in personal and social development.

• Gives consulting services to pupils coming from different cultural background and pupils with different environmental conditions.

• Provides pupils with career consulting.

• Provides pupils'slegal guardians with information, methodological and consulting support.

• Through prevention specialist ensures prevention of risky behaviour, implementation of preventive measures and work coordination of school prevention specialists.

• Provides methodological support for teachers and school facilities in offering consulting services of schools and school facilities to applying supporting measures.

• Makes adjustments regarding taking final exams and school leaving exams of pupils of upper secondary and tertiary professional schools.

• Provides assistance and counselling for schools in the field of identifying /exceptionally/ gifted pupils and providing them with professional pedagogical, educational and psychological services.

• Evaluates regularly implementation of supporting measures.

Guidance and counselling centres collaborate with appropriate regional offices of the Labour Office of the Czech Republic in the field of career advice and guidance (see Carrier Guidance in a lifelong learning approach).
Special Education Centre

Special education centres work mostly in schools set up for groups of children, pupils and students with special educational needs (physical, mental, hearing, visual disabilities/imairments, speech defects, autism, multiple disabilities, rarely also for pupils with developmental learning disorders or behavioural disorders) and specialize in providing consulting services for the category of pupils for which the school has been set up. The current trend is to provide the specialized consulting services on an integral basis for more categories of disabled pupils. The main objective of the special educational centres is the provision of consulting services, supporting care and professional assistance regarding the inclusion of pupils with disabilities/imairments.

In the centres work psychologists (psychologové), special education needs specialists (speciální pedagogové) and social workers. These teams may take on other professional workers with respect to the clients’ disabilities. The centres work on an outpatient basis in the centre premises and through visits of the centres’ workers to schools and school facilities, or families and facilities taking care of pupils with disabilities.

Common activities of the special educational centre include above all:

- Determines to what extent disabled pupils are prepared for compulsory school attendance.
- Determines the special educational needs of pupils with health disabilities, and supporting measures requirements.
- Works out expert background documents to specify education conditions of pupils with special educational needs.
- Suggests recommendations on suitable modifications to final exams of pupils with disabilities.
- Provides career counselling in the field of follow up education and work placement.
- Ensures special education care and supporting measures to pupils in the inclusive form of education if the professional support cannot be ensured by the school and its staff.
• Carries out special pedagogical and psychological diagnostics and provides counselling and assistance in solving problems in education and social developments of pupils with disabilities.

• Provides counselling in the field of education of pupils with disabilities as well as for education staff and legal representatives of pupils.

• Gives methodological, information and consulting support to schools which educate disabled pupils and to their legal representatives.

• Evaluates regularly the needs and effectiveness of supporting measures.

Legislation and Bibliography:


Education Act [5]

Centre of Educational Care

Centres of educational care are school facilities which provide diagnostic, preventive care and consulting services for minors in a difficult life conditions, people with behavioural disorders, people at risk of behavioural disorders, or people with behavioural disorders developed, persons with negative phenomena in social development, who have not been put under protective care or placed in institutional care. The centres are also intended for majors until they have completed upper secondary education (client).

The diagnostic activity is focused on recognizing the essential features of the clients’ personality and finding their needs and problems. It is a starting point for drawing up an individual plan to follow in applying pedagogical, psychological and therapeutic procedures.

The therapeutic activity is directed towards the clients’ change in their behaviour and attitudes.

The centre of educational care provides psychotherapeutic assistance for children, youth and parents for instance in problems of mutual relations, behavioural disorders, bullying, antisocial phenomena with children and young people (aggression, drug abuse, initial delinquency), or mental difficulties and personality problems in children,

The care is ensured by expert teams of psychology, special education and social work.

Basic methods of work are individual psycho-therapy, family therapy and group psycho-therapy.

The centres offer also coordination of combining a voluntary therapeutic stay in educational care centres for children and youth with a stay in a residential department.
Some centres prepare **preventive programmes for schools**: e.g. programmes on bullying, racism, drug abuse, or safe internet. They also offer diagnostics and intervention if there are pathological phenomena in the class.

If necessary, the centre of educational care can also **collaborate** with the school, institutions of pedagogical and psychological counselling, the authority for social and legal protection of children, medical facilities and other bodies which are engaged in prevention and solution of the client’s risky behaviour.

**Legislation and Bibliography:**


[Education Act](#) [5]

**The Diagnostic Institute**

The diagnostics institute is a school facility which carries out special pedagogical and psychological testing on a residential basis of **children** who have been **ordered to have institutional education** or **imposed protective care** by a court, or of children who have been placed in the institute by their parents/persons responsible for their education (on the basis of an agreement between the institute and parents or a legal guardian of the child or juvenile of age) because of behavioural difficulties. It can provide children with non-residential special educational care i.e. provide special education or psychological services to children with behavioural disorders and to their families or schools.

**Legislation and Bibliography:**


[Education Act](#) [5]
Career Guidance

Career guidance and counselling is provided by transmitting information about the world of work, which is part of the curriculum in both the compulsory and in post-compulsory education and is aimed at the whole population.

Another form of preparing for life in the world of work is practical training which particularly takes place in upper secondary education, especially at vocational schools attended by about 75 % of population.

Apart from the school advisors mentioned above, career counselling is also provided by institutions specialized therein.

Legislation and Bibliography:


Yearbook of Trends. Education in the Czech Republic 2006/07–2016/17 [10]

Career Issues in the Curriculum

Within the compulsory education, one of the educational areas included in the Framework Educational Programme for Basic Education [11] is also the area The People and the World of Work. This area includes seven thematic fields. The thematic field The World of Work is compulsory in its full extent to all pupils of the 2nd stage. Considering its focus on future occupational choice, it is recommended to include it in the highest school years.

Preparation for the professional and economic civilian life is carried out at upper secondary level within the educational area (for general upper secondary schools) and cross-curricular theme People and the World of Work (for vocational courses). The framework educational programmes [12] also require the general upper secondary school leavers to have entrepreneurship competences and leavers of vocational courses to have the competences needed to enter the labour market and carry out business activities. Including practical training and work experience in companies into educational plans of vocational upper secondary schools facilitates the contact between pupils and employers which may influence the pupils’ decision on the future choice of employment. Moreover, after completing their studies, some of the pupils start working at the company where they have had their practice.

Contact with the world of work is provided through practical training in companies during the vocational education (see section Teaching and Learning in Upper Secondary Education [13]).

Legislation and bibliography:
Institutions Providing Career Guidance

Career guidance and counselling is provided by:

- school advisor (výchovný poradce) directly at school (see Counselling Services at Schools)

- pedagogical and psychological counselling centre (pedagogicko-psychologická poradna)

- special education centre (speciálně pedagogické centrum) (in the case of pupils with special educational needs)

- the Career Guidance Centre [17]

- information and guidance centres for choice of career of the Labour Office of the Czech Republic [18] (IPS)

Information and guidance centres for choice of career of the CR Labour Office (IPS)

The labour offices have undergone a legislative change by which a Labour Office of the Czech Republic [6] has been established. The Office has its regional offices, which include contact centres set up in compliance with the needs for accessibility. Information and guidance centres for choice of career within regional offices provide current information on:

- the network of upper secondary schools, study and vocational courses in the whole country

- admission procedures requirements

- demands and requirements for each occupation

- opportunities of graduates’ employment

- situation in the labour market in regions and the CR
retraining opportunities (for more information, see Unemployed and Other Defined Groups [19])

Information and guidance centres for choice of careers of the CR Labour Office provide detailed descriptions of jobs, the possibility of self-testing of professional interests in relation to the occupation and relevant education, electronic search of study fields or vocational courses in the whole country and other services, all of them free of charge.

Standard activities of the school advisor include (in addition to those mentioned in the section Counselling Services at Schools) accompanying the last grade classes in visiting the information and counselling centre of the Labour Office, where pupils become acquainted with the situation in the regional labour market and with the options of follow-up education. Pupils are informed that they can make an appointment for an individual consultation regarding the choice of their career or transition into the labour market.

National Institute for Education

The Career Guidance Centre is a part of the National Institute for Education [1]; this Centre publishes a number of publications analysing success of graduates in the labour market.

The National Institute for Education is the administrator of the Internet portal www.infoabsolvent.cz [20] – the Information System on School Leavers' Success in the Labour Market (ISA) which was created within a systemic project VIP Kariéra (2005–2008) of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports [21] with the support of the European Social Fund. On the website, those who are interested can find a short description of every course at upper secondary schools, conservatoires and tertiary professional schools, a short description of the field, job opportunities, information on unemployment, basic documents, schools offering particular courses, and basic information on the entrance procedures to these schools. The site can be searched by profession and gives the characteristics of every position, activities performed, a list of courses in which it is possible to attain the necessary qualifications, average monthly income, and other information. The courses can also be chosen taking into account the kind of disabilities/impairment of the pupil/student. The web pages also contain advice on career choices and in the case of study difficulties, they give contact for specialists in pedagogical and psychological counselling centres, the Career Guidance Centres, Labour Offices and the Information Youth Centre.

The establishment of school guidance and counselling workplaces (školní poradenská pracoviště) at more than 100 schools was an important part of the VIP Kariéra project. The guidance and counselling centres are staffed by a school psychologist, and/or school special educational needs specialist, a school advisor and a school prevention methodist. Currently, there is a trend to expand the number of school guidance and counselling centres and thus to give more schools the competence to provide guidance services to pupils directly.

Vocational training of pupils with special educational needs

The vocational training of pupils with special educational needs is similar to that of the mainstream population, including the structure of branches, maintaining the support that is appropriate to the pupils' special educational needs. Career guidance provided for these pupils is similar to that of the other pupils; in the case of disabled pupils, the special education centres also participate in guidance. The transition of young people with severe or multiple disabilities from vocational
training to the labour market seem to be the most difficult area of caring for the disabled. The situation is particularly complicated in employing intellectually impaired persons. These juveniles are usually registered as the long-term unemployed, or receive a disability pension and very often remain in the care of the social network.

Legislation and Bibliography:


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