

# GUIDELINES

## Educational Counselling and Career Guidance

Edition 2.0  
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## Imprint

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## Educational Counselling and Career Guidance

Edition 2.0

Status: 05.2023

Well informed and counselled on  
education and career in Berlin!

An open, independent, low-threshold and free offer of educational  
and further education counselling in the state of Berlin





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## Preamble

Educational and career decisions are important life choices. Good counselling can be of support and in making the right decision and implementing it successfully. Good counselling on vocational further education involves much more than simply providing information about further education opportunities or new professions!

Professional and personal everyday life of many people in Berlin is nowadays strongly influenced by digital applications. Participation in both professional and social life increasingly requires digital skills. There is hardly a professional or personal situation in which the Internet, new media or technical operations do not play a role.

But climate change and decarbonisation will also bring about new technologies that will lead to an extensive change in living and working conditions. Learning new things and continuing to learn over the course of one's life are becoming more commonplace, more natural, and more personal.

Especially in times of changing work requirements, educational counselling offers orientation to better cope with the manifold challenges. Good counselling does not replace one's own actions, but supports counselees to determine their individual educational or professional path and to take appropriate steps.

**“The result of the counselling for me is that I now have new career perspectives, thus no longer feel helpless in this regard. I was shown very good possibilities that I would like to implement.”** (feedback from a counselee)

Anyone in Berlin who wants to find out about their career options and development opportunities and is looking for advice from experts on further education, career advancement, catching up on school-leaving qualifications, or on the implementation and financing of educational projects can obtain independent counselling free of charge at the 10 counselling facilities funded by the state of Berlin, either on-site or online.

Educational Counselling and Career Guidance in Berlin is linked to people's individual interests and competencies. It opens career perspectives, shows prospects for success and supports self-determined as well as social participation. In the counselling, different ways are shown, and suitable and appropriate solutions are developed together. Educational Counselling and Career Guidance is voluntary, individualised, and confidential.

## Counselling as a component of the further education strategy and lifelong learning

In view of far-reaching re-orientation challenges in the career world, lifelong learning is considered a requirement for maintaining employment and participation in working life. This goes hand in hand with the need to support people on the path of constant social and technological changes that take place in shorter innovation cycles. For example, new and changing skills requirements in many sectors

and occupations call for increased efforts to gain qualifications and to continue education, both professionally and in general. “Lifelong learning means empowering people to acquire a broad range of skills and navigate the education and training system, using state-of-the-art technologies and learning tools across facilities. Consequently, a systemic approach should be taken in professional further education to ensure the adaptation to technological change throughout working life.”<sup>1</sup>

The variety of educational opportunities and qualifications has increased, as have the requirements for further general and professional education and for taking control of one's own life and career planning. An increasing complexity of techniques, methods, and media characterises wide areas of society, the economy, and the environment. Further learning and education are more necessary than ever in the context of accelerated digital, demographic, and environmental change. An important requirement for lifelong learning is enabling equal opportunity access to education and learning, as well as to knowledge and information about opportunities for advancement and qualifications. Formal, non-formal, and also informal learning processes are an integral part of lifelong learning.

Educational and further education counselling has gained additional importance in this context: “As re-orientation processes accelerate, the interest and need for further education increase. This tends to be equally true for further education counselling. Counselling that is appropriate for the target group and quality-assured can help increase participation in further education activities and improve their success.”<sup>2</sup>

The National Further Education Strategy, as an interplay of the federal government, the states, and the economic and social partners, emphasises that further education, as the key to securing skilled workers and employment, should contribute significantly to innovative capacity and competitiveness. “The most important thing in our country is the people in our country with their skills, creativity and commitment. This strength builds on qualifications and competencies. The transformation of the career world – driven in particular by digitalisation – will massively change job profiles and qualification profiles.”<sup>3</sup>

The goal is to establish a new culture of further education and to better integrate labour market and education policy instruments, to bundle the further education programmes of the federal and state governments, and to expand and interconnect the existing counselling services, especially those of the federal government, the states, chambers, associations, and educational organisations, into a nationwide, high-quality lifelong counselling structure. Employers play an important role in providing training, learning, and skills development opportunities in Germany.

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<sup>1</sup> Osnabrück Declaration (2020, p. 8)

<sup>2</sup> German Bundestag. Report of the Commission of Inquiry. (2021, p. 274)

<sup>3</sup> Federal Ministries of Labour and Social Services and Education and Research. National Further Education Strategy Paper. (2019, p. 2)

The new European Agenda for Adult Learning also aims to improve the supply, promotion, and take-up of formal, non-formal, and informal learning opportunities for all by 2030. This is to be supported, among other things, by lifelong counselling for all, with the possibility of recognition of competencies. "It's critical to make adults aware of the importance of learning as a lifelong endeavour that they should pursue periodically throughout their lives."<sup>4</sup>

In order to actively shape change in the world of work, the federal government launched the Qualification Campaign in 2019, which includes both the National Further Education Strategy and the Qualification Opportunities Act. The "Qualification Opportunities Act (QCG)" and the "Work of Tomorrow Act" (from 2020) will promote access to further education support and advice for employed workers. The changes are aimed at employees who are affected by digital structural change or who are seeking further education in an occupation in which there is a shortage of skilled workers (bottleneck occupations). The "Participation Opportunities Act" offers further funding opportunities for the long-term unemployed and thus access to the general and social labour market. It regulates the promotion of employment subject to social insurance contributions in the general and social labour market.

The new "Act to Strengthen the Promotion of Training and Further Education"<sup>5</sup> is intended to expand and supplement the options for promoting vocational and labour market-oriented training and further education from 2023. Overall, access to further education support for employees is to be opened up to all companies and employees.

### Educational and further education counselling as an indispensable component of the development of skilled workers as well as adult and further education in Berlin

For the productivity of the economy and for the quality of work and life of all citizens in the state of Berlin, the professional qualification and further education of all employees is of great importance. The maintenance and updating of qualifications and competencies here encompass both employment-related and civic perspectives.

In the wake of the digital and ecological transformation, the challenges facing Berlin's labour market call for greater efforts to increase the participation of employees in further education, to support disadvantaged groups, and to improve the further education system. According to a study by the OECD on the future of further education in Berlin,<sup>6</sup> people with a migration background, who make up about one-third of Berlin's population, should be targeted with specific offers for further education in order to keep up with the labour market, which is characterised by digital change. At the same time,

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<sup>4</sup> European Commission. Council resolution on a new European agenda for adult learning. 2021–2030.

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.bmas.de/DE/Service/Gesetze-und-Gesetzesvorhaben/weiterbildungsgesetz.html> (Retrieved 05/25/2023)

<sup>6</sup> Cf. OECD. Future-proof further education in Berlin, Germany. (2022)



offerings for disadvantaged groups should be improved and job-related further education and general adult education should be better coordinated so that synergies in language acquisition and the teaching of digital skills, for example, can be used more effectively.

Overall, the OECD report recommends developing a long-term further education strategy for Berlin that takes up elements from the 2011 Qualification Master Plan and encompasses both skills development and further education as well as the promotion of a culture of lifelong learning. The goal should be to reduce the barriers to accessing further education in Berlin. This should be realised in close coordination between policymakers, employees, employers, and education providers and tailored to the specific labour market needs in Berlin.<sup>7</sup> The state of Berlin already has a suitable concept for promoting lifelong learning in the form of the infrastructure of independent Educational Counselling and Career Guidance that has been in place for many years.

The changes in the world of work and the need for continuous professional as well as general further education justify more than ever a neutral and unbureaucratic offer of education and further education counselling as part of the public service.<sup>8</sup> In particular, motivation for learning is a central aspect of education and further education counselling in Berlin. It includes counselling and access to further education opportunities for employees, reaching the formally low-skilled and those with less educational backgrounds. The focus is on individual education and further education counselling, but company-related qualification counselling is also part of the “Educational Counselling and Career Guidance” in the state of Berlin.

Consequently, one focus of Berlin's labour policy is to motivate people to engage in educational activities, as these contribute significantly to employment, further education, to “learning to learn”, and to professional development. Education and learning<sup>9</sup> are intrinsic parts of professional and life biographies, regardless of age, gender or cultural background. “Adult education aims at participation in social, political and community life, in the world of work, and in art and culture. It promotes the development of the personality, health awareness, and the ability to think critically and participate in shaping the democratic community.”<sup>10</sup>

### Educational Counselling and Career Guidance in Berlin as a resource for lifelong learning

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7 The OECD report examined the opportunities and challenges for Berlin's labour market. The existing Berlin further education system was analysed to identify opportunities to make the system more effective and more responsive to local labour market needs, which should help address widespread skills gaps and deficits.

8 Cf. Senate Department for Integration, Labour and Women. Berlin Master Plan Qualification. (2011, p. 4)

9 Learning includes the acquisition of knowledge (know-how) and certain skills and abilities for one's own independent use, competency development, self-activity and self-competence, empowerment and development of one's own learning and action strategies.

10 Land of Berlin. Berlin Adult Education Act. (2021, p. 3)

The education and further education counselling in the state of Berlin sees itself as a preventive investment to improve employability and the skilled labour situation in the state of Berlin. Educational Counselling and Career Guidance includes information about career development and advancement opportunities, the labour market, and educational opportunities used for individual educational and career pathways. The qualification counselling as a specific professional counselling offer in Berlin supports companies and employees in questions of the operational further education planning and realisation.

The counselling services are based on knowledge about the education and vocational training system, about the (regional and supraregional) labour and education market, about the regional skilled labour situation, and on the knowledge about changes in qualification requirements due to increasing digitalisation and automation in Berlin. This is especially important for those who, with the multitude of educational opportunities and professional conditions, need subject matter expertise to make the right decisions and to implement educational and vocational activities more purposefully.

The inclusion of “Educational Counselling and Career Guidance” in the Berlin Adult Education Act<sup>11</sup> strengthens the provision and promotion of independent and free education and further education counselling in the state of Berlin. The National Strategy for Further Education also emphasises the importance of the quality and neutrality of education and further education counselling: “Against the backdrop of a changing labour market, there is a need for high-quality and provider-neutral further education counselling for both working people and companies.”<sup>12</sup>

The State of Berlin provides the funds to secure and further develop this resource and has thus taken on an exemplary role throughout Germany and Europe to this day. For Berlin's labour market, Educational Counselling and Career Guidance makes an important contribution to developing and securing the potential for skilled workers and opportunities for participation, as well as to reaching and promoting people with low formal qualifications.

As professional requirements and activities are constantly changing in the course of the digital and ecological transformation, Educational Counselling and Career Guidance is also becoming increasingly important as a resource for a successful re-orientation process in Berlin. In a growing Berlin, the existing qualifications and competencies of employable persons must be promoted in the best possible way and supported in an even more targeted manner through educational counselling, further education, and post-qualification.

For the Berlin labour market, this requires increased efforts to improve and secure the future of Berlin's further education system, including the offerings of individual education and in-company

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid. (2021, p. 6)

<sup>12</sup> Federal Ministries of Labour and Social Services and Education and Research. National Further Education Strategy Paper. (2019, p. 10)

qualification counselling. “A requirement is to strengthen further education counselling for individuals and qualification counselling for companies and businesses so that professional and personal, as well as organisational challenges and upheavals can be overcome.”<sup>13</sup>

### Experiences of education and further education counselling in Berlin

For many years, the state of Berlin has been committed to providing and maintaining independent education and further education counselling. Since the beginning of the 2000s, the Senate Department responsible for labour has taken up the national and European recommendations regarding the design of lifelong counselling and its quality assurance.<sup>14</sup> Starting in 2006, centralised counselling documentation and uniform quality assurance were included as accompanying fields of action to ensure a high and comparable quality of counselling services. An independent and low-threshold concept of publicly funded educational and further education counselling was developed.

With a clear commitment to funding structures of independent education and further education counselling, the State has long been involved in various funding programmes and guidelines with educational and labour market policy backgrounds.

In the context of this development, there are versatile working and exchange relationships with other counselling structures in Germany and Europe, such as the know-how transfer of stakeholders in educational counselling from Berlin and Austria, which was conducted in the period 2011–2016. The basis was a cooperation agreement between the State of Berlin and the Republic of Austria, the Berlin Senate Department for Labour, which is responsible for vocational training, and the Austrian Federal Ministry of Education. The aim is to promote a transnational exchange of experience and transfer of learning on the structures and quality of educational counselling across national borders. Furthermore, Berlin educational counselling has participated and continues to participate in the further development and exchange of counselling concepts and resources within the framework of European projects and funding programmes.<sup>15</sup>

Based on the needs and requirements of the labour market, vocational training, and gender equality policy, the state of Berlin has introduced publicly funded counselling services on education and careers and can look back on a history of more than 35 years of promoting and supporting education and further education counselling. Counselling services and structures have changed, and new ones

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13 Federal Ministries of Labour and Social Services and Education and Research. National Further Education Strategy. Continuity and departure. (2022, p. 15)

14 Cf. European Commission. Council Resolution on Lifelong Counselling (2008) and Federal Ministry of Education and Research. Recommendations of the Innovation Circle on Further Education for a strategy to shape learning over the life course. (2008)

15 Cf. Project QuaDEC “Quality assurance and development of educational counselling from a European perspective Paris – Berlin – Vienna” (2011, ESF Grundtvig Lifelong Learning Programme) and Project Guide. “Good Guidance Stories. Case Studies in educational counselling” (2015, ESF Lifelong Learning Programme).

have been added over the long period of existence. The establishment and promotion of an independent education and further education counselling service in the city with focus topics oriented to current needs spanned several periods.

Responding to new issues and concerns in career-related counselling, new concepts were introduced or modified, such as most recently in 2016 the “Mobile Educational Counselling and Career Guidance for Refugees in Berlin”<sup>16</sup>. And through it all, the counselling services were funded differently by the respective funding agencies. Counselling and information on further education and qualification were funded within the framework of various model projects and programmes with EU or ESF, federal and state funds. Under the impression of European harmonisation and the establishment of a common economic and educational area, further education counselling is in the sphere of influence of lifelong learning and the Lisbon Strategy.<sup>17</sup> Education and further education counselling has since experienced an increase in importance at European and national level. In addition, it is considered to be of strategic importance in terms of educational policy. This led to a variety of activities in Germany aimed at expanding counselling services.

The aim of these counselling services was and is to structure existing information and advisory services on lifelong learning in the city and to establish a demand-oriented, independent, and professional counselling service. The publicly funded educational counselling programme is intended to strengthen Berliners' ability to adapt to economic and technological change. This helps avoid or end unemployment and means that additional skilled labour potential can be tapped.

### Perspectives of Educational Counselling and Career Guidance in Berlin

In the digital economy and the knowledge society, lifelong learning is becoming a requirement for social participation and an integral part of educational and work biographies. Digitisation is changing the way we learn, how we deal with knowledge, information, data and technologies in the future. “Skills for living in the digital world are becoming a key requirement for social participation, as they are imperative for a successful educational and career path. Learning in the context of increasing digitisation and critical reflection will be integral parts of this educational mission in the future.”<sup>18</sup>

The opportunities, as well as the necessities, for vocational and general learning are increasing. Increasing diversity and a change in employment biographies are becoming apparent. The consequence: Professional experience and acquired qualifications are subject to more rapid change.

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16 Cf. Senate Department for Integration, Labour and Social Services. Guidelines “Mobile Educational Counselling and Career Guidance for Refugees in Berlin”. (2018)

17 Cf. European Commission. Memorandum on Lifelong Learning. (2000). Accordingly, Europe should become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world by 2010. Considered one aspect: In the future, the individual will be assigned greater personal responsibility for maintaining his or her own employability.

18 Conference of Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs. Education in the digital world. (2016, p. 4)

More frequent changes in areas of activity or entirely new learning requirements are increasingly a reality and normality for almost all occupational profiles. This also increases the need to constantly reflect on and organise one's own educational acquisitions and learning processes. Horizontal and vertical movements make orientation of counselling to target group categories imprecise and carry the risk of exclusion of other groups.

“It is important to facilitate access to further education for every individual without age limits, for example by making existing further education offerings more transparent, expanding opportunities for professional reorientation, training and continuing education (including part-time), and providing incentives to take advantage of further education offerings, especially those related to degrees.”<sup>19</sup>

The following developments and needs can be derived from this for Educational Counselling and Career Guidance:

- The increase in flexible working conditions, changes in the way work is organised in companies, and advancing technological developments are placing ever greater demands on the qualifications and skills of employees. They require a different structural organisation of work and permanent learning at formal, non-formal, and especially informal levels.
- Increasingly online-based knowledge procurement and collaborative forms of work, automation and new developments such as virtual reality and artificial intelligence (AI), as well as currently the climate and energy crisis are changing our working and living conditions.
- The employment and work situations of the future require recourse to learning and self-direction competencies with regard to the selection, acquisition and handling of knowledge (information and data), as well as the evaluation of their usefulness. They are subject to continuous change, so that people have to process information at shorter intervals, acquire new knowledge, and develop suitable action strategies for processing it.

These changes affect both professional and personal lifestyles, and thus the relationship between work and private life. For professional change processes, family as well as health aspects and issues must also be included, which strongly influence the actual and the possible course of life. This is another reason why an increase in education or employment issues is emerging as a result of digital, demographic and environmental change. At the same time, it requires strengthening the resilience of

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<sup>19</sup> Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Services. Skilled Workforce Strategy of the Federal Government. (2022, p. 17)

people and organisations in dealing with situations of crisis and upheaval, as they have become more commonplace.<sup>20</sup>

In the coming years, Educational Counselling and Career Guidance in Berlin will include a stronger focus on promoting individual (and company) readiness for further education, and on targeted planning and promotion of career development and further education. This includes support for self-empowerment and self-competence.

“Because younger generations are likely to rely on further education and learning throughout their careers, creating a culture of lifelong learning is critical. The goal here should be to “learn to learn”. Greater awareness of the need for and benefits of learning is a requirement to encouraging individuals to participate in professional further education and general adult education.”<sup>21</sup>

The analogue and digital counselling concepts and formats will address and shape the new questions and changes with regard to the effects of an ecological and digitalised living and working world proactively, professionally, and in the interests of people and organisations. In the future, it will no longer be knowledge and content alone that are relevant, but methodical and problem-solving learning strategies that enable and support the transfer of action. This requires a professional learning and counselling approach that supports the (self-)learning participation of counselees, based on knowledge about changing professions and professional requirements.

At the same time, Educational Counselling and Career Guidance will further develop and expand networking with other counselling structures as well as with the various labour market and education actors. This includes, among others, cooperation with the Federal Employment Agency and the Job Centres, the economic and social partners, the chambers, the regional further education associations and re-orientation networks, the providers of adult and further education as well as basic education, to expand access opportunities for different target groups and groups with low participation in further education by involving different actors and educational providers. Publicly funded Educational Counselling and Career Guidance is also intended to contribute to securing and developing skilled workers and to the economic and professional performance of employees and companies in the state of Berlin.

The goal of Educational Counselling and Career Guidance is to further develop the existing information and counselling offers on lifelong learning for people and companies in Berlin in order to provide and continue to provide a sustainable, needs-oriented, independent, and professional counselling offer. In

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20 Cf. Federal Ministries of Labour and Social Services and Education and Research. National Further Education Strategy. Continuity and departure. (2022, p. 6)

21 OECD Future-proof further education in Berlin, Germany. (2022, p. 21)

the future, qualification counselling will also be further expanded in order to sensitise companies and employees to further education activities and to accompany them.

The present guidelines for Educational Counselling and Career Guidance<sup>22</sup> bundle the conditions and the experiences of the organisation of a competent and quality-supported counselling on education and further education in Berlin. It encompasses the perspectives and areas of action for sustainable structuring and networking of publicly funded counselling services in cooperation with educational stakeholders, associations, interest groups, and institutions.

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<sup>22</sup> The guidelines of Educational Counselling and Career Guidance are subject to regular revision and are being updated since 2017.

## 1. Principles and guidelines of Educational Counselling and Career Guidance

In the state of Berlin Educational Counselling and Career Guidance is seen as a service “[...] aimed at helping individuals of all ages and at any point in their lives to make education, training, and career decisions independently to take charge of their professional lives based on good preparation and knowledge. [...]”<sup>23</sup>

The counselling is intended to enable people to have a clearer picture about their career goals, interests, qualifications, and skills – also in relation to new professional requirements. It helps people to better understand the education and employment system and to apply this knowledge to their own situation. The counselling provides information about education, work, and learning by organising, systematising, and preparing it when and where people need it.<sup>24</sup>

Education and further education counselling is intended to make the existing skills, abilities, experiences, and competencies of counselees more visible in order to strengthen their ability to act individually. Successful Educational Counselling and Career Guidance does not exclusively serve the purpose of overcoming a current educational or employment problem, but also aims at personal development in the sense of lifelong learning.

The actions and activities following the counselling, such as taking up further education or making a career change, remain the responsibility of the counsellee. According to this understanding, publicly funded education and further education counselling in Berlin is characterised as follows:

- It includes individual, personal counselling, information on further education options and opportunities.
- It is neutral, independent, free of charge, open to everyone, and has low-threshold access.
- It is aligned with the counselees’ specific concerns, needs, and situations.
- It includes employees’ and companies’ further education needs and plans.
- It is committed to a high standard and quality of counselling.

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23 Cf. OECD (2004:19) and Cedefop (2005)

24 Cf. Senate Department for Integration, Labour and Women. Berlin Master Plan Qualification. (2011, p. 36)



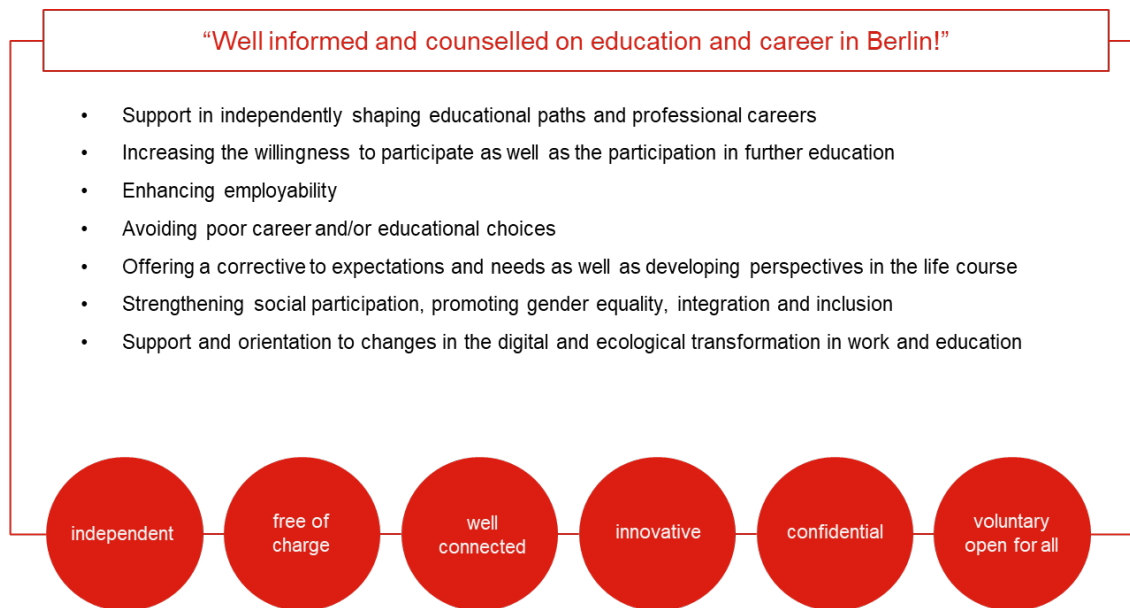


Fig. 1: Contents and characteristics of Educational Counselling and Career Guidance

Expanding (strengthening) the ability to make decisions and take action as well as empowering counselees in dealing with educational and career issues are the starting point for a proactive design of the counselling process.

The guidelines and principles guide the counselling process, the selection and use of methods, the selection and deployment of counselling staff, and quality assurance. The counselling facilities commit to complying with these guidelines and principles. To ensure effective and result-oriented counselling services, they work together with the accompanying structures (→ section 2).

### 1.1 Objectives and tasks

Educational Counselling and Career Guidance in the state of Berlin is aimed at all adults with their individual educational and professional biographies, as well as life plans. It is open to all people, free of charge and not bound to any requirements. It is important to understand and focus on the counselees' needs and experiences.

The counselling is meant to strengthen and promote individuals in their possibilities and chances of general and professional development towards a self-determined life and social participation. It aims to increase individual (general and vocational) participation in further education and employability as well as to increase and improve company further education practices and culture.

According to the IOSM model<sup>25</sup>, the objective for Educational Counselling and Career Guidance is for counselees to leave the counselling *more informed, oriented, structured, and motivated*, based on the following content and characteristics:

- Counselling motivates adults to take part in further education and to engage in educational activities and lifelong learning.
- Counselling empowers individuals to independently shape their educational and professional careers and life plans and supports them in their choices for further education or professional development.
- Counselling supports the preservation of the individual employability of adults and thus contributes to the development and safeguarding of the skilled labour needs of Berlin's economy.
- Counselling creates transparency about the offers of general and vocational further education and informs about possibilities and general labour market conditions.
- The counselling supports the planning and realisation of further education in companies and by employees (qualification counselling).
- The counselling service takes the needs of disadvantaged groups into account and develops needs-based counselling services for, among others, low-skilled, semi-skilled, or untrained persons, for immigrants and for people with disabilities.

As a result, counselees should have sound information and actionable knowledge about how to match their personal ideas and their skills with actual educational and employment opportunities and the demands of their personal life and career.

The success of counselling is measured by the degree in which it enhances counsellee's ability to take education and career related decisions into their own hands, leading to educational and/or vocational activities, such as starting further education or bringing about a career change.

## 1.2 Counselling outcome and indicators of success

For the collection and measurement of counselling outcome, overarching outcome expectations and activity-related as well as impact-related outcome indicators are defined and established in order to evaluate counselling outcome and verify the achievement of objectives.

With regard to short-term intervention, such as educational and further education counselling, it is important to check whether and to what extent:

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25 Cf. Schröder, F., Schlögl, P. Das IOSM-Modell (2014, p. 91 ff.)

- The transfer of correct and relevant information about the labour market and the educational system to classify individual educational opportunities has taken place.
- In the counselling, it was possible to identify possible problem situations and to name options for action, and to derive requirements for action from them.
- It has been successful to focus on the acquired competencies and qualifications with regard to a professional goal formulation (orientation with regard to one's own abilities and goals).
- Through counselling, counselees' professional situation and, if applicable, problem situations were further reflected and a clarification with regard to the goal setting was achieved through the counselling.
- The counselling helped develop more knowledge and strategies on how to plan and implement the phased implementation.
- Individuals are able to realistically assess the content requirements and duration of next steps and pursue their goals upon completion of counselling.

The activity-related outcome expectations refer to the educational and/or vocational activities and actions of counselees after the educational and further education counselling in the sense of the objective.

- The commencement of further education, further training, post-qualification, or reorientation.
- Taking up an apprenticeship, a course of study/secondary study, or catching up on vocational and/or school qualifications.
- Starting (new) employment.
- A (further) career advancement or change in an existing occupation or for a new or different occupation (change/adaptation in duties, company or job-related further education, periods of education, advancement, or career, etc.).
- A referral (or recommendation)<sup>26</sup> to process the counselling request in other public counselling and educational services in the state of Berlin.

The evaluation (→ section 5) includes a twofold survey of the effects and impacts of counselling: the results of counselling are recorded in the counselling documentation at the end of counselling and determined by means of a separate survey of the counselees after the end of counselling. The

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<sup>26</sup> Referrals to other facilities are part of the interaction if other topics overlap the Educational Counselling and Career Guidance or should be pre-clarified, or if counselling concerns can be served more appropriately elsewhere (interface areas: labour, education, integration, and social services).

counselling results from the evaluation are the basis for the evaluation of success by the specialised department and are also reflected on in the network. The overall results and findings are summarised and published in the annual “Counselling Monitor”.

### 1.3 Counselling services and concerns

The counselling service includes individual and personal education and further education counselling. It includes information about educational opportunities, about professional development, and promotion possibilities as well as about the labour market, which can be individually processed, systematised, and used for the curriculum vitae. Qualification counselling with companies also includes the contents and procedures of organisation-related further education counselling, which addresses the situation in the company in the context of further education and employment and thereby includes the company groups.<sup>27</sup>

The Educational Counselling and Career Guidance services are guided by the principles of independence, impartiality, confidentiality, equal opportunity, and holism, and are available to all people in Berlin. People in all phases of adult life are addressed, and open and low-threshold access to Educational Counselling and Career Guidance (analogue or digital) is provided in all counselling facilities. The counselling facilities at the various locations in Berlin provide the following counselling services.

#### A. Counselling services and main concerns:

- Further education counselling
- Counselling on training, studies, school-leaving qualifications, and post-qualification
- Counselling on professional (re)orientation
- Career prospects and access to employment
- Qualification and further education in the company (qualification counselling)
- Professional integration and qualification in Germany
- Learning and learning conditions
- Funding and promotion of educational activities

#### B. Additional and/or support services

- Information on lateral entry into the profession of kindergarten teacher: At the info point of the Senate Department for Education, Youth and Family, or directly in a counselling facility.

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<sup>27</sup> Cf. k.o.s GmbH. Documentation Network Day Qualification Counselling (2014).

- Possibility of using PCs and the internet for (accompanied) self-research in further education databases or on educational platforms.
- Information and counselling on acquiring and developing digital skills.
- Information on and referral to social and district counselling services.
- Information on adult literacy and basic education and referral to basic education programmes.
- Information on offerings and issues related to inclusion.
- Information and workshops on concerns such as career entry or return to work, competency assessment and balancing, learning in adulthood and “learning to learn”, digitalisation and the world of work or introduction to information search and processing.

The selection and the definitions of the counselling concerns are based on the long-standing surveys or findings about the needs, demands, and interests of persons to be counselled in the state of Berlin as well as on the basis of studies and empirical surveys.

#### 1.4 Counselling standards and characteristics

Educational Counselling and Career Guidance in Berlin is oriented towards the needs, interests (subjective and objective concerns), and possibilities of counselees and takes into account the independence and neutrality from providers of education and further education, the independence from possible sanctioning measures, the voluntariness to select and use counselling offers, and the voluntariness to implement the results from the counselling. In addition, the following quality characteristics apply to the provision of counselling services:

- Orientation regarding concerns and needs: Orientation towards the concerns, interests, and needs of counselees, considering their individual (life) situation and professional requirements.
- Resource and competency orientation: Identify and analyse the counselees' skills, experience, and competencies.
- Orientation regarding reflection and biography: Exchange about the motives and goals, the acquired skills and qualifications in comparison to the professional perspectives.
- Goal and solution orientation in interaction: To initiate achievable and structured activities or changes and to develop and unfold motivation, self-activity and action orientation.

The requirement for counselling is the availability of information and in-depth knowledge on the part of the counselling staff about educational and employment opportunities and, in addition, professionally validated and proven assessments of career prospects, career advancement, and

development opportunities in Berlin. A superordinate range of tasks and activities is described for the preparation, implementation, and follow-up of counselling.

Based on the principles and guidelines of confidential and free Educational Counselling and Career Guidance, the following requirements and standards apply to the provision of counselling.

- Information on counselling services, locations, and formats is publicly available throughout Berlin.
- The counselling centres are easily accessible and visible in public spaces in Berlin, in all districts and also represented as mobile services in public spaces, e.g. in other counselling facilities or at the welcome centre.
- Counselling can be direct or scheduled and can be booked/cancelled by phone, at the on-site counselling facility, and online through an appointment booking system. Counselling can also take place on a mobile basis or on an outreach basis in a (public) facility, for example in a library or an adult education centre.
- The counselling centres are open Monday through Friday and are accessible to all people.<sup>28</sup>
- Counsellings are offered in analogue and digital counselling formats in person on-site, by phone, by video, by e-mail or by chat, or in combined formats.
- Contents and concerns of Educational Counselling and Career Guidance are shown in advance and/or at the beginning of a counselling session. It is made transparent that Educational Counselling and Career Guidance is neutral, sanction-free, confidential, and not bound to any preconditions.
- The duration of the counselling (per appointment) is approximately 45–60 minutes.<sup>29</sup> On average, three counselling appointments are scheduled (per concern or topic), so as many people as possible can take advantage of the counselling.
- At the end of counselling, the counselees are asked to provide feedback on the outcome of the counselling for the evaluation of the service. (→ section 5)
- It is possible to make repeated counselling appointments later, for example after further education or a career change.

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28 The accessibility and presence of at least eight hours on weekdays must be guaranteed. In addition, digital or telephone counselling services can expand counselling options for shift workers, for example.

29 The average value for the duration results from the statistical evaluations of the documentation in Berlin.

- In the sense of strengthening equal participation in society, the offers and services of Educational Counselling and Career Guidance in the state of Berlin are open and<sup>30</sup> accessible for people with disabilities.
- The implementation of non-discriminatory and gender equality-oriented education and further education counselling.

### 1.5 Counselling services and process

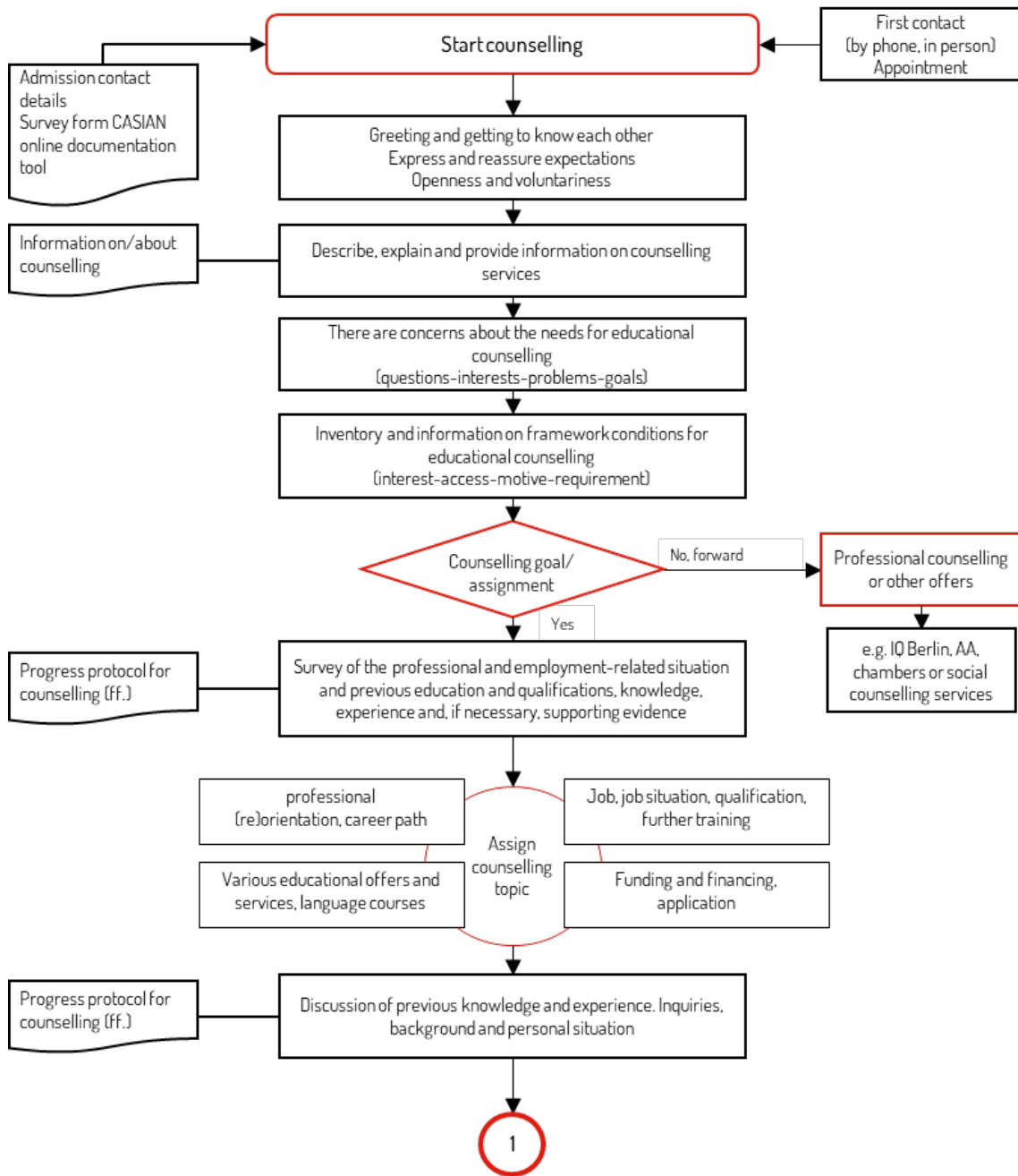
For Educational Counselling and Career Guidance, a counselling process for preparing, conducting, and following up on counselling sessions was developed and introduced. The counselling process distinguishes several phases in which certain activities and steps are specified. Specification and/or verification documents are assigned to the individual counselling activities. The conditions and requirements of synchronous and asynchronous counsellings should be transparent, conducive and comprehensible for counselling clients.

The counselling process is operationalised in a flow chart according to the aforementioned specifications and characteristics, and thus forms the basis for the counselling practice at the counselling facilities.

The counselling activities are based both on many years of experience in counselling and on various theoretical foundations and concepts for education and further education counselling.

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30 Cf. Appendix Educational Counselling and Career Guidance – Barrier-free.





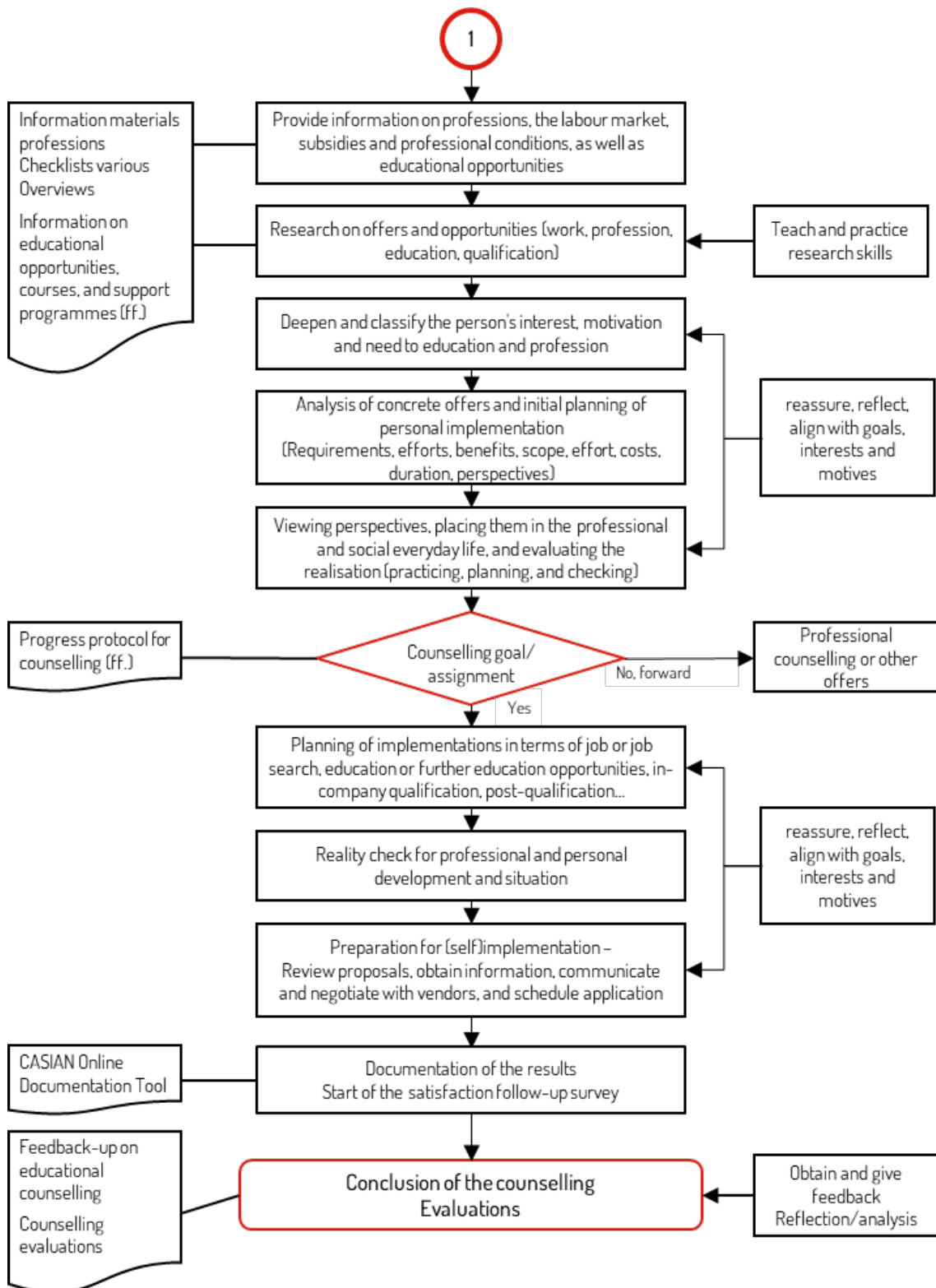


Fig. 2: The process of Educational Counselling and Career Guidance

## 2. Structures and levels of action

The counselling facilities plan, organise, and implement, on behalf of the Senate Department responsible for labour, counselling services according to the goals and specifications of the guidelines for Educational Counselling and Career Guidance and the specific requirements.

The structural and procedural organisation according to the quality framework (→ section 4) integrates and ensures the application of uniform procedures of the counselling facilities. The specialised department in the Senate Department responsible for labour coordinates goal- and participation-oriented cooperation, implementation of tasks in the network based on the division of labour and ensures controlling for successful implementation of counselling services based on the objectives and counselling results (→ section 1).

The counselling facilities cooperate with each other for this purpose and work closely together in the Educational Counselling and Career Guidance network. They complement each other in their counselling services in order to offer the counselees the best possible counselling, information, and orientation.

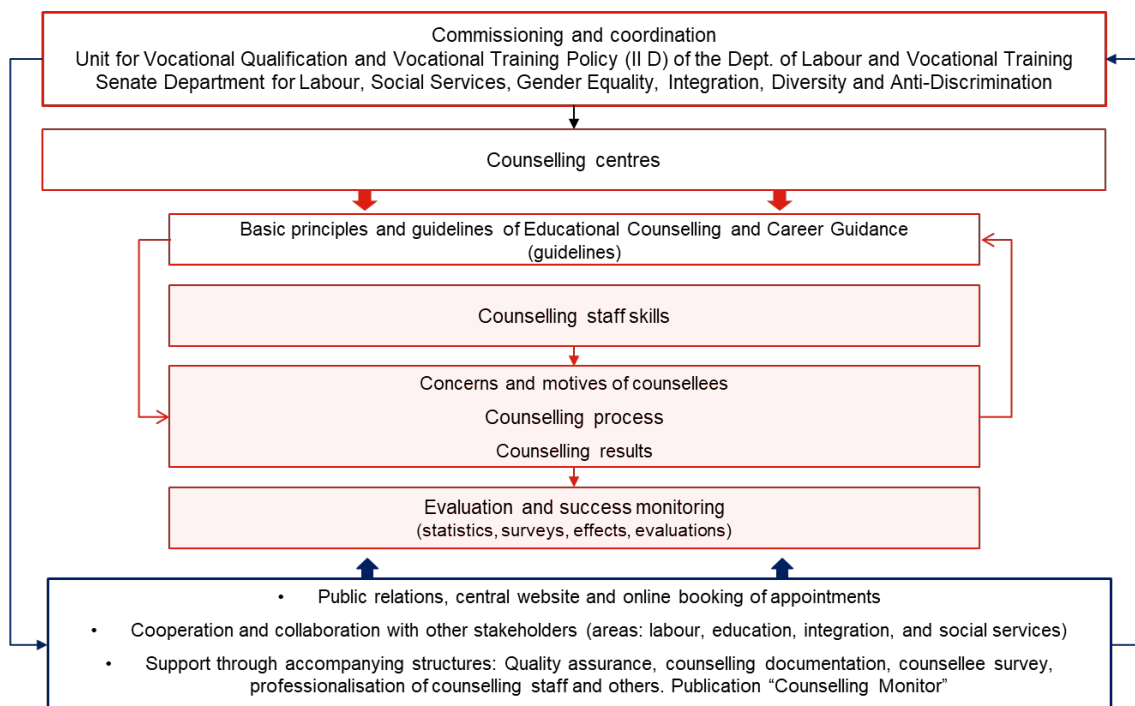


Fig. 3: Procedural organisation of Educational Counselling and Career Guidance

Procedures (central) and digital tools for this are:

- the digital counselling formats for counselling by video, by e-mail, by chat, or combined,
- an online-based appointment booking system,

- the online-based counselling documentation Casian (→ section 5.1), and
- an online-based survey tool (→ section 5.2).

## 2.1 Coordination of counselling services and providers

The Unit for Vocational Qualification and Vocational Training Policy (II D) of the Department of Labour and Vocational Training in the Senate Department responsible for labour (in short, specialised department) is responsible for the technical coordination and controlling for Educational Counselling and Career Guidance with the following focal points:

- Contact and representative of the state programme Educational Counselling and Career Guidance.
- Professional coordination and moderation of regular meetings in the network and cooperation on organisational, content-related, and public relations activities of the counselling facilities and the network (→ section 6).
- Participation and/or steering of the representation of the state's Educational Counselling and Career Guidance programme at the Adult Education Advisory Board.<sup>31</sup>
- Steering and monitoring of quality assurance and certification of counselling facilities (→ section 4).
- Oversee regular entry of counsellings into Casian online counselling documentation. Steering of the results for counselling documentation (per quarter and year) based on the professional report (zgs-consult).
- Implementation of performance reviews (→ section 5) on the results of the counselling documentation (professional report and statistics per quarter and year, zgs-consult) and the survey of counselees (professional report per quarter and year, k.o.s).
- Evaluations of counselling results from the evaluation and publication in the Counselling Monitor (→ section 5.3).
- In addition, the professional coordination is in exchange with the administrations responsible for the individual professional counselling services and coordinates with them.

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<sup>31</sup> Cf. State of Berlin. Berlin Adult Education Act (2021, p. 15). Two representatives from the network take part in the adult education advisory board on behalf of the specialised department.

## 2.2 Educational Counselling and Career Guidance network

The resources for Educational Counselling and Career Guidance include the locations of general educational counselling and the professional counselling services<sup>32</sup>, supported by accompanying structures for quality assurance, for counselling documentation and evaluation, and for public works.

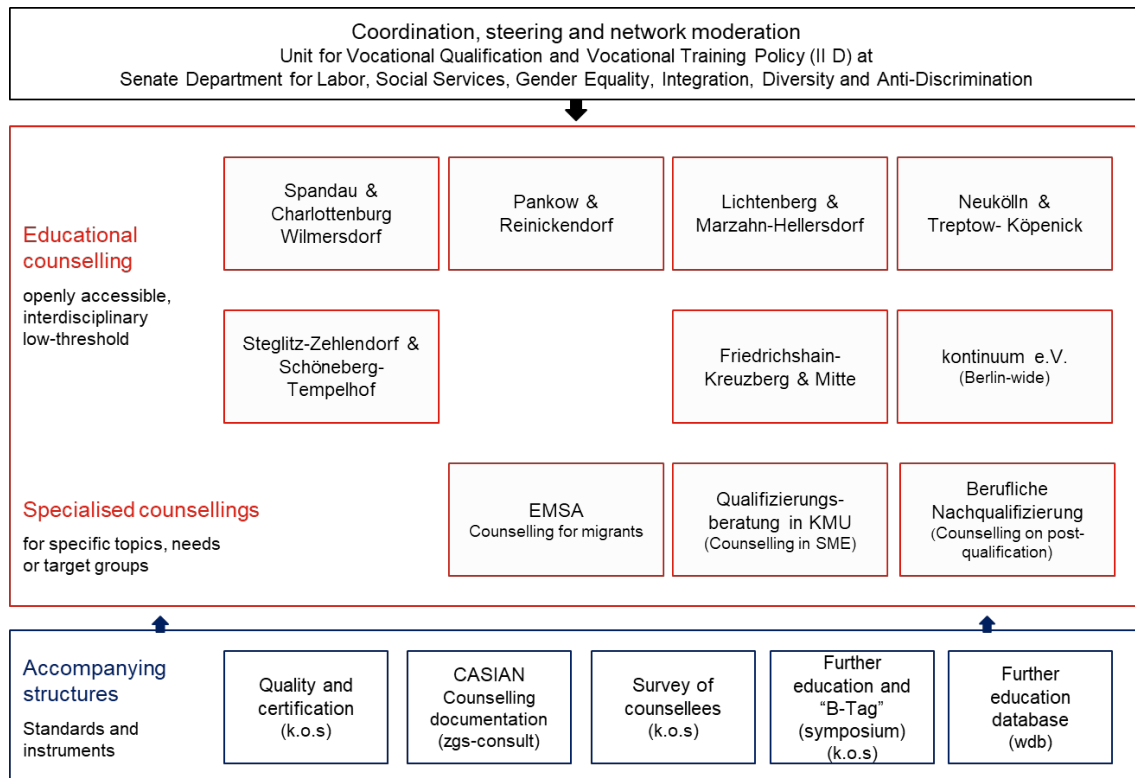


Fig. 4: Structural organization of the Educational Counselling and Career Guidance network

### Educational Counselling and Career Guidance facilities

The facilities differ in terms of specialisation and/or specific counselling concerns and topics as follows.

- **Educational Counselling and Career Guidance facilities:** are primarily local, in seven locations, divided by dual districts (6 to 12 districts) and one counselling centre is active Berlin-wide. The Educational Counselling and Career Guidance facilities implement the counselling services comprehensively, equivalently, or to a comparable extent.

In the case of specific counselling concerns, Educational Counselling and Career Guidance facilities refer to one of the professional counselling centres or to cooperating counselling

<sup>32</sup> See <https://beratung-bildung-beruf.berlin/>

offers or services such as the employment agencies, Job Centres, chambers, adult education centres, and district counselling centres and services or to other state-sponsored projects.

- Specialised counselling facilities:

offered at one location or at several locations are geared to specific concerns or further education content or refer to specific addressees or target groups. These include:

- Qualification counselling in small and medium-sized enterprises (FQB),
- Counselling on vocational qualification as post-qualification (FbQu),
- Success with Language and Professional Qualifications (EMSA),
- Counselling for immigrants on vocational integration and qualification opportunities, on training and studies, internships and German language courses takes place across the network both on a mobile basis – i.e. outside – and in the counselling facilities.

#### Accompanying structures for Educational Counselling and Career Guidance

The support and monitoring of the “Educational Counselling and Career Guidance” comprises several sub-areas and tasks, which are intended to strengthen and secure the performance of Berlin's counselling service. In addition to and independent from the network of counselling providers and locations, the accompanying structures are assigned the following tasks by the Specialised Department for Vocational Qualification and Vocational Training Policy (II D) in the Senate Department responsible for labour:

- Quality assurance and certification includes independent promotion and assurance of the quality of counselling in counselling facilities as well as regular assessment and certification according to the “Berlin Model Quality Framework”. Implementation is carried out by k.o.s GmbH (→ section 4). It is accompanied and monitored by the specialised department.
- The Casian counselling documentation is an online-based database in which all counselling processes are recorded, stored and evaluated after input by the counselling facilities. The Casian counselling documentation is maintained by zgs-consult GmbH (→ section 5.1). The results are made available to the specialised department in professional reports.
- The (online-based) survey of counselees is provided after the completion of the counselling. The survey is standardised and anonymous, using a survey and evaluation programme. The evaluations are summarised by k.o.s GmbH in professional reports (→ section 5.2) and made available to the specialised department.
- The annual further training day (B-Tag) and offers of additional activity-accompanying further education of the counselling staff are conceived and carried out by k.o.s GmbH in coordination with the specialised department.

- The central website [beratung-bildung-beruf.berlin](http://beratung-bildung-beruf.berlin) is provided, edited, and maintained by k.o.s GmbH (→ section 6).
- The further education database Berlin wdb, of Europublic GmbH, supports the counselling facilities as an information platform about further education offers and by referring to the counselling offers as well as locations of the Educational Counselling and Career Guidance.

### 2.3 Cooperation and collaboration with other facilities

Cooperation with other providers in the field of Educational Counselling and Career Guidance is intended to open up, promote, and secure a synergy of regular services and funded projects, both in terms of material and human resources and capacities, and in terms of the benefits for counselees.

By knowing each other, sharing with each other, and designing transitions, effective counselling implementation should increase the benefits or success of counselling services. The cooperation between and with the actors and partner organisations also aims to make access to and knowledge of independent and open counselling services transparent and visible for large sections of the population in Berlin.

Within the framework of the structures and offerings of Educational Counselling and Career Guidance, cooperation and a continuous exchange with the relevant actors and institutions are consistently pursued and organised, taking into account the basic principles and guidelines (→ section 1). The counselling facilities also have their own local or specialised collaborations, and work with various district organisations and institutions.

#### Cooperation with Berlin's Employment Agencies and Job Centres

A regular exchange on counselling for individuals on education and career issues takes place with the Berlin-Brandenburg Regional Directorate and Berlin's employment agencies as well as Job Centres.

The cooperation refers to the forwarding of counselling cases to the counselling centres for in-depth processing and orientation questions, within the framework of career guidance in the working life of the employment agencies, as well as for dialogue and joint professional exchange.

#### Cooperation with other offers and services

Educational Counselling and Career Guidance facilities cooperate with other public counselling and educational services and state or federally funded programmes or model projects:

- Career guidance in the working life and qualification counselling of the Employer Service of the Federal Employment Agency.
- Berlin Job Centre.
- Berlin adult education centre.

- Welcome Centre Berlin and the Welcome to Work offices.
- Other state-funded projects, such as the ARRIVO Berlin Network project and the IQ Network Berlin project, of the senate department responsible for labour.
- Further education networks in the Berlin and Brandenburg region and the Zukunftszentrum Berlin of the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Services (BMAS) to support small and medium-sized enterprises.
- Project “Cross-Functional Promotion” Vocational Training Counselling Network for Study Dropouts of the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF).
- Women's Education Counselling Projects in Berlin, the Senate Department responsible for women and gender equality.
- Programme “INQA Coaching” (previously unternehmensWert:Mensch) of the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Services (BMAS) to support small and medium-sized enterprises.
- Other economic, educational, and labour market policy programmes and initiatives of the federal government and the state of Berlin to secure skilled workers and promote further education.

Transitions and potential referrals to third parties are defined in the process design of Educational Counselling and Career Guidance in order to coordinate activities and services in terms of content and organisation, and thus ensure greater effectiveness of counselling services in Berlin. This requires from all participants an up-to-date knowledge, a mutual exchange of information and cooperation practice about the existing offers for education and careers. Collaboration, transitions, and referrals aim to identify the appropriate information and best possible counselling and increase access for counselees.

### 3. Counselling staff competencies

Based on many years of experience in education and further education counselling in the state of Berlin and with a view to the continuous professionalisation of counselling staff, basic requirements and expectations are set for the existing qualifications and competencies for the counselling staff to be employed in Berlin's counselling facilities.

#### Qualification and competency expectations

The counselling staff in the counselling facilities should have a completed (adult) pedagogical university Master of Arts/Sciences degree in educational sciences, adult education, sociology, or a similar Bachelor of Arts/Sciences degree, including several years of (pedagogical) professional experience in fields of activity such as further education counselling, adult education, or training.

The knowledge, skills, and experience required and/or to be acquired for the professional activities of the counselling staff in Berlin include:

- Knowledge of vocational training, the labour market, further education, and adult education, including knowledge of labour market support, further education and training, and other support services and programmes in the state of Berlin.
- Knowledge of the vocational training system, academic and vocational education, and the employment system (including training and further education occupations, training regulations, comparability of degrees and creditability).
- Knowledge specific to education and further education counselling as well as systemic and other counselling approaches and theories.
- Knowledge and experience in counselling interviews and interaction, as well as analogue and digital counselling design (media use and implementation).
- Knowledge and fundamentals of digitisation, as well as learning and working in the digital world (digital and ICT skills).<sup>33</sup>
- Knowledge of legal and structural frameworks, e.g. data protection and data security.
- Knowledge and experience in providing counselling in a way that is appropriate for the target group, and in preparing and conveying information, as well as in the use of digital media.
- Knowledge and experience in respectful interaction with other cultures, lifestyles, and value systems and behavioural patterns resulting from these (diversity and gender competence).

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<sup>33</sup> Cf. Berlin competence model "Additional cross-occupational qualification in digital competencies" (2018), see also <https://kompetenzen-digitaler-wandel.de/>



- (Basic) language skills in a relevant foreign language.

#### Technical and methodological skills

- Counselling implementation and design using appropriate and established counselling methods and tools.
- Application and mastering of questioning and interviewing techniques.
- Planning and implementation of counsellings, workshops, and group counselling (among others communication, interaction, mediation, presentation, facilitation, visualisation).
- Application and use of digital counselling formats (synchronous and asynchronous) such as counselling by video, by e-mail, or by chat.
- Deployment and use of digital communication media and knowledge bases.
- Documentation and evaluation of data or information.

#### Personal skills

- Communication skills that are understandable and appropriate to the audience, collaboration skills, teamwork skills, and ability to reach consensus. Social-communicative and reflexive competencies regarding own and others' attitudes and ideas.
- Analytical thinking, ability to independently develop relevant information and conduct research on education and careers.
- Sensitivity in dealing with counselees and their requirements.
- Ability to adopt perspectives, i.e. to put oneself in the shoes of the counselee and at the same time be able to adapt to different individuals (flexibility).
- Personal boundaries regarding the counselling cases (maintaining closeness and distance), if necessary, referral to competent services and counselling structures (especially in the case of psychological problems, drug problems, family conflicts, or rent debts).
- Ability to independently design and organise work: Plan, structure, prioritise, and appropriately resource counselling activities.
- Ability and willingness to cooperate and cooperation with the other public counselling and educational services.
- Ability to self-organised learning and a willingness to undergo further education and learning. Ability for self-evaluation and self-reliant time management.

The required skills, abilities, and knowledge (counselling competencies) of the counselling staff are described in relation to the activities and tasks in the counselling process (see Appendix Tasks and Competencies in the Counselling Process).

### 3.1 Professionalisation of (counselling) staff

The requirement for professionally provided counselling services are qualified and competent counselling professionals who have sound and up-to-date specialist knowledge, counselling theories, and approaches, have the necessary pedagogical know-how as well as methodological and didactic skills to carry out the counselling in accordance with the principles and standards (→ section 1).

In-service further education and professionalisation of the counselling staff in Berlin should contribute to and ensure that appropriate, needs-based, and results-oriented counselling services are planned and implemented for the benefit of counselees. The primary function of professionalisation is to systematically promote and ensure the professional and interdisciplinary competency development of the counselling staff in accordance with expectations. Regular further education serves as evidence of the counselling staff's competency development. Thus, the acquisition and updating of specialised knowledge and skills as well as regular reflection on counselling experiences should ensure a high level of qualification.

The implementation and safeguarding of further education and professionalisation of the counselling staff takes place within the framework of a division of tasks consisting of facility-related and interdisciplinary learning and further education offers. These can be formal or non-formal educational activities, further education, workshops, professional exchanges, or personnel development measures.

The facility-related measures of personnel development include an aptitude and selection practice, a systematic induction practice, regular further education of the counselling staff, as well as an accompanied reflection on counselling experiences.

The interdisciplinary learning and further education opportunities for counselling staff are provided by the accompanying structures or by contracted service providers. Examples of this are annual further training days, seminars, and workshops on counselling basics or specific topics such as the further education concept of a learning and development workshop (BeratungsLAB).

Personnel development is part of the quality management in the counselling facilities. Professionalisation is meant to have the following elements:

- Requirement and competency profile for counselling staff:

Based on the requirement profile, the existence of basic counselling competencies is to be ensured within the framework of a selection process in the counselling facility.

- A systematic and accompanied induction:

The induction into the counselling facility should include a professionally supervised introduction and familiarisation with the work as a counsellor.

- Continuous (on-the-job) further education:

In particular for career starters and counsellors who would like to deepen their specialist knowledge, further education courses on the basics and methods of education and further education counselling are offered on a regular basis.

The regular further education of the counselling staff is to be ensured both by interdisciplinary offers and by internal offers. The requirement for this is an independent interest in learning and further education on the part of the counselling staff.

Cross-disciplinary workshops and quality circles are held regularly in the context of organisational and methodological competency development and improvement practice.

The network discusses workshop contents and evaluates learning experiences.

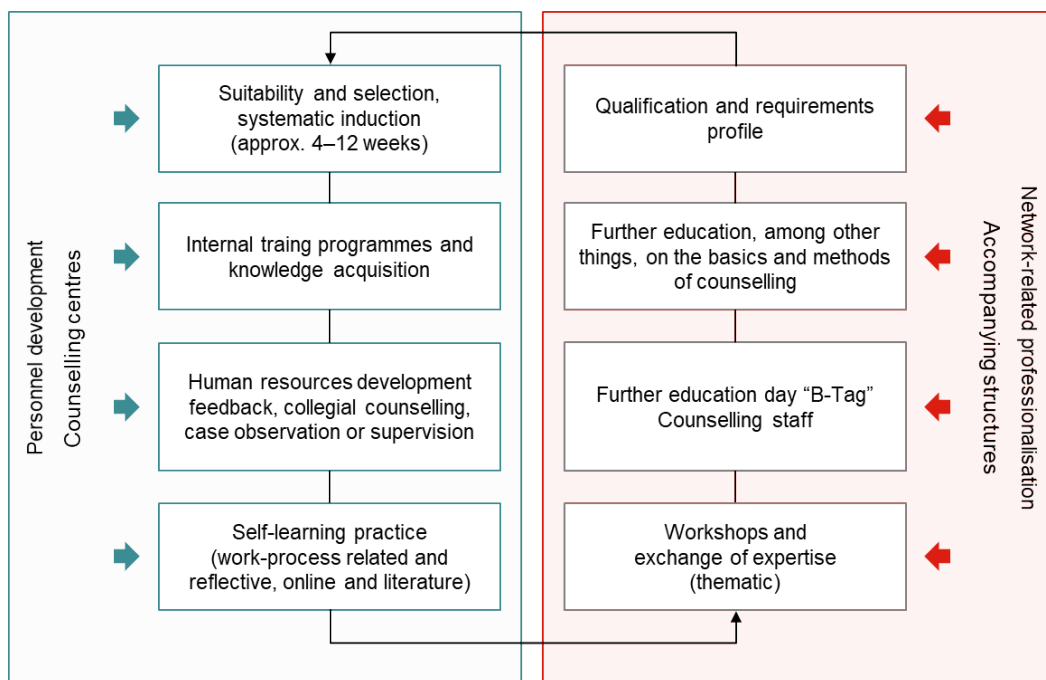


Fig. 5: Tasks and instruments for counselling staff skills training

Overview of the fields of action of internal (counselling facility) and interdisciplinary further education (offers also include B-Tag) for the professionalisation of counselling staff in Berlin:

Professionalisation – facility level

- Personnel selection in counselling facilities should be based on the requirements for counselling personnel. The implementation of the suitability test and selection is the responsibility of the counselling facility and is carried out under its own direction. The underlying procedure for this is to be defined and secured in quality management.
- New counselling staff are trained and inducted into their work by means of professional introduction, support, and reflection on counselling processes (including peer counselling, observation, monitoring, and evaluation) and successively by taking over independently conducted counselling sessions. The implementation should be planned, implemented, and reviewed within a reasonable period of time (according to prior professional and methodological knowledge as well as development needs).
- The personnel development measures include opportunities for further education, participation in specialist conferences, workshops, quality circles, and opportunities for development support for the counselling staff. Instruments for this can be: Staff appraisals, target agreements, reflection on counselling experiences, collegial counselling and guidance, and supervision. Activities and results are defined, planned, and documented as part of quality management.

#### Professionalisation – interdisciplinary level<sup>34</sup>

- The annual further training day, “B-Tag”, is intended to support the professional and methodical further education of counselling staff in Berlin and to promote cooperation. The design of the B-Tag is based on professional topics and/or current issues as well as findings on the development of the quality of counselling (e.g. evaluations of surveys of counselees).
- Regular further education courses, workshops, or seminars on the basics and methods of education and further education counselling and on specific topics or development needs are offered and implemented.
- During professional exchanges and quality circles further education and development topics are discussed and documented.

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<sup>34</sup> The preparation and implementation are carried out by k.o.s GmbH, see section 2.1

## 4. Quality assurance and certification

The Specialised Department for Vocational Qualification and Vocational Training Policy (II D) of the Department of Labour and Vocational Training in the Senate Department responsible for labour ensures quality-supported and certified Educational Counselling and Career Guidance. This is regulated by the Berlin Model Quality Framework (QBM) as a recognition procedure.

Quality assurance and development in the state of Berlin is based on the “Quality Concept for Counselling” (QfB)<sup>35</sup> and includes an understanding of good and professional educational and further education counselling, which is to be introduced, implemented, and secured in the counselling facilities. Components for this are:

- Process-oriented quality requirements for educational and further education counselling, taking into account quality management approaches and principles,<sup>36</sup>
- Professional and content-related requirements, standards and characteristics of the Educational Counselling and Career Guidance service in the state of Berlin (→ section 1),
- Awarding the “QBM educational counselling Quality Seal” as proof of the fulfilment of a) the quality requirements and b) the content requirements (acc. to the guidelines).

The Quality Framework Berlin Model<sup>37</sup> defines the application and use of the quality model for education and further education counselling, the reference to professional standards and basics according to the guidelines, and the procedure of recognition and certification of the counselling facilities.

A QBM advisory board accompanies the quality assurance and certification, advises the recognising body (accompanying structure) and the Department for Vocational Education of the Senate Department for Labour, Social Services, Gender Equality, Integration, Diversity and Anti-Discrimination.

### 4.1 Quality assurance and certification processes

The counselling facilities (executing agencies) commit themselves to regular quality assurance and development according to the “Quality Concept for Counselling”. The existence of a system to ensure the quality of the provider at the counselling facility is a requirement for this.<sup>38</sup>

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35 See <https://www.kos-qualitaet.de/konzepte/qualitaetskonzept-fuer-beratung/>

36 Cf. Cedefop (2005). Reference criteria for quality assurance systems for educational and career guidance provision in Europe.

37 Cf. Guide to the QBM process.

38 The supporting facility of the counselling facility thus proves that it has introduced or maintains a functioning and effective QM system (e.g. ISO 9001 and 29993, EFQM, LQW, AZAV).

The aim of quality assurance and development in the counselling facilities is to design and secure the framework conditions for Educational Counselling and Career Guidance in such a way that the counselees (individuals and companies) are provided with high-quality counselling as a result. It focuses on an organisational and individual reflexivity<sup>39</sup> to support and enable the self-direction process of counselees.

For the recognition and the receipt of the “QBM educational counselling Quality Seal”, the following evidence must be provided:

1. Preparation of evidence of quality management and self-commitment

- According to the QBM procedure, the counselling facility (executing agency) is responsible for continuous quality assurance and development on its own (self-commitment) and provides evidence of this for a period of three years, recurrently, to provide effective quality management.
- In a quality report (or manual), the processes, procedures, responsibilities, and regulations of the counselling facility are set out in relation to the quality requirements (see quality concept for counselling) and to the professional requirements (see these guidelines). Regular revision of the quality report is mandatory.
- In a management review, the counselling facility retrospectively evaluates its achieved results and quality assurance as well as prospectively planned developments and improvements for the next three years. The management review is an input to the audit of the counselling facility.

2. Completion of the (external) audit for recognition (certification)

The aim of the audit is to check, reflect on, and evaluate whether the quality requirements have been met and whether the necessary evidence has been provided.

The audit concludes with a statement on the audit result:

(+) The requirements are met:

There are no deviations. The “QBM Educational Counselling Quality Seal” is awarded.

(-) The requirements are not met:

There are deviations when requirements were not met or not processed. The

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<sup>39</sup> Reflexivity here refers to both the organisation and the team in terms of the action-guiding understanding and process design, as well as to the counselling staff in terms of reflecting on their own actions and impact of counselling.

counselling facility must revise the deviations and repeat the audit (in a period of up to six months).

The audit report contains the explanations and comments on the status of quality assurance (fulfilment and degree of achievement) as well as indications for improvements and further developments.

A distinction is made in the recognition procedure between initial recognition and recurrent re-recognition.

For the initial recognition, a quality report is mandatory input and basis in the audit. Following the successfully completed audit, the management review is validated in the QBM advisory board for a decision to award the “QBM Educational Counselling Quality Seal”.

In the case of re-recognition, recurring every three years, the audit includes the submission of the management review and a presentation on the status of quality management in the counselling facility. The decision here is up to the recognising body.

Details are regulated by the recognition procedure and the auditing specifications.<sup>40</sup>

### 3. Recognition and certification with the seal of quality for educational counselling

After the recognition, the counselling facility receives the “QBM Educational Counselling Quality Seal” and a certificate of recognition. The accreditation of the counselling facility is valid for the duration of the recognition.<sup>41</sup>

With the recognition, the counselling facility publishes its management review to the specialised department for vocational qualification and vocational training policy (II D) in the senate department responsible for labour.

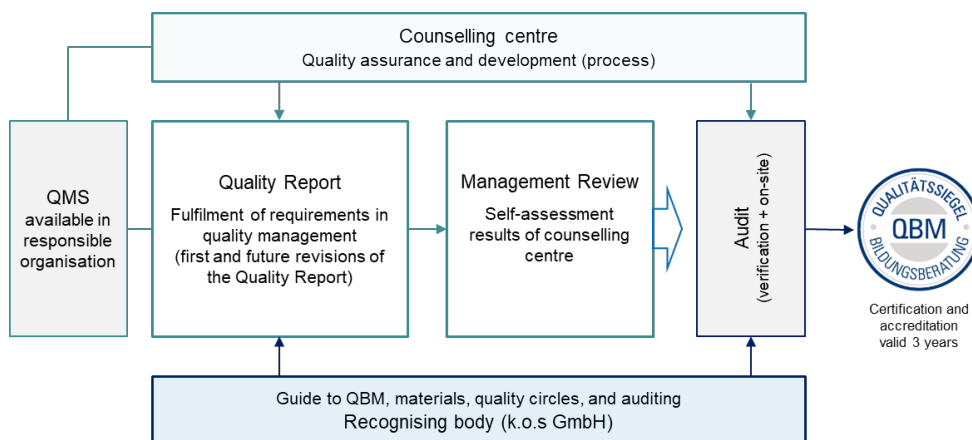


Fig.6: Instruments and process of quality assurance and certification

40 Cf. Guide to the QBM process and auditing.

41 See <https://www.kos-qualitaet.de/konzepte/qbm-verfahren/>

#### 4.2 Actors and participants in external quality assurance

K.o.s GmbH is the recognising body for the Berlin Model Quality Framework and awards the “QBM Educational Counselling Quality Seal”. It organises the tasks and implementations within the framework of the recognition and certification procedure for awarding the quality seal as well as the accreditation and public announcement of the recognised counselling facilities. The recognising body is thereby appointed by the responsible Department for Vocational Training of the Senate Department responsible for labour and is supported by the QBM advisory board.

The QBM advisory board is composed of two to three independent experts, one representative of the recognising body (k.o.s GmbH), and the Specialised Department for Vocational Qualification and Vocational Training Policy (II D) of the Senate Department responsible for labour. The experts involved counsel the recognising body and the specialised department on quality assurance procedures and the further development of the professional basis of Educational Counselling and Career Guidance, and they take over the validation of initial recognitions. The QBM advisory board<sup>42</sup> meets annually on pre-determined topics and tasks.

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<sup>42</sup> The QBM advisory board has an advisory board charter with the duties and functions.



## 5. Evaluation

The use and results of publicly funded Educational Counselling and Career Guidance in the state of Berlin are systematically collected, documented, and evaluated. The evaluation includes the counselling documentation of all counselling sessions and the survey of the counselees after the end of the counselling.

For the purpose of evaluating the demand and needs of educational and further education counselling, the online-based counselling documentation (in place since 2007) is used to collect socio-demographic data of the counselees, including age, educational background, and employment situation, to enter information on the counselling concern and counselling services, and to receive feedback from counselling staff on the counselling outcome.

The evaluation and assessment of the counselling success takes place in two stages: At the end of counselling, in the form of a structured survey by the counselling staff on the educational and/or vocational activities (entered in the counselling staff documentation) and after the counselling, in the form of a standardised survey on the effects, which is collected and evaluated separately.

The survey of the counselees after the end of the counselling takes place anonymously via an online survey tool (DSGVO-compliant) or via a paper questionnaire in order to be able to ascertain to what extent the counselees agree that they (better) realise or have implement their plans after the counselling due to the increase in information, orientation, structure, and motivation.

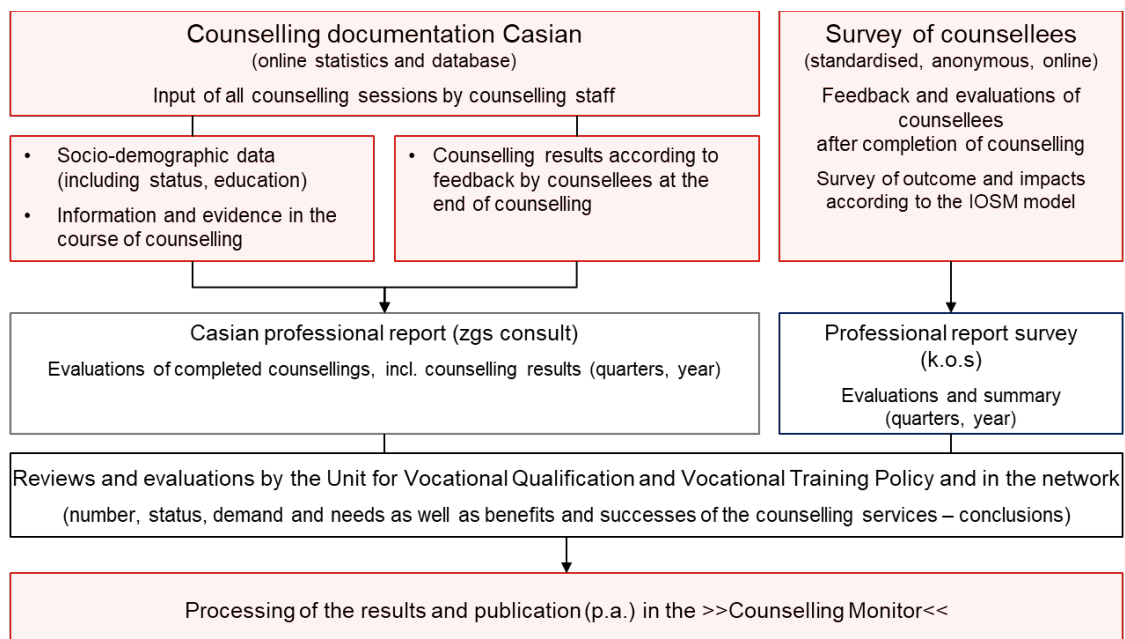


Fig. 7: Tasks and instruments of evaluation

## 5.1 Counselling documentation Casian

The counselling documentation is used for the numerical (statistical) collection and (comparative) evaluation of counselling sessions carried out as a whole and per counselling facility or counselling location. It aims to document counselling needs and demand as well as, after completion, the results and planned implementations from the counselling and to evaluate and summarise them according to selected criteria. Counselling documentation is ensured via the Casian documentation portal.

The entry of counselling (completed counselling processes) is online-based and includes information on the status of the counsellee, the counselling concern, and the services provided, as well as information on the counselling result and the planned activities of the counsellee (→ section 1). These inputs are used for summative evaluation of counselling results.

The counselling sessions data are collected by the counselling staff at the counselling facilities and entered online into the Casian database. A standardised documentation format is used for this purpose with information on socio-demographic characteristics such as age, educational and vocational qualifications or degree, employment status or language skills, and with details of relevant information for the counselling process (e.g., further education, professional career, individual situation).

At the end of the counselling, the counselling staff obtains direct feedback and asks the counsellee about “their” counselling result. The counselling outcome survey refers to the concern and to the planned activities or actions following the counselling according to the outcome indicators. The counselling result as an assessment of the planned educational and vocational activities of the counsellee is then recorded and evaluated in the Casian counselling documentation.

In addition to sociodemographic data, information on access to counselling and the scope of counselling appointments, counselling concerns and formats (online, by phone, or on-site), and referrals to professional counselling, other services, or other agencies are recorded and evaluated.

The data and information of the counselling documentation are prepared for a certain period of time (quarterly, annually) and summarised in professional reports. The survey and evaluation contents therein extend to the following characteristics:

- Number and total of counsellings (persons counselled, incl. counselling appointments).
- Evaluations according to the counsellees’ basic socio-demographic data (incl. age, education level, professional/studies degree, and/or existing qualifications and competencies, employment status (employed or unemployed), work experience, other existing (partial) qualifications and further education).

- Evaluation of the performed counselling sessions according to counselling concerns as well as reaching target groups and groups in need of Educational Counselling and Career Guidance.
- Survey on the use of additional services (by type, scope, and duration).
- Evaluations according to the counselling results at the end of the counselling – assessment by counselling staff in connection with the counselling concerns and services (→ section 1).

The collection and evaluation are carried out according to the principles of documentation, in compliance with data protection and data security.

## 5.2 Counselling outcome

For a qualitative evaluation with regard to effects and impacts of the counselling, the counselees are interviewed after the end of the counselling in accordance with the objective and the outcome indicators. The (standardised) survey is conducted using an online feedback tool or on paper. Participation in the survey is transparent, voluntary, and anonymous.

The aim of the survey is to make visible and measure the effects and impacts of the counselling with regard to the implementation of the counselling outcome (educational and/or vocational activities), and the increase of the professional ability to act (in the sense of an empowerment approach) with the help of the IOSM model.<sup>43</sup> Therefore, we ask about the degree of change and implementation competency in relation to the individual counselling goals and possible change processes after the counselling has taken place. Furthermore, the satisfaction with the framework conditions is also considered.

The counselee can fill out the online questionnaire directly after the completion of the counselling or later. They will be sent or given a link or QR code for this purpose. In addition, there is the option of filling out the questionnaire and dropping it off on paper at the counselling facility (spatially separate). The purpose, objectives, effort, and conditions of the standardised survey are explained and justified by the counselling staff at the beginning and at the end of the counselling.

The survey can be used to check and assess whether the objectives and the desired effect have been achieved in conjunction with counselling results (→ section 1.2). The results of the surveys are summarised and evaluated overall and per counselling facility on a quarterly and annual basis in a professional report.

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<sup>43</sup> Cf. Austrian Institute for Vocational Training Research (2021). Panel Survey of Educational Counselling Austria.

### 5.3 Evaluations and reports

The results from the evaluation are analysed, compiled, documented and assessed in the network with regard to the achievement of objectives and the further development of the Educational Counselling and Career Guidance on a quarterly and annual basis.

The regular evaluations are carried out with regard to the demand and needs, the benefits, the efficiency, and the effects and impacts of education and further education counselling. They serve to report about the realised achievements and results of the Educational Counselling and Career Guidance, and to legitimise them towards the commissioning parties, the public, as well as the interested actors. The evaluations also serve as a basis for improvement and quality development measures (→ section 4) for the range of services and the concept of Educational Counselling and Career Guidance.

These results are processed and presented to the public in a summarised form in the annual “Counselling Monitor” on education and careers. The “Counselling Monitor” is published both online on the programme website [www.beratung-bildung-beruf.berlin](http://www.beratung-bildung-beruf.berlin) and in a printed edition.

## 6. Public relations and communication

In the long period of existence of Berlin's counselling resources (→ Preamble), independent and individual educational and further education counselling has developed a professional reputation and a positive image – in contrast to campaign-led and target group-oriented counselling services or even the traditional career guidance and job placement services offered by Employment Agencies and Job Centres. This led to a stable demand and recognition or high appreciation towards the counselling services.

The introduction of a new umbrella brand and the new concept for public relations from 2016 was guided by the following questions: What should be communicated and offered (message), to whom (addressees), why (rationale), through which channels (media and means), how (method) and with which intended effects?

The starting point and basis for this is an established corporate design. The service Educational Counselling and Career Guidance should become a brand or a term to expand the offer in its importance and increase awareness.

### 6.1 Corporate design

The aim of the corporate design is to convey and increase public perception and recognition of the product or service Educational Counselling and Career Guidance in Berlin – in the sense of a unique selling proposition. In the public and in the different social milieus, a positively connoted reputation<sup>44</sup> is to be created via the brand and the public presentation as well as via marketing and a broad awareness and recognisability to the performance and the content is to be achieved.

The citizens of Berlin should feel addressed by the service and the presentations or information, and know for what purpose and for what concerns or questions they can use the Educational Counselling and Career Guidance. A positive public image of the Educational Counselling and Career Guidance should be established.

The Educational Counselling and Career Guidance logo is a central component of the corporate design and enables identification of the counselling service in all presentations as a publicly funded service in the state of Berlin. The logo is a symbol and mark of the Educational Counselling and Career Guidance in Berlin, both internally and externally. It is used for authentication and is a characteristic of a quality counselling service.

Further components of the corporate design are a recognisable layout for the external presentation and in the public relations, including an own font. In addition, several key messages, and statements

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<sup>44</sup> Positively evaluated characteristics for publicly funded education and further education counselling can be: confidential, neutral, sanction-free, independent, voluntary, quality and unbureaucratic, free of charge, multilingual, open to all.

such as “Well informed and counselled on education and career in Berlin” or slogans such as “Broaden your own perspectives” are used in a targeted manner in public communications.

These components are also intended to differentiate the service from other counselling services and at the same time the positive image of a clearly identifiable and recognisable service as a brand can be secured.

## 6.2 Public relations

In order to make the public more aware of the service and the publicly funded offer of Educational Counselling and Career Guidance in terms of its purpose, character and function, public relations measures (including advertising and participation at events) and communication were planned and implemented by the counselling facilities (including local and district cooperation and networking) and the accompanying structures. The measures are coordinated and further developed in the network.

The counselling services of the Educational Counselling and Career Guidance are offered and advertised via the website [www.beratung-bildung-beruf.berlin](http://www.beratung-bildung-beruf.berlin). The website provides information and materials for people who are looking for appropriate counselling and would like to make an appointment online or by phone. The website also presents and illustrates the basic principles and the concept of independent and free education and further education counselling in Berlin. The website is part of the central public relations and marketing as well as part of the acquisition of counselling participants. At the same time, it is part of the corporate design and identifiable with the brand.

Public relations and marketing goals include:

- The public service Educational Counselling and Career Guidance is to be presented in the form of a uniform design throughout Berlin, advertised by means of selected media and advertising products, and communicated at the various counselling centres.
- The design should be clear, visible, appealing, and recognisable. The content, goals, and quality are to be clarified and used in public communication.
- The counselling offer should be visible and understood by the public based on the service characteristics (individual, independent, confidential, voluntary, free of charge). The increased awareness should also activate demand.
- In the interest of transparency and consumer protection, customers should be informed in advance about the requirements and conditions of the counselling service and its use. Written information and information such as flyers and checklists for counselling on the website, as well as verbal information in the context of making an appointment serve at the same time as individual preparation for counselling and can increase the benefit of counselling.

- The information and promotional materials for Educational Counselling and Career Guidance (including flyers, checklists, website, rollup, posters as well as advertising materials up to presentations for events) are designed according to the standardised layout (in terms of content and appearance) and are provided centrally.
- The requirements for public relations and the individual components are described in an annex to these guidelines. The design guideline defines the layout requirements for all participating organisations (→ section 2). The counselling facilities act in accordance with these guidelines and in coordination with the professional coordination within the framework of their local or specialist public relations work.

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#### Relevant documents related to the guidelines

- Guiding principles of Educational Counselling and Career Guidance (published on the website [beratung-bildung-beruf.berlin](http://beratung-bildung-beruf.berlin))
- Corporate design guidelines on Educational Counselling and Career Guidance
- Attachment: Questionnaire for counselees (variants)
- Attachment: Tasks and competencies in the counselling process of educational counselling.
- Attachment: Educational Counselling and Career Guidance – Barrier-free
- Guide to the QBM procedure (current version)



[www.beratung-bildung-beruf.berlin](http://www.beratung-bildung-beruf.berlin)



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