

New Skills for New Futures Higher Education Guidance and Counselling Services in Ireland

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FEDORA Project
New Skills for Vocational Guidance in Higher Education in the European Union

With the support of
the Commission of the European Communities
under the LEONARDO DA VINCI programme



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A country report of a study on
“New Skills for Vocational Guidance in Higher Education”
carried out under the auspices of FEDORA,
with the support of the Commission of the European Communities
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FOREWORD

This country report is part of larger study on "New Skills for Vocational Guidance in Higher Education". The study has been carried out under the auspices of the European Forum for Student Guidance - Forum Européen de l'Orientation Académique (FEDORA). It has been funded by the European Commission as part of its LEONARDO DA VINCI programme.

FEDORA provides a platform for counsellors and advisers in higher education to meet and exchange their experiences. Its activities have enabled practitioners to gain insight into the wide range of guidance methods and activities in Europe, and to benefit from the richness of this diversity.

In particular, the FEDORA Summer Schools have provided opportunities for practitioners to learn from each other's experience, and to relate this experience to recent theoretical developments. The Summer Schools revealed the strong demand for more systematic training in this field, and the potential benefits of responding to this demand at a European rather than purely national level. It was felt, however, that before planning any initiatives of this kind, a clearer map was needed of guidance and counselling services in higher education in Europe, and of current training provision for practitioners. A proposal for the study was presented to the European Commission, and the Commission agreed to fund it under its LEONARDO programme.

The study is of wide significance. For the first time, a comprehensive analysis is available of higher education guidance and counselling services across the whole of the European Union. In several cases, the study has provided the first such analysis even at national level. Because it is based on a common structure and methodology, the study also enables practices in each country to be contrasted with the others.

This report, together with the 15 other national reports on all Member States of the European Union and the synthesis report written by A.G. Watts and R. Van Esbroeck, is an important one both for FEDORA and for guidance and counselling in higher education in Europe.

This resource will be invaluable for international and national policy-makers, for higher education managers, and for guidance and counselling practitioners, as well as for employers in planning their higher education recruitment links. In particular, it enables the strengths and weaknesses of the different national systems to be identified, and is a powerful source of ideas on how the services in each country might be improved. It will also give clearer direction to the work of the European Commission, FEDORA and other European bodies in supporting such development.

Joachim Klaus
President, FEDORA

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Preface

This report was written as Ireland's contribution to the FEDORA project 'New Skills for Vocational Guidance in Higher Education in the European Union' supported by EU's LEONARDO Programme.

Loretta Jennings (NUI, Maynooth), Declan Ahern (UL), Mary Sweeney and Patrice Twomey (UL) provided profiles on the positions of Careers Adviser, Student Counsellor and Co-operative Education Manager respectively. They, with Lucille McDonald (Maynooth), Muireann Ni Dhuighneain (DCU), Mary McNulty (NUI, Cork) and the author, contributed to the rating scale exercises, along with many other advisers in all services who helped with these and provided Annual Reports, Student Handbooks, job descriptions and other useful material. Jackie Pryor (TCD) provided excellent typing/editing support.

The author acknowledges the support of all; the conclusions drawn are hers based on the information provided.

'Ireland' refers in all cases to 'The Republic of Ireland' unless otherwise indicated in the text, while the terms 'Higher Education', 'Third Level Education' and 'Tertiary Education' are used interchangeably.

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September 1997

1. Summary

This report has been written as part of a Europe-wide FEDORA (Forum Europeen de l'Orientation Academique) project on 'New Skills for Vocational Guidance in Higher Education'. The project has been carried out within the LEONARDO programme of the European Commission. Its aims are:

- To provide an up-to-date overview of the current structure of guidance and counselling services within higher education, the roles of those who work in these services, and the training for such roles.
- To identify the extent to which training provision exists within the European Union to equip those in guidance and counselling roles in higher education with the new skills they require to meet the changing needs of an increasingly diverse student body, within a European labour market.
- To provide a starting-point for exploring the extent to which postgraduate and post-experience training modules might be made available across Europe, possibly leading to a European Master's degree in guidance and counselling in higher education.

In each of the EU Member-States, a similar country-study is being prepared, based on a common structure and methodology. This approach will increase the comparability of the national reports and facilitate the writing of a coherent synthesis report.

In **Section 2** the main guidance and counselling services and systems in higher education are discussed, covering educational and/or vocational and/or personal guidance, and including both general services and those aimed at particular target-groups.

Section 3 gives, for each of the services/systems listed in Section 2, the main occupational roles, the number of people currently occupying those roles and the focus of the roles. For each occupational role, a detailed analysis is provided of the tasks performed, indicating in some detail what is involved in particular tasks in particular roles.

A more in-depth task analysis is offered for three occupational roles: Careers Adviser, Co-operative Education Manager, Student Counsellor. These roles were chosen because of their importance in the guidance system in Irish universities.

In **Section 4** the nature of the training provided is examined in relation to the three roles discussed in Section 3.

Section 5, by way of conclusion, draws attention particularly to the scarcity of resources available to guidance workers, and how training provision may help them to address their current funding and staffing limitations.

2. Structures

Table 1: Main Guidance and Counselling Services & Systems

Service/System	Funding/Admin Control	Location	Extent	Level*	Target Group
Careers Service	Funded and controlled by Government	Always inside institution	All Universities Dublin Institute of Technology Some Regional Technical Colleges	3	All students
Co-operative Education Service	Funded and controlled by Government	Always inside institution	One University	2	All students
Counselling Service	Funded and controlled by Government	Always inside institution	All Universities, DIT and some RTCs	3	All students
Personal Tutorial System	Funded and controlled by Government	Always inside institution	Established in one University; being developed in others	2	All students

* The 'Level' category can be defined as follows:

First-in-line (1): part of the formal teaching function

Second-in-line (2): linked to the formal teaching function, but with some degree of specialisation

Third-in-line (3): separated from the formal teaching function, and offered by specialists

Part of the holistic model being used in the survey (see p.18).

2. Structures

2a. The System of Higher Education in the Republic of Ireland

There were around 97,000 full-time students in higher education in 1994/95, representing approximately 40% of the relevant age cohort. This figure in full-time higher education has risen from 30,000 in 1975, reflecting both the age profile of the state and increased government commitment to creation of places in higher education through the 1980s and 1990s.

The main requirement for enrolment at tertiary level is the Leaving Certificate, awarded after thirteen years of primary and secondary education (most Irish students are 17/18 when leaving school). The Leaving Certificate in itself is not enough to guarantee a place at university; additional requirements are set by the universities and their faculties, and competition assessed on grades or 'points' only can be very severe. The disciplines with the highest enrolment are Humanities (Arts) 30%, Natural Sciences (15%), Economics/Business/Commerce (13%) and Engineering (13%). General responsibility for the administration and funding of education in Ireland lies with the Government's Department of Education. The Higher Education Authority (HEA) plays an essential role in providing assistance and promoting the system. Until 1996, tuition fees were charged to students. In 1996 they were abolished for primary degree courses, but they are still payable at post-graduate level.

The Universities

The Universities Bill passed in June 1997 has resulted in a change in character and nomenclature for the National University of Ireland (NUI) (established 1908). It is now made up of four constituent universities:

- National University of Ireland, Cork (NUI, Cork) - formerly University College, Cork (UCC)
- National University of Ireland, Dublin (NUI, Dublin) - formerly University College, Dublin (UCD)

- National University of Ireland, Galway (NUI, Galway) - formerly University College, Galway (UCG)
- National University of Ireland, Maynooth (NUI, Maynooth) - formerly St. Patrick's College, Maynooth

The University of Dublin (1592) has one constituent College, Trinity College - generally known as Trinity College Dublin (TCD). Its degrees are awarded to students of TCD and to holders of qualifications from four Colleges of Education, and to those who have completed some courses at Dublin Institute of Technology (see below).

The Universities of the NUI and TCD conduct degree courses in Arts, Science, Business/Commerce, Engineering, Law, Medicine and Dentistry. NUI, Maynooth, offers courses in Arts and Science including Computer Science.

Dublin City University (DCU) and University of Limerick (UL) were both established in the 1970s as National Institutes for Higher Education and were offered university status in 1989. Both offer a wide range of courses in the Applied Sciences, Accountancy, Business Studies, Computer Science, Engineering, Languages and the Humanities. Their programmes have a practical orientation, incorporating compulsory structured work experience, and the institutions were set up to have close ties with industry, science and technology; in each case, they award degrees to a College of Education also.

The Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT) was established in 1978 to co-ordinate six colleges, the oldest of which was founded in 1886. The Institute's courses cover a wide range of areas - Business, Catering, Design, Media, Music - leading to awards from professional bodies (certificates and diplomas) and degrees (see above). From 1998/99 DIT will become a degree-awarding institute.

The Pontifical University at St. Patrick's College, Maynooth, is the Roman Catholic National Seminary and does not form part of this study.

Other Institutions offering Third-level Education

Twelve Regional Technical Colleges (RTCs) throughout Ireland offer courses in the Humanities, Engineering, Applied Sciences and Business Studies. Courses on offer span apprenticeship training, two-year National Diploma courses and degree courses. One RTC

(Waterford) has recently been designated an Institute of Technology (WIT) and others are likely to follow.

The National College of Art and Design (NCAD) offers a range of courses at various levels, as does the National College for Industrial Relations (NCIR).

The National Council for Educational Awards (NCEA), set up in 1979, is the main award-granting body for degree courses at Regional Technical Colleges, the National College of Art and Design and the National College of Industrial Relations. It validates a few courses at DIT, and a few more at the small number of private colleges, which developed mainly in Dublin in the 1980s, offering some degree courses in sought-after areas of study.

Duration of Courses

At the NUI universities, the duration of courses leading to Bachelor's degrees in Arts, Law and Commerce has traditionally been three years, with Science degrees taking four years and some new programmes, e.g. the Law and Business 'joint' degree, also taking four.

Traditionally, the TCD model has been four years; DCU and UL also operate on a four-year basis.

Engineering, Agriculture and Science normally require four years' study in all colleges, Architecture and Veterinary Medicine five years and Dentistry five or six years. Medicine requires six years' study.

Semesterisation is gaining ground through the system.

Around one-third of graduates go on to further study and/or take postgraduate degrees.

Graduate teacher training is catered for through Higher Education Diploma (H.Dip.Ed) courses at the NUI universities and at TCD. UL provides teacher training for Physical Education, and for teachers of Business subjects. DCU runs the National Distance Education Centre, offering Arts degrees, while the UK's Open University operates from a Dublin office to support students based in the Republic of Ireland.

The Master's degree requires an average of two more years' study, although there are taught models lasting one year; it may be obtained through course work or research thesis (or examination and minor thesis). A significant development since the 1980s (which continues to contribute to the diversity of Advanced Diplomas and Master's degrees on offer) is the range of Advanced Diplomas and Master's degrees funded by the European Social Fund.

through its Advanced Technical Skills Programme (ATS) which aims to provide the supply of scarce technical skills necessary to promote economic output. Their effect has been to provide a bridge to the working world, and generally to promote employability for recent graduates.

After the Master's degree - normally of the kind gained through research - a PhD can follow, normally at least three years later.

2b. Main Guidance and Counselling Services and Systems

The main services selected for consideration include: Careers Services, Counselling Services, and the Co-operative Education Service at UL. The Personal Tutorial System will also be commented on, along with the overall Student Services provision particularly as it applies to mature students, disadvantaged socio-economic groups, students with disabilities and international students. Services are always free to students; however, in the new era of 'free' education students will pay capitation fees which will go to fund some aspects of Student Services. Otherwise, services receive their funding from their institutions, which in turn receive their subventions from the central government's Department of Education via the Higher Education Authority.

The discussion of **Careers Services** will describe a very similar provision in the universities and DIT - excepting UL where the Careers Service provision is incorporated into the Co-operative Education Unit. The RTC situation is in some respects dissimilar and that will be clarified also. Careers Services are in general officially entitled 'Careers and Appointments Services'; in one case the title has been altered recently to 'Careers Advisory Service' (TCD).

All of these Careers and Appointments Services operate independently from their own premises within the university; in the case of DIT from the central administration building to service five constituent colleges. Typically, they report to the President through the Registrar (NUI Universities); and to the Provost, Board and Council (TCD) via a Careers Advisory Service Committee (TCD) made up of academics and employers, which itself reports to the college's Student Services Committee (of which the Director of the Careers Service is a member). At NUI, Galway, the Careers and Appointments Service has operated as part of that university's Industrial Liaison Service.

At the inception of the new universities (now DCU and UL) as National Institutes of Higher Education, Careers Services were given a high priority as servicing those institutions' missions regarding enterprise and development of highly qualified manpower, but they have taken a rather different form in each place.

At DCU the Careers and Appointments Officer operates a similar service to that in operation at all the other universities mentioned. It is part of the Student Affairs Division, which co-ordinates a number of student-centred services - Counselling, Health,

Accommodation, Sport, Access Programme (see p.14) and Chaplaincy Services - all reporting to the Director of Student Affairs, who in turn reports to the President of the university.

UL's distinctive approach incorporates the Careers Service into the Co-operative Education Division, reflecting that university's commitment to the 'co-operative education' principle which integrates structured work experience into the degree programme (see pp.9-10).

Advisory staffing levels in Careers and Appointments Services, i.e. Careers and Appointments Officers / Directors of Careers Services together with Assistant Careers and Appointments Officers / Careers Advisers, can be represented in relation to final-year students - where their activity is concentrated - as follows:

NUI, Dublin	4	4,110
TCD	3	2,671
DCU	2	1,172
NUI, Cork	3 (2 of them part-time)	2,185
NUI, Galway	2	2,175
DIT	1	2,491
NUI, Maynooth	1	1,400

(Source: *Graduate Careers Directory '96-97*, CSU, 1996)

As well as this, services will generally have in place a Senior Executive post, responsible for co-ordination of administration, employer liaison, statistics etc. They will usually carry some of the responsibility for Library/Information Room maintenance, display and ordering of contents, sometimes with at least one other member of support staff, though the title of 'Information Officer' is not officially conferred (but sometimes 'Information Assistant' is - see p.20)

Turning to RTCs, a Careers and Appointments Officer has been appointed in a number of Colleges - the post most recently advertised (June 1997) had the title of 'Careers Information Officer' although the duties described were those of Careers and Appointments Officers elsewhere.

Occasionally in an RTC setting, a Counsellor may 'double' in this role, where there is no Careers and Appointments Officer post in place.

Academics on 'vocational' courses in RTCs may also take on a 'careers advisory/ placement role', especially where a vacuum in provision exists, and relationships with the Public Employment Service (FÁS) locally will be well-developed in some instances.

So far, no Careers and Appointments Officer at an RTC has met the criteria for AGCSI admission. These are similar to the criteria for admission to AGCAS (Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services for Britain and Ireland), requiring at least one person in a full-time careers post, advising degree students and graduates on career destinations, with specific careers service and careers library space provision within the institution.

Mission statements for two universities indicate a similar purpose, shared by all Careers Services: 'The purpose of the Careers Advisory Service is to assist students and recent graduates of the College with their career choice and the implementation of their career plans as part of the University' (TCD)¹, and 'We seek to assist and encourage students to address career development issues: to choose wisely; to prepare for selection procedures and to enter employment and training' (NUI, Dublin)². Both statements go on to state aims relating to marketing their courses and students to employers, and informing the academic community of changes in the employment market, but in both statements the weight is placed on student preparation and motivation. The TCD mission statement has as aim 1: 'helping students and graduates of the College to understand the career choice and through an active self-managing approach to make and implement realistic career plans'¹. NUI, Dublin, states similarly as one aim: 'to help students to understand the process of career choice and to develop their capacities to determine and execute career decisions'.²

The **Co-operative Education** and External Affairs Division at UL is one of the three Academic Support Divisions represented in the Executive Board, the highest level of decision-making in the university. The Co-operative Education Division is responsible for the provision of the following range of services:

¹ C.Aungier: 'The British-Irish Model' pp.143-145. In Hochschulabsolventen für den Europäischen Arbeitsmarkt - eine Herausforderung für die Universitäten, HRK, 1997.

Idem 'Higher Education and Careers Advisory Services in Ireland', pp.199-203. In Students' Counselling in Austria and in Europe, WVK, 1996

² Annual Report (Appendix 3 p.26). UCD Careers and Appointments Service, 1995

- Co-operative Education Programme
- Teaching Practice (300 teaching practice assignments)
- Off-Campus Programme ('year out' provision)
- Careers Service
- External Liaison

The Co-operative Education Programme is an educational programme designed to promote individual career development and self-awareness by integrating classroom theory with planned and supervised practical experience outside the formal environment. This is a key feature of all academic programmes at UL.

The Co-operative Education Division's responsibility for the direction and development of the programme and its associated activities leads its Managers to engage in extensive and focused activity with employers, inside and outside Ireland, intensive preparation of students for their placement, monitoring of progress during the placement, and assessment of outcomes afterwards.

In addition to this distinctive feature, the Co-operative Education Division carries out all the functions of a Careers Service as operating in the other universities, and its Co-operative Education Managers operate also as Careers Advisers.

The staffing of the Co-operative Education Division, and the approximate numbers of students to be catered for through its activities (both careers services and co-operative education placements), is as follows:

- Co-operative Education Manager (1) - Business and Computer Systems (582)
- Co-operative Education Manager (1) - Engineering and Science (600)
- Co-operative Education Manager (1) - Humanities (652)
- Co-operative Education Manager (1) - International Placements (275)
- Placement Officer (5) - Business; Engineering and Computing; Engineering and Science; Education; Humanities

Outside higher education institutions, where Careers Services are accessed in very large numbers by students, there is statutory provision available through FÁS - the National Public Employment Service. FÁS services comes into play where institutions may have less provision than described above (e.g. RTCs or private colleges), or where graduates have moved away from their university centres or been out of education for some time. Good relations exist between FAS and university Careers Services, particularly in harder times in the marketplace for graduates where the range of 'bridging' courses offered by FÁS to address market need and the needs of the unemployed provide an invaluable adjunct to the work of Careers Services. There is also an annual collaborative exercise to publish GOI (a 'Graduate Opportunities in Ireland' directory) made available through university Careers Services, and a FÁS Overseas Sponsorship Scheme is accessed annually by final-year students - particularly engineers interested in gaining international work experience in Japan, where FÁS has built up valuable corporate links and placement experience over a number of years. FÁS is also engaging in collaborative work with two university Careers Services (TCD and UL) involved in the EURES project (see p.38).

Student Counselling Services have been established at Irish universities from 1970s onwards, and their representation there and at DIT is as follows, with related student numbers:

	DCU	NUI Maynooth	TCD	NUI Cork	NUI Dublin	NUI Galway	UL	DIT
Student population	6,934	4,254	11,500	10,700	17,191	8,000	8,000	6,000
Number of Counsellors	1 F/T 1 P/T	1 F/T	1 F/T 1 P/T	2 F/T	1 F/T 2 P/T	2 F/T	2 F/T	6 F/T

(Source: 'Position Paper on Counselling Services in Irish Universities', presented to CHIU (Committee of Heads of Irish Universities) 27 May 1997).

The position paper enumerates elements in the delivery of an adequate Student Counselling Service as including:

- Direct counselling service. A one-to-one counselling service which responds directly to the needs of students who present themselves or are referred by other university services.

- Preventive education programme for students. A range of programmes which enables students to integrate into the academic programme and community life of the university. Such programmes typically involve study skills, stress management, time management, and appreciation of the changes in the nature of their family and peer relationships associated with the transition to student life. The extent of this provision varies from university to university; it is more developed in some than in others.
- Support and consultancy. A consultative service to staff, students and universities to aid them in the effective performance of their respective roles. Typically the majority of students will not require professional counselling, but will be assisted through difficulties by front-line academics and student services staff (see p.13). Support and consultancy directed towards aiding these typically involves tutor training programmes, support to student peer-support groups, advice on policy formatting to university committees, services dealing with issues such as universities' protocols for response to student death, sexual harassment policies and so on.
- Research. A regular research programme which enables a Student Counselling Service to achieve an understanding of the needs of the students and the staff whom it is attempting to serve.
- Organisation development. The development of the systems required for the efficient delivery of a service, including administration systems, internal and external referral networks, directories/information banks and trainee placements.
- Professional development. Ongoing professional development includes obligatory professional monitoring and development through regular consultation with a professional counsellor external to the institution, in addition to attendance at relevant training events.

Information available on structures as they apply to Student Counsellors indicates that they may have a presence in the centralised Student Services area or as part of the Student Health Service, or may sometimes operate autonomously.

The **Tutorial System** developed historically at TCD, and now in place across the system to varying degrees, refers not to a 'course tutor' or 'academic tutor' system, but to a 'pastoral' or 'personal' tutor system which aspires to act:

- as an interface between students and the institution, e.g. as advocate in relation to academic progress;
- as one of the Student Services in the institution, with the tutors possessing the ability to refer students efficiently to other Student Services.

At TCD all students are assigned a tutor on admission to the college. These tutors typically operate on a specified 'drop in' basis throughout the year, available to their tutees direct; they may or may not be assigned students from their own discipline. They are full-time teaching staff; tutoring is an additional voluntary activity.

At DCU, the Student Handbook describes a system where each student is assigned a Personal Tutor at the outset of their academic career. This Personal Tutor is available for consultation on academic and related matters, working in close liaison with other services provided by the university. A short individual meeting with each student assigned will occur on an organised basis in order to discuss academic progress and related issues: such meetings are held during the first semester of the first year, during the second semester of the first year, and at least once during each subsequent year of study. The Personal Tutor may also visit each student during the integrated training period.

Variations exist between institutions in these respects. The critical distinction between academic and 'personal' tutors lies in the role played in the disciplinary process. In an unpublished summary of the training carried out for tutors funded by the Nuffield Foundation (see p.34), the role of the Personal Tutor is described as follows: 'The ideal tutor is a paragon - available, approachable, with excellent interpersonal skills, unflappable and aware of the complexities of a whole range of life issues and a good manager'.

The **Student Services** area in general embraces a wide range of professional staff (including those already covered) and administrative staff carrying out co-ordinating roles. It spans Doctors, Physiotherapists and Nurses based in Student Health Services, Student Accommodation Officers, International Affairs Co-ordinators, Co-ordinators for Students with Disabilities/Disadvantage known as 'Access' Officers (see below), and Chaplains, to name some examples. All of these provide a more specialised layer of support for students; they complement the more generic services outlined above, and can act as a valuable referral resource.

An important agent in mobilising a somewhat disparate group has been the Confederation of Student Services in Ireland, both as an 'umbrella' focus and an organiser of conferences with a useful updating and training function. The membership is broad and spans the categories mentioned above; its events can be attended by members of AGCSI (Association of Graduate Careers Services in Ireland) and IAUCC (Irish Association of University/College Counsellors) both of which are represented on its Executive Committee.

All of the services function now in an environment which is acquiring an enhanced awareness of the importance of broadening access to higher education, given Ireland's developing prosperity³. This has resulted in both 'external' and 'internal' responses.

The main external response - **AHEAD** - is an independent voluntary organisation working to promote full access to, participation in, benefit from and contribution to third-level education by people with disabilities in Ireland, North and South. The Chairman is the Professor of Chemical Engineering at NUI, Dublin, and former Registrar of that College. There is a full-time Director in place, together with an Employment Co-ordinator and a part-time Development Officer. AHEAD has published a Student Handbook for students with disabilities, a Grants Booklet outlining benefits, grants and scholarships available for which students with disabilities may be able to apply, and a report on a small pilot study accessing employers' experience in recruiting and employing people with disabilities (see Bibliography). Otherwise, AHEAD's provision includes mounting training/awareness sessions for groups such as Careers Advisers, organising conferences, co-operating with universities on the provision of services for students with disabilities, and working in consultation with the Irish Business Employers Confederation (IBEC), the Civil Service, Careers Advisers in higher education, and individual employers, to ensure that graduates with disabilities have equal access to employment; a pilot work experience programme is being implemented by AHEAD in pursuit of this aim. Events for school-leavers who are potential university entrants as well as for students with disabilities and other interested parties are being run in co-operation with university Careers Advisers.

Internally, the universities have sought to address inequalities in access among students with disabilities, among those from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds, and among mature students, through developing **Access Programmes**. Access and Support Services for students with disabilities are well developed in some universities. At NUI,

Dublin, the Access Co-ordinator for these students is designated 'to offer a friendly support service to both students and staff, and information concerning the range of facilities and services available to students with disabilities'. Forty assistants are available to provide physical support services, but the Access Service's mission statement does not include counselling provision - this is left to the mainstream guidance and counselling services in the universities.

In relation to broadening access for those from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds and also for mature students, the universities have responded internally through developing appropriate Access Programmes for these groups. Targeting of schools in disadvantaged areas is one facet of 'Access' that is under way, through the development of closer relationships of an academic and 'familiarisation' kind between the institution (DCU, TCD, NUI Dublin) and the schools concerned. Actions taken can include Study and Activity Groups and Reinforcement Teaching, all handled through voluntary student engagement from the universities concerned, as well as Open Days and Summer Schools. Importantly, some Scholarships are being provided, and in some cases broadening the means of access is being considered for the extra places provided for 'targeted' schools in particular areas.

The Trinity Access Programme⁴ for mature students is designed to enable students who 'because of their socio-economic background would not have had the opportunity to pursue third level education to compete equally for entry to College and equip them with the skills and knowledge they will need to benefit from and participate in a third level educational course'. The one-year preparatory programme on offer will consist of arts/science-based elements along with an Educational Guidance and Personal Development Course, all to be provided and implemented through established academic and student services' 'in-house' resources. A number of lecturers have been appointed to work specifically on the programme, and appointments have been made to posts of Director of the Access Programme overall and also of Director of the Access Programme for Mature Students. At NUI, Dublin, the new ERA (Equal Rights to Access) Programme will create up to 70 additional places for direct entry from 20 second-level schools in 12 areas that for socio-economic reasons would otherwise be less likely to produce participants. Additional support will be offered through a

³ T. Mitchell: 'Tackling the Vicious Circle of Poverty'. *Irish Times*, 23 July 1997.

⁴ T. Mitchell 'Educational Programme required for those who need it most', *Irish Times*, 24 July 1997

full-time Summer School for Incoming Students and through significant financial and academic support including a student tutoring scheme.

International Student Services exist across the universities. Their development has been fuelled particularly through the ongoing European activity of the Erasmus/Socrates programmes, but of course the universities engage in other exchange and international student activities, particularly with North America (e.g. TCD receives 120 US students a year on its 'Year Abroad' programme). However, the EU Student Mobility Programmes have presented the main impetus for development in this area, with Erasmus and now Socrates and Leonardo providing the necessary infrastructure - particularly for the integrated time spent abroad which is now always a part of courses with a language component, but also for courses where use is made of such an opportunity on a voluntary basis.

In 1995/96 1,585 students from all Irish institutions - universities, colleges of art, RTCs and colleges of education - studied in Europe through Erasmus arrangements. The distribution among universities was as follows: NUI Dublin (284); NUI Cork (89); NUI Galway (117); TCD (191); NUI Maynooth (29); UL (160); DCU (217); DIT (128). France and Germany were the leaders in terms of numbers of Irish students received.

Incoming student numbers reveals a very different picture numerically, with figures available for 1996/97 showing a total of 4,184 students from other EU countries being hosted in Ireland. The explanation for the disparity has always been seen as being caused by the fee-paying situation for Irish students. This, until 1996, necessitated their paying fees to their home university while studying in Europe, given that no fee income could be obtained from EU students coming from non-fee-paying member states. It will be interesting, therefore, to see if the elimination of fees will lead to greater equilibrium being achieved between incoming and outgoing students in future.

In the main, International Student Services exist with the purpose of 'administration of European student mobility programmes, International Student exchange programmes and the development and administration of bilateral agreements generally' ('International Student Officer', UL advertisement, June 1997). Sometimes, the role is an administrative and university liaison rather than a counselling one. Students from elsewhere will normally access 'mainstream' services as any 'home' student would, but Orientation Sessions are run by the International Relations / International Offices to help make international students familiar with these, and to introduce them generally to their host university. At NUI, Cork,

the International Office engages in some preparation of those going abroad as well as orientation of incoming students. It also maintains a library of relevant prospectuses and other 'country' information. NUI Dublin has developed an advisory aspect to its International Office, where one of the 'official' four staff members concerned is involved in, along with university liaison and EU programme administration responsibilities, providing support to individual students. This may take the form of help with integration into the academic system, or maintaining a 'watching brief' in case of illness or personal difficulties.

3. Roles and Tasks

Table 2: Main Occupational Roles, Numbers and Focus

SERVICES	OCCUPATIONAL ROLES	NUMBERS	FOCUS			
			E	V	P	
Careers Service	Careers & Appointments Officer / Director, Careers Service	7	2	4	1	
	Assistant Careers & Appointments Officer / Careers Adviser	10	2	4	1	
Co-operative Education Service	Co-operative Education Manager	4	1	5	1	
	Placement Officer	5	0	7	0	
Counselling Service	Student Counsellor	24	1	1	5	
	'Specialist Group' Adviser / Co-ordinator ¹	70	2	0	5	
Personal Tutorial System²	Senior Tutor	1	3	1	3	
	Tutors	72	3	1	3	

¹ Refers to all of those specialists / co-ordinators based in student services / health services generally who interface with e.g. students with disabilities / Access students / International Student Officers.

² Refers to one institution only with a developed personal tutorial system; others' systems are currently in development.

Table 3: Tasks Performed in the Main Occupational Roles

Scale of Involvement

Occupational Roles	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U
Careers & Appointments Officer / Director, Careers Service	4	4	4	4	2	3	2	2	4	3	2	3	3	4	4	4	0	2	2	3	4
Assistant Careers & Appointments Officer / Careers Adviser	3	4	4	4	2	3	2	2	4	3	2	3	3	4	4	4	0	2	2	3	4
Co-operative Education Manager	4	4	4	2	1	1	1	1	4	2	1	4	4	4	4	4	3	2	2	3	4
Placement Officer (Co-operative Education Service)	0	1	2	2	1	2	0	1	2	2	1	4	2	3	4	4	4	2	0	1	2
Student Counsellor	1	0	0	4	4	4	0	1	2	1	2	3	3	0	0	0	0	1	2	2	1
'Specialist Group' Advisor/Co-ordinator	4	3	3	4	3	3	0	3	4	3	2	4	2	4	0	0	0	4	3	4	4
Senior Tutor	4	2	3	4	2	1	0	0	4	4	0	4	0	2	2	0	0	4	4	4	3
Tutor	2	2	3	4	2	1	0	0	4	4	0	4	0	2	2	0	0	3	2	3	3

- 4 Major involvement
3 Considerable involvement
2 Some involvement
1 Minor involvement
0 Nil involvement

3. Roles and Tasks

3a: Tables

The ratings in Tables 2 and 3 were developed by a small working group of expert practitioners, selected to include representation of the occupational roles that are the basis of the detailed occupational profiles.

The task analysis is based upon a student-centred holistic guidance model⁵. This model distinguishes three types of guidance:

Educational (E): guidance on choices of educational options, and learner support.

Vocational (V): guidance on choices on, and placement into, occupations and work roles.

Personal (P): guidance and counselling on personal and social issues.

For each of the occupational roles, a task analysis has been performed, the result of which is given in Table 3. The following task classification⁶ has been used:

1. **General management:** general administrative management, including service/programme planning and evaluation. Includes managing guidance activities within the institutional setting, and general liaison with external bodies (e.g. education institutions, guidance agencies, social services, official bodies, and employers). (A)
2. **Information management:** collection, production and display of information in relation to education and training opportunities, and/or careers, occupations and the labour market. (B)
3. **Information-giving:** providing relevant information to individuals or groups in relation to education/training opportunities, and/or careers, occupations and the labour market. (C)
4. **Counselling:** helping clients to explore their own thoughts and feelings about their present situation, about the options open to them, and about the consequences of each option.
 - 4.1 **Short-term individual counselling:** helping clients on a one-to-one basis in a single or limited number of sessions. (D)
 - 4.2 **Long-term individual counselling:** as 4.1 but representing a planned programme over a longer period and more sessions. (E)
 - 4.3 **Short-term group counselling:** as 4.1 but on a group basis. Tends to be in smaller groups than teaching, to be composed of individuals who share some common characteristics, to focus on their expressed needs rather than on predetermined

⁵ Van Esbroeck R, & Watts, AG: 'Training for New Skills for a Holistic Guidance Model' Paper presented at the VI FEDORA conference, L'Aquila, May 1997

⁶ Watts, AG & Van Esbroeck, R: 'Task Classification: Working paper for Leonardo project on New Skills for Vocational Guidance in Higher Education in the European Union', 1997.

- learning aims, and to be organised to encourage active participation by all the individuals involved. (F)
- 4.4 **Long-term group counselling:** as 4.3 but representing a planned programme over a longer period and more sessions. (G)
- 4.5 **Facilitating self-help groups:** encouraging individuals to form themselves into ongoing groups to share experiences and to support each other. (H)
- 5 **Advice:** making suggestions based on the helper's own knowledge/ experience and on assessment results. (I)
6. Assessment: making judgments about individuals' suitability for certain options, based on inventories, tests, observations, interviews, etc.
- 6.1 **Facilitate self-assessment:** supporting individuals in choosing their own assessment devices and drawing conclusions from them. (J)
- 6.2 **Diagnostic assessment:** selecting assessment devices, interpreting the results and making appropriate recommendations. (K)
7. **Referral:** referring individuals to service better equipped to deal with their problem. (L)
8. **Teaching:** programmes of planned experiences, designed to develop the skills, concepts and knowledge that will help individuals to manage their educational, vocational and personal development. (M)
9. Placement: into education or training programmes, and/or into employment.
- 9.1 **Liaison with providers:** liaison with employers and with education and training providers to obtain information on the opportunities they offer. (N)
- 9.2 **Coaching:** helping individuals to present themselves effectively (on application forms/in interviews). (O)
- 9.3 **Vacancy information:** providing individuals with information on particular vacancies in education, training or employment. (P)
- 9.4 **Preselection:** preselecting individuals for particular vacancies in education, training or employment. (Q)
10. **Advocacy:** negotiating directly with institutions or agencies, within and/or outside own institution, on behalf of individuals, especially those for whom there may be particular barriers to access. (R)
- 11 **Supporting other guidance sources:** providing training sessions and disseminating information materials to teaching staff and other guidance providers. (S)
12. **Feedback to providers:** collecting information on the unmet needs of particular groups, and encouraging providers of opportunities to respond by adapting and extending their provision. (T)
13. **Follow-up:** contacting former clients to see what has happened to them; its purposes may include data for use with subsequent clients, evaluating the effectiveness of the guidance given, and offering further support needed. (U)

3b: Commentary

In all, about 120 individuals (not including Personal Tutors, who are normally full-time academic staff - see pp.12-13) work in the HE guidance and counselling sector. Most HE guidance and counselling units are small: the largest careers services or counselling services have half a dozen or so staff, and even in more generic Student Services settings personnel still operate in essentially small set-ups.

While the roles of Careers Adviser, Counsellor and Co-operative Education Manager are generally well defined in terms of tasks required, less well-defined roles are adopted by information assistants and clerical staff in these areas and by those carrying out co-ordinating/administrative roles in areas like International Student Services, Schools Liaison and the newer areas of Access provision - catering for those from backgrounds of socio-economic disadvantage, with disabilities, or seeking entry as mature students. These, along with Chaplains and Health Professionals and indeed academic staff, play an important role in the informal counselling infrastructure. They of course are important conduits in the system, as sources of referral, and of feedback to those formally engaged in guidance and counselling roles. Tutors straddle the academic and counselling systems. Traditionally, the tutor acted in an academic role solely, linked to teaching and supervisory tasks; these days a developing role as Personal Tutor is emerging in many institutions, embracing to a greater or lesser extent personal counselling tasks.

With the exception of Counsellors, the informational tasks aspect of the main occupational roles - notably Careers Advisers and Co-operative Education Managers - is extremely important, and an aspect of their work for which they are constantly accessed by students, academic staff, school-leavers, second-level careers guidance counsellors and the general public. **Information giving** (C) and **information management** (B) engage these people in constant verbal communication, with individuals and groups, and also written communication through preparation of written material for publication.

Counselling is a fundamental task which each of the major roles engages in heavily on an ongoing basis. It may vary in intensity and duration, and 'short-term counselling' may be defined differently by the different groups - for Counsellors 'short-term' will involve significantly more encounters. In addition, it is important to differentiate the therapeutic nature and objective of the Counsellor's role, especially in relation to e.g. particular stress-

related and addiction-related problems which would be formally designated as their preserve by virtue of their specialist training, and not engaged in by those in the other roles.

Importantly, **referral** (L) plays a part in the enaction of the roles, as no one role can cater for the full range of issues presented. It is this element of referral, arising from the distinctive variation in counselling roles, that highlights the varying focus among the roles where educational, vocational and personal guidance are concerned. All engage in each element, but for Careers and Co-operative Education Managers, the focus revolves around vocational guidance, while the Counsellors' focus reflects overwhelmingly a personal guidance aspect. Personal tutors also take on a personal guidance focus, alongside an emphasis on educational guidance.

Careers Advisers and Co-operative Education Managers engage in **coaching** students for selection (O) and in providing them with **vacancy information** (P) as a by-product of their vocational guidance focus - tasks not shared by the Counsellor or Personal Tutor. Co-operative Education Managers and Placement Officers working in co-operation engage uniquely in the task of **pre-selection** (Q), differing in this respect from Careers Advisers despite their common vocational guidance focus. They also focus less on educational guidance than would be the case for Careers Advisers generally, as they are normally dealing with students on 'vocational' courses with fixed programmes who have less need to choose course options - or to select postgraduate courses given more ready entry to employment directly on graduation from UL's courses.

The challenge of a more diverse student population, in terms of a wider age-distribution, and more students without the conventional school-examination requirement or with disabilities, requires greater emphasis on counselling, perhaps of a **longer-term** kind (E), and of **teaching** (M) in the sense of implementing programmes of planned experiences designed to develop skills in individuals to manage their own educational, vocational and personal development. There is even greater need for **coaching** (O) and for **advocacy** (R) as e.g. employers need to be appraised of the special requirements of these students - and of the particular strengths they may bring to employment. **Follow-up** (H) will gain in importance to add to knowledge of these students' progress while in the system and beyond it, together with ongoing **liaison with providers** (N) - inside and outside the institution - to see that learning needs as well as personal and social needs are met.

The use of new technologies is already having a major impact on the **information management** (B) and **information giving** (C) aspects through the shift being created by the Internet. Now it is possible to access and provide information on courses (including entry requirements and content) through the relevant web-sites, rather than through hard-copy booklets and directories alone.

Vacancy information and information on employing organisations can be accessed in the same way, and e-mailing course providers and recruiters is a 'live' possibility. Technology has also a major implication for **self-assessment** (J) and is being pursued now in this way through computerised interest inventories that match interests to occupations - notably 'Gradscope' and 'Pathfinder'.

The European dimension of guidance is ever on the increase through the on-going development of the EU Student Mobility Programmes. Aside from those in International Offices charged with the management of these programmes on behalf of their institution, there is greater demand for **information giving** (C) and **information management** (B) provision, together with special needs in the areas of **coaching** (O), **advocacy** (R) and **liaison with providers** (S) as visiting students seek employment locally.

Trends

Given the larger number overall, and the emergence of discrete groups with special needs, **group counselling** both **short-term** (F) and **longer-term** (G) is developing and will continue to develop. **Facilitating self-help groups** (H) is likely to gain in importance, especially where groups with 'special needs' are concerned. The importance of technology in **information giving** (C) and **information management** (B) will gain ground and particularly in relation to **self assessment** (J) now that 'Prospect' - a computer package incorporating self-assessment, career choice, decision making and action planning elements - is being customised for use in Irish Careers Services in 1998. Its use for job application is also gaining importance, so it will need to be incorporated in **coaching** (O).

The European dimension is likely to encourage demand for increased attention to **short-term group counselling** (D) in relation to orientation and adjustment for incoming students and also to preparation for groups of outgoing students by way of planned **teaching**

programmes (M), so that they gain full benefit from the vocational and personal as well as the educational benefits of their transnational experience.

3c: Ireland: Detailed Occupational Profiles

(i) Careers Adviser

The role of the Careers Adviser is primarily student-centred, facilitating the realisation of students' academic and employment potential through the provision of an effective advisory and information service.

Advisers aim to assist students to take responsibility for their own actions by helping each of them to see the strengths that they have as unique individuals, by promoting and developing self awareness and self-esteem, and by encouraging them to view with optimism the range of choices available to them. Students are encouraged to identify and assess options open to them in order to make and implement effectively their own choices. Advice involves presenting an objective and non-directive view, outlining the alternatives available and their consequences. Advisers require excellent communication skills, both verbal and oral, including listening skills. They need to have the ability to adapt to a constantly changing world in terms of information and the technology to retrieve, store and disseminate it.

All Careers Advisers carry out a significant number of **general management** tasks (A) in terms of their caseloads and related academic and employer liaison.

Information is an essential component of careers work and in order to perform their tasks advisers need to be skilled in **information management** (B). They need to be aware of: students' needs; sources of useful information locally, nationally and internationally; systems for acquiring, storing and disseminating information; and methods of processing and using information in an integrated way with students. Advisers contribute to the production of collaborative publications for use in services throughout the country, in addition to material for in-house use.

The goal in **information giving** (C) is to assist students in their decision-making and problem-solving and to equip them with the skills for coping with the ever-changing circumstances in the fields of their educational and career development. This requires highly developed research skills to research, assimilate and select from the wealth of wide-ranging and often complex occupational material available. Organisational and presentation skills are required to make this information accessible and readily understood by students. Information maintained by the Careers Service can be classified under the following headings: occupations, further study and training, employers, and job search strategies. In most

services, regular newsletters are compiled and distributed to promote events, announce postgraduate awards, advertise vacancies and notify important developments in training, recruitment and study opportunities. In larger services, functions relating to the organisation and presentation of information including newsletters are performed mainly by support staff; in smaller services, these responsibilities fall mainly to the Careers and Appointments Officer working in conjunction with the Secretary/Information Assistant.

One-to-one in-depth **advisory interviews** (I) of up to an hour's duration with predominately final-year students have traditionally been the main vehicle for assisting students to structure their thoughts about self-assessment, career planning, the options open to them and their likely outcomes. In the larger services these interviews can still be very much the core of their work and advisers usually specialise in particular disciplines. In recent years, the introduction of brief informal interviews or 'drop-in sessions' (lasting 10-15 minutes) with duty advisers and group interviews have been offered to complement the 'one-to-one' interview (or, in some smaller services especially, to replace it). This has arisen in response to the sheer volume of students seeking assistance, but also in recognition of the need to encourage students to take more personal responsibility for their own career planning and decision-making. These 'drop-in' sessions operate to clarify information, to encourage action or maybe to refer a student for a 'full' interview where that provision exists.

Another response to student demand that is gaining ground in all services in the 'small group' session designed to cater for those with similar interests or requirements and to move beyond **information giving** (C) to create an active learning environment through **short-term group counselling** (F).

A number of services offer computer-assisted guidance on a limited scale ('Gradscope' - an interest inventory - and 'Pathfinder'), and all will offer 'Prospect', an integrated computer-assisted guidance system, soon, so **facilitating self-assessment** (J) among individual students.

Advice (I), as given by Careers Advisers, encompasses the following major areas: careers, subject choice, graduate employment, postgraduate study and training, and job search strategies, as well as help on subject and course choice to incoming students. The focus of the advice is predominately vocational. The educational aspects normally refer to routes to qualifying or enhancing vocational skills and rarely deal with learning support

activities or personal guidance: such cases are normally **referred** to other student services (L).

As appropriate, advisers provide **psychometric assessment** for students seeking vocational guidance and counselling (K). Developing, organising and delivering a careers education/development programme - i.e. **teaching** (M), and **coaching** (O) in individual faculties or across the board, including careers talks, seminars, workshops, and sometimes involving external speakers - form a major part of the adviser's tasks. However, **facilitating self-help groups** (H) is not normally the concern of careers advisers.

Advisers develop rapport with employers - **liaison with employers** (N) - identifying graduate opportunities and facilitating on-campus recruitment. In addition, visits of students to employers may be arranged. These provide **information on vacancies** (P) in education, training and employment via electronic mail to individuals or class representatives, newsletters, vacancy noticeboards and files located in the service and relevant departmental noticeboards. They are not involved in **pre-selecting** individuals (Q) but might occasionally be involved in **advocacy** (R) in cases of special need, e.g. students with disabilities needing help in accessing employers.

They provide **feedback to providers** (T) though liaison with Heads of Departments, Deans, the Admissions Officer, the Registrar and Student Services Officers in relation to individual students, class groups, careers education programmes, and in particular providing feedback to the universities from employers relating to recruitment trends and employer needs with implications for course content and design. In some universities, Careers Advisers may sit on strategic subject committees and course programme boards.

Many advisers engage in **follow-up** (U) through preparing or assisting in the preparation of the statistics on the first destination of graduates and other statistics of relevance to the work of the service and the production of its annual report.

In addition, careers advisers are expected to be active, participating members of AGCSI (Association of Graduate Careers Services in Ireland), AGCAS (Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services) and other appropriate professional bodies both nationally and internationally, e.g. FEDORA. Contributions include researching, writing, and attending and organising training events and conferences.

(ii) Co-operative Education Manager

The role of the Co-operative Education Manager is multifaceted and covers a range of responsibilities, viz. careers adviser, programme manager, educator, marketing person, referral agent and administrator. The Co-operative Education Programme is an educational process designed to promote individual career development and self-awareness by integrating classroom theory with planned and supervised practical experience outside the formal classroom environment. Co-operative Education involves the placement of students in employment relevant to their academic interests for 6-8 months during their undergraduate studies at the University of Limerick. This is a key feature of all academic programmes. With a network of over 1,000 employers and an annual placement level of some 1,800 undergraduates, it is one of the largest placement programmes world-wide. Currently some 30% of students undertake international placements.

The Co-operative Education & External Affairs Division has responsibility for the direction and development of the programme. It identifies appropriate employers and liaises with them to ensure that they are made aware of the range of resources and expertise available on-campus, and consults with employers on suitable work assignments for students. Students are generally selected by employers through interviews which are held on-campus and organised by the Division. During placement, the Division maintains contact with the employer and arranges for students to be monitored by a University faculty member.

The University of Limerick is committed to a philosophy of careers education and this is implemented through the Co-operative Education Programme as an integral part of the academic programme. The goals of Co-operative Education are:

- to help students relate theory and practice;
- to enable students explore and experience different career options;
- to help students to develop interpersonal skills;
- to help students to develop marketable and transferable skills.

The tasks of the Co-operative Education Manager can best be described in terms of the relationship with students, employers and within the university itself. The relationship with students is an educational one, helping them to set appropriate goals responsive to their particular needs, and aiding students in securing appropriate work experience to realise these

goals and evaluating their outcomes. This will involve **individual counselling** (D), supporting individuals in order to **facilitate self-assessment** (J) and **information giving** on education and training as well as on careers and labour market trends (C).

Central to the relationship will be the provision of careers counselling from an early stage in their academic programme on an **individual** (E) and **group** basis (F) - the latter being carried out through group orientation sessions to prepare students for their placements. This process involves participation by employers, student counsellors, information service providers and other students, particularly in the orientation of students for overseas placements and in preparation for selection by international employers. Mounting such a programme generates **management** tasks (A) as well as involving **information giving** (C) on placement opportunities. An important part of the programme is monitoring of outcomes and maintaining contact, and co-ordinating visits from faculty with this objective in view, i.e. **follow-up** (U) and **management** tasks (A).

The provision of a careers guidance and counselling service will also involve assisting students in the implementation and verification of career plans, providing occupational information in order to assist students make appropriate choices, plans and adjustments relative to career planning. These requirements are delivered through engagement in **information management** (B) and **information giving** (C) including **vacancy information** (P), and particularly through **facilitating self-assessment** (J) so that students learn to reflect on the value to themselves of integrating work experience with academic studies.

Relations with employers involve general tasks relating to establishing and maintaining effective communication links between employers and the university, i.e. **liaison with providers** (N) and **general management** tasks (A). In particular, they need to identify new employers and assist them in developing placement opportunities that will serve the needs of a diverse student population, e.g. new degrees such as Wood Science. This involves them in **advocacy** (R) on behalf of those groups for whom there may be barriers to access. They must also monitor student performance vis-à-vis employer requirements through providing **feedback** (T), engage in **follow-up** (U) to fulfill the requirement of acting as the main conduit between the university and external organisations, and provide a **feedback mechanism** (T) on labour market trends and requirements, research opportunities etc.

In relation to the university, the role of Co-operative Education Manager demands that they serve as the campus expert in the field of Co-operative Education and careers, interpreting these activities to the various constituencies: this involves **general management** (A) and **information giving** (C). They need also to work with faculty members to ensure that the educational values of the programme are achieved, providing **feedback to providers** from marketplace experience (T) and giving them **support** (S) in this regard. They must conduct primary research with employers, faculty and students concerning Co-operative Education's relationship with careers, involving them in **general management** (A), **information management** (B) and conducting **follow-up** surveys (U).

They have to represent the interests of the Division on faculty boards and other fora (A) and provide professional input into the design and modification of course curricula, involving **general management** (A) and **information giving** (C).

Where international placements are concerned, the role of the Co-operative Education Manager is concerned with establishing and maintaining relationships with a network of European partners including the European Commission, employers, other universities and university enterprise training partnerships: this involves **general management** (A), **information management** (B), **information giving** (C) and **liaison** tasks (N).

In addition, they must identify and secure funding opportunities for international **placements** (P), and provide **management** (A) to deal with the contractual, administrative, financial and operational aspects of placement projects.

(iii) Student Counsellor

The Counselling Service is involved at all stages of student third-level careers. The main functions carried out by the Counsellor includes in particular individual psychological **counselling** both **short-term** (D) and **long-term** (E), but also **diagnostic assessment** (K) through the use of psychological instruments, and to some extent **facilitating of self-help groups** (H), **teaching** of coping skills to groups (M) as well as **supporting other guidance sources** (S) - i.e. teaching staff and other advisers. Nowadays, they can expect to receive referrals from Access Officers, recently appointed to look after disadvantaged students and students with disabilities; for these groups, student counsellors are likely to organise workshops and **facilitate self-help groups** to address their particular needs (H), which may develop into **short-term** (F) or **long-term group counselling** (G). There is also potential here to engage in **teaching** (M) - implementing a programme of planned experiences designed to develop the skills, concepts and knowledge that will help individuals manage their educational, vocational and personal development.

The Counsellor may work with both individual and groups of students in relation to therapeutic provision - through both **short-term** (D) and **longer-term** (E) **individual counselling**. Aspects of student experience presenting needs for such provision include relationship problems, separation anxiety, family problems, bereavement, problems centring on sexual and personal identity, and difficulties exacerbated by the transition to further education which may have much earlier roots - for example, clinical anxiety (including phobias and obsessions), clinical depression (including those who have made suicide attempts or have suicidal ideas), eating disorders (including bulimia and anorexia), child abuse and incest. Counsellors are also engaged in developmental **teaching** provision (M) including that related to psychological stages of development, disorientation problems (e.g. transition from school to college, country to city, culture to culture), and study and learning problems (particularly those associated with living away from home). Counsellors also provide preventive support through **teaching** programmes (M) including study skills training, exam preparation groups, assertiveness training, orientation programmes, and stress management.

Their work includes the provision of practical support including access to information, engaging the Counsellor in **information management** (B) and **information giving** (C) relating to finance. It also includes **supporting other guidance sources** (S) through training

in communication skills and personal development skills, to enable tutors to provide help directly to students without referral to the Counselling Service.

The development of the Counselling Service within the educational institution, and by implication the development of the institution itself, requires constant review. Experience has demonstrated that with both formal and informal communication networks, students increase their use of a service as they discover its usefulness to them. This necessitates constant monitoring of the situation by the Counselling Service to ensure an ongoing, appropriate response to the needs of students and others. In addition to the need for increased resources and the development of institutional arrangements which this process suggests, the Counselling Service may often be in a position to recognise both helpful and unhelpful college practices, and to contribute to policy development of a variety of sorts within the organisation including curriculum, pastoral and administrative policies. It can be seen that the Student Counsellor has a useful institutional function in enabling the college to respond to the needs of students and the college community more generally. The Counselling Service can play a significant role in researching these to ensure that the college has an accurate understanding of such needs. This particular focus engages the Student Counsellor in giving **feedback to providers** (T) so that they may adapt and extend their provision to address unmet needs of particular groups of students.

Another important aspect of the work of the Counsellor is to recognise the onset of serious physical and psychological disturbances among members of the college community and to **refer** them appropriately (L). The facilities for referral for specialist help tend to depend on local arrangements.

The implication for Counselling Services of the growth in volume and diversity of third-level education in Ireland has been the need for services to develop in both size and complexity. This entails the development of the **management** function within Counselling Services (A). Counsellors are often required to take on this role in order to ensure the effectiveness of the service on a day-to-day basis - and into the future. At the same time, the direct provision of Counselling Services often falls to the same personnel. This issue has implications for the resourcing required by Counselling Services (both human and financial) as well as the support required by Student Counsellors undertaking these management functions.

4: Training and Qualifications

4a: Table

Service/System	Occupational roles	Minimum educational qualifications for entry	Initial training in guidance and counselling	In-service training in guidance and counselling
Careers Service	<i>Careers & Appointments Officer / Director, Careers Service</i>	3 year Primary Degree	1 year Diploma/MA in Careers Guidance - optional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AGCAS training programme • AGCSI occasional training sessions • FEDORA Summer School
	<i>Assistant Careers & Appointments Officer / Careers Adviser</i>	3 year Primary Degree	1 year Diploma/MA in Careers Guidance - optional	
Co-operative Education Service	<i>Co-operative Education Manager</i>	3 year Primary Degree	1 year Diploma/MA in Careers Guidance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As for Careers Service
	<i>Placement Officer</i>	School Leaving Certificate +	Optional / Varied / None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As may be provided
Counselling Service	<i>Student Counsellor</i>	3 year Primary Degree	Master's in Psychology / Psychological Counselling / Counselling / Social Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IAUCC training seminars • FEDORA Summer School
	<i>'Specialist Group' Adviser/Co-ordinator *</i>	3 year Primary Degree	Varies / None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be established
Personal Tutorial System	<i>Senior Tutor / Tutor</i>	At least Master's level	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nuffield Training Programme • Occasional training provided by Student Counsellor, Health Service, etc.

* e.g. Director Access Programme, Disability Advisory Officer/Co-ordinator, European/International Officer/International Student Affairs Administrator

4b: Commentary

Training qualifications can be categorised typically as postgraduate / Higher Diplomas or else as applied Master's degrees, consisting of a 'mix' of lectures and seminars, practical assignments of a 'field-work' kind, and a requirement that a thesis/dissertation be completed on a relevant topic. They are typically postgraduate in character and most commonly of one year's duration, sometimes two years, particularly the Master's programmes (in a few cases offered over two years part-time, e.g. MA degree in Guidance and Counselling at NUI Cork).

All of the courses mentioned are 'follow-ons' to a primary degree. Sometimes this can be a degree in the Social Sciences, particularly in the cases of MSc courses in Counselling Psychology where a degree in Psychology is a pre-requisite. However, it is important to note that the various Higher Diplomas in Careers Guidance have been associated to a significant extent with the provision of recognised training of second-level teachers as school guidance counsellors, and this has often been reflected in a stated preference for degree holders in any discipline with a teaching qualification as entrants.

Generally speaking, the Diploma in Careers Guidance incorporates a counselling skills element, reflecting the pastoral-care role that the careers guidance specialism in Irish schools incorporates. In the case of NUI, Cork, the course leads to a Higher Diploma in Guidance and Counselling. The practical training element will often include a school placement and school-related project (NUI, Maynooth, where the course is styled Higher Diploma in Arts (School Guidance and Counselling)) and possibly also an industry placement and job analysis element (NUI, Cork).

While referring particularly to the school in its course element on 'education', the course at NUI, Dublin, deals in its vocational guidance component with such elements as adult guidance, testing, careers information, computer-aided guidance, careers guidance within the European Union context, and administration of a career guidance service - all indicative of a broader focus than the school emphasis of some other courses. Significantly this course states an express requirement of at least three years' work experience in education, social work or business.

At TCD, the MEd course offers among several electives one in guidance and counselling. The course duration is of two years and combines a broad theoretical base with

specialised study in education. This is reflected in the organisation of course work (covered in the first year) which provides for a core curriculum involving a multi-disciplinary approach to the theory and practice of education. Philosophy, psychology and sociology are studied in the light of their particular contributions to the theoretical foundations of education. In addition, students may take introductory courses in such areas as statistics, administration and research methods.

The option in Guidance and Counselling is designed to equip participants to work professionally in this area. It can be taken in Mode A, for those seeking a Guidance and Counselling qualification recognised by Irish schools, and in Mode B - with a research emphasis - for those who have already acquired such a qualification. The course consists of theories of counselling and their psychological foundations, a systems approach to counselling practice, and school guidance practice.

The other main set of qualifications on offer are those with a psychological and counselling psychology basis, confined to those with a primary degree in psychology. The MA (Counselling Psychology) at NUI, Dublin, is being re-vamped, but draft information on the new syllabus indicates a mixed approach of lectures, tutorials and seminars, with a strong practical 'casework' element where each course member takes clients under supervision. The student is expected to keep detailed case-notes and to present four typed and bound case studies and two process reports at the end of the programme, detailing the nature of the problems, the counselling/psychotherapeutic approaches used, the interventions adopted, and the outcomes. On this course, students are exposed to practitioners of psycho-analytic psychotherapy, gestalt therapy, constructionist psychotherapy, cognitive behavioural therapy, systemic therapy and process-oriented psychotherapy. They then pick one model with which they are comfortable, and placements reflect this and the client group favoured by students.

'Self-awareness' is a requirement and each participant must choose a counsellor/therapist and attend in the role of client on at least a fortnightly basis. Personal development groups are also organised. The academic content includes courses in micro-counselling, personality testing, case presentation, case management, adult psychiatry, child and adolescent psychotherapy, legal and ethical issues, assertiveness training, group processes, research methods, theories of counselling and psychotherapy, and life-span development.

At NUI, Cork, a number of Master's degree courses are run - some full-time, some part-time - in the Counselling/Counselling Psychology areas. Again, strong emphasis is placed on the personal growth of participants, the acquisition of counselling skills and a solid grounding in counselling theory. The courses available include a Higher Diploma in Gestalt Therapy (two-year part-time) and an MA in Humanistic Therapy. There is also a foundation course in Counselling Skills open to graduates in the helping professions and other suitable persons.

TCD's contribution in this area is an MSc in Counselling Psychology, which is a full-time course that offers graduates in psychology a professional training in counselling psychology and runs for two years. The first year provides a basic training in counselling psychology. Major instructional blocks are combined with practical experience in the form of experiential work and supervised placements. The second year of the course involves further advanced practice and study. Students will have another placement experience; they also attend regular case discussions and carry out research on a topic related to counselling psychology. There is a particular emphasis on experiential work and personal development. General counselling skills and specific techniques essential to effective counselling intervention are taught by means of lectures, workshops and supervised practical work.

All of this training is delivered in a traditional mode, is financed through fees being paid (in the range of IR£2,000-£3,000 depending on the course) and appear to make little direct attempt to cover the higher educational, European or disabilities dimensions in any direct way (the NUI, Dublin, Higher Diploma in Careers Guidance is an exception, since it covers adult guidance and considers pan-European activity through appropriate course options).

Recently, an interesting development in training has occurred in relation to the personal tutorial system. Traditionally this group has consisted of volunteers (or those invited to volunteer to take on the role): although always carried out by members of the teaching staff, it was unrelated to the teaching function, and indeed a tutor might be responsible for students of a department other than his or her own. They operated historically in one college - TCD; through the CSSI (Conference of Student Services in Ireland) an interest was identified in strengthening similar provision throughout Ireland's universities. The Nuffield Foundation was approached for funding and TCD's Senior Tutor with his administrative officer travelled to institutions throughout Ireland to assist them in setting up a personal

tutorial service via a one-day workshop, the broad outline of which can be summarised as follows:

- The development of Student Services in TCD including the centrality of the Tutorial Service.
- The criteria for selection of tutors, their training and the support necessary to sustain a Tutorial Service.
- The relationship between the Tutorial Service and the institution.
- What role do tutors play?
- Presentation of case histories.

It is stressed that no one model can be imposed on all institutions, and that it is up to each institution to adapt the model to its own circumstances. It is planned to take the workshop to more universities in the future.

Role of Professional Bodies

Two professional bodies or interest groups play some part in training provision.

One is the Association of Graduate Careers Services in Ireland (AGCSI). All Careers Advisers in the Republic's and Northern Ireland's Universities as well as DIT are in membership of this body through their membership of the Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services in Britain and Ireland (AGCAS); there is also participation by a small number of Administrative Assistants from various universities, admitted as AGCAS members to the 'Information Officer' category. Aside from the collaborative efforts previously mentioned, AGCSI meets twice a year, and once every second year holds a three-day conference with some external participation.

The bi-annual meetings and the Conference have a significant training dimension. Sometimes this takes the form of a 'briefing' update from an employer or professional body or e.g. from a body such as the Fulbright Commission on postgraduate study in USA. At other times a visit is organised to a prominent employer who hosts the Association's meeting, and provides a detailed presentation of its career opportunities, recruitment criteria and requirements (recent visits of this kind have been paid to IBM and to the Irish Army). A

training session was held in June 1997 by AHEAD - the disability forum - to help advisers to become more aware of the needs of students with disabilities. In general, the sessions have had an information/update emphasis rather than a skills development one, although AGCAS training in Group Work Techniques was 'imported' in 1992, and a week-long course on 'Developing Student Skills' was run in July 1994, under the auspices of the TCD / University of Liverpool EUROFORM project, in which 21 Irish University Careers Advisers took part.

Through AGCAS membership, there is full access to the AGCAS training course provision, offered in Certificate and Diploma form, to be made available shortly also as a Master's degree. Individual Irish Careers Advisers travel to the UK to undertake short AGCAS courses which may/may not form part of the 'official' AGCAS certification process. So far, however, no Irish Republic-based Careers Adviser has signed up to take an AGCAS qualification. One Irish Careers Adviser (from a Northern Irish University) is acting as an AGCAS trainer.

Co-operative Education Managers are members of AGCSI and participate fully in AGCSI activities; their training situation is covered fully by the description given above for Careers Advisers.

The policy of the Irish Association of University and College Counsellors' (IAUCC) - again an 'all-Ireland' body - on required qualifications for its members states that such professionals must have sound theoretical knowledge of human development and counselling skills, and experience gained through a recognised counselling course which would fulfil the criteria for membership of the Association of Student Counsellors (UK). It offers accreditation on the basis of current full membership of IAUCC for one year plus two years' experience of student counselling at a third-level college, employment as a designated student counsellor for not less than eight hours per week, completion of a professional counselling training or psychology course of one year full-time (or two years part-time), conforming to the IAUCC code of ethics, having access to consultative support, and continued professional development which includes attendance at relevant conferences, courses, training events and workshops (may include personal therapy/counselling). Accredited status is given for a five-year period, after which it must be renewed.

4c Detailed Profiles

(i) Careers Adviser and Co-operative Education Manager

(As both categories undertake similar training, they are considered together in this profile).

The normal postgraduate training undertaken by this group is that on offer in Careers Guidance (see above).

Of twenty-one Careers and Appointments Officers/Careers Advisers and Co-operative Education Managers, eight are holders of this qualification, for the most part obtained from NUI, Dublin, or NUI, Cork. One Careers Adviser acquired hers from what is now Manchester Metropolitan University, while one Co-operative Education Manager holds a Master's qualification in Careers Guidance from Fordham University in the USA. One Careers and Appointments Officer is a professionally qualified psychologist. Sometimes these posts are advertised with a requirement for a qualification in Careers Guidance or a similar field, or with work experience gained in an area of graduate employment, but often the qualification may be simply a set of desirable attributes in applicants.

In recent years, the development of an awareness of the importance of strategic management in universities has been reflected in some interest in acquiring management qualifications by Careers Advisers: one has obtained an MBA through part-time study (as has an adviser at a Northern Ireland University). It is reflected also in the recent appointment of two MBA degree holders as Directors of Careers Services, both with backgrounds in the human resources function rather than in guidance and counselling. These positions were advertised with a requirement of knowledge of, and experience in, computerised systems. Relevant experience was mentioned but guidance qualifications were not cited as an absolute requirement.

If a gap exists in managerial expertise, it also exists in the area of computer literacy particularly among longer-established practitioners (who are in the large majority). Aside from administrative usage, there is a need for Careers Advisers to become comfortable with computer-assisted guidance, and with the information management tasks arising from the gathering importance of the Internet for researching postgraduate study and employment opportunities. There is a continuing interest in training in careers education, and particularly in new ways of dealing with large numbers of students.

Some advisers have pursued the European dimension with enthusiasm, and have participated in FEDORA and the AGCAS European Sub-Committee, but travel costs have hampered access in many cases. The European Employment Service (EURES) has been piloted in two services; more services would like to get involved, and share in the training benefit acquired by the two 'Euro Advisers' concerned.

(ii) Student Counsellor

Here the training profile is a highly specialised one. Student Counsellors have either a Psychology or Professional Social Work background and are most likely to have acquired the relevant postgraduate qualifications in Counselling/Counselling Psychology. One has acquired a PhD in Student Development in the USA. In addition, they participate in on-going short courses with such bodies as the Creative Counselling Centre, the Irish Gestalt Centre, the Clanwilliam Institute and the Integrative Psychotherapy Training Programme. Counsellors' generic programme training equips them to deal with people of all ages, and they also have been taught abnormal psychology including stress management through their courses.

Through the IAUCC, seminars have been run on topics such as the counselling presence, the counsellor and the university, and the use of imagery.

Counsellors are concerned about the pressures that managing Counselling Services place on them; one of them is completing an MSc in Educational Management. A concern is also felt regarding the demands that greater European integration is placing on them, as well as the universities' mission towards students with disabilities. A particular need is expressed in relation to the wider institution and the importance of learning to speak its 'language' so as to acquire the necessary resourcing for Counselling Services.

5. Conclusions

Careers Advisers, Co-operative Education Managers and Student Counsellors are fundamentally well-qualified professionals, conscious of the need to adapt to change and creating their own training opportunities or availing themselves of what presented to them by way of update and adaptation in the general training provision around them.

Arguably, their difficulties arise not from a lack of training per se but from the environment in which they find themselves. The university environment is one which may currently be seen to be placing somewhat less emphasis on recognising 'professionalism', but becoming more preoccupied with demonstrating transparency in its use of resources to government. In particular, the institution is also likely to be engaged in student expansion on a very large scale, but without corresponding improvement in staff: student ratios in the student services areas, so the emphasis sometimes can be on coping with larger numbers rather than anything else.

This means that student advisers are of necessity disproportionately engaged in the 'fire-fighting' business, be it in dealing with unemployed graduates (the 'Celtic Tiger' economy affording some respite here at present, it is true) or with acutely stressed students (Ireland's suicide rate among young males particularly being above the European average).

Where training can help student advisers themselves to withstand the daily pressures of this environment, it would be welcome; where it would be of a kind to carry weight with those in authority, it would be even more welcome. (Currently, they may fail to state a requirement for guidance qualifications in recruitment advertising - for Careers Advisers at least - and even more so recently than in the past).

A likely vehicle for advancing the case for a European Master's qualification would be the Confederation of Students Services in Ireland (CSSI) (see p.14) which functions as an 'umbrella' organisation, and also encompasses those who may be of the age-range and stage of career development most likely to engage in formal Master's degree studies. Established professionals might be interested, but maybe more in a 'modular' style of learning, not necessarily leading to formal qualifications which they possess in any event. An area of likely expansion must be the RTC / non-University area (40% of students are in this category). There is already a call for these to upgrade, and a desire among themselves to do

so, which should bring commensurate development in student services in this area when the expansion occurs⁷.

As far as the evolution of an 'holistic' model is concerned, there is no doubt that the Student Counsellors operate in a distinctive therapeutic milieu, requiring a highly specialised training. To some extent, those Careers Advisers who follow the Higher Diplomas in Careers Guidance at NUI, Dublin, and NUI, Cork, 'share' in the acquisition of these skills. It is unlikely that Student Counsellors would have the time or motivation to acquire extensive knowledge of postgraduate courses or of the labour market, but the development of the Internet may facilitate this - should they wish to extend their role that widely.

An interesting possibility may lie in an evolving area of synergy across both camps - skills development. In the case of Careers Services, there is a stated resolve to promote autonomy, to put self-help measures in place and to generally encourage a proactive approach to career planning, decision-making and job search; at the same time, the Student Counselling Services are developing programmes which promote health and well-being in a wide sense, e.g. stress management. Careers Advisers are now actively engaged in the promotion of, and sometimes the development of, personal skills transfer from the study to the work environment, while Counsellors are concerned with implementing personal effectiveness programmes which can embrace achieving success in the interview situation. Should these developments gather momentum, there will be common ground in aspects of activity which could and should be co-ordinated across the roles.

It follows that if there is in both areas a movement away from the addressing of 'problems' - be they personal or vocationally related - towards an 'holistic' approach developing an autonomous individual more able to cope with issues on their own, this may present an opportunity for a coming together for common activities - developmental programmes, for instance - while retaining the distinctive specialisms for use as required in specific situations.

⁷ Y. Healy 'Upgraded RTC's must keep their eye on the ball'. Education and Living Supplement, *Irish Times*, 16 September 1997

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University Counsellors - Position Paper on Counselling Services in Irish Universities, 1997

Student Guide to Job Hunting - C. Aungier, S. Walker (AGCSI, ESB) 1997

Series of Careers Booklets - AGCSI (1997)

Student Handbooks and Annual Reports - DCU, NUI Dublin, NUI Cork, NUI Maynooth, TCD, UL

Appendix

Training Courses in Ireland

Names and Addresses

1. Higher Diploma in Careers Guidance
MA in Counselling Psychology
NUI, Dublin, Belfield, Dublin 4
2. Higher Diploma in Guidance and Counselling
MA Degree in Guidance and Counselling
MA Degree in Counselling Psychology
Masters Degree in Counselling
Higher Diploma in Gestalt Therapy
Foundation Course / Higher Diploma in Gestalt Therapy
NUI, Cork
3. MEd (Master of Education degree) (Guidance and Counselling option)
MSc in Counselling Psychology
MSc in Educational Management
Trinity College, Dublin 2
4. Higher Diploma in Arts (School Guidance and Counselling)
NUI, Maynooth, Co. Kildare
5. MSc in Educational Management
DCU, Glasnevin, Dublin 9

Non-university-based Counselling courses are run by:

The Clanwilliam Institute, 18 Clanwilliam Terrace, Dublin 2

The Institute of Creative Counselling and Psychotherapy, 82 Upper George's Street, Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin

FEDORA Publications

1. Synthesis reports produced for the New Skills Project

Watts, A.G., & Van Esbroeck, R. (1998). *New Skills for New Futures: Higher Education Guidance and Counselling in the European Union*. Brussels: VUBPress

Watts, A.G., & Van Esbroeck, R. (1998). *De nouvelles compétences pour un avenir différent: Services d'orientation et de counselling dans L'Union Européenne*. Bruxelles: VUBPress.

2. Country reports produced for the New Skills Project

A Schilling, M. & Moisl, A. (1998). *New Skills for New Futures: Higher Education Guidance and Counselling in Austria*. Louvain-la-Neuve: FEDORA.

B(Fl) Van Esbroeck, R. (1998). *New Skills for New Futures: Higher Education Guidance and Counselling in Flanders (Belgium)*. Louvain-la-Neuve: FEDORA.

B(Fr) Wouters, C. (1998). *New Skills for New Futures: Higher Education Guidance and Counselling in Belgium (French Community)*. Louvain-la-Neuve: FEDORA.

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How to order

The synthesis reports can be ordered through:

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Fax: + 32 00 2 629 26 94 - E-mail: kvschare@vub.ac.be

The country reports can be ordered through:

FEDORA - Forum Européen de L'Orientation Académique
Boîte Postale 55, B 1348 Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium.