



**ADA UNIVERSITY**  
**SCHOOL OF EDUCATION**  
**MASTER OF ARTS IN EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT**

**CAPSTONE PROJECT**

**Career Counselling Services Centres in Public Universities in Azerbaijan**

Lamiya Malahova, Latafat Bayramova, Ulkar Ulukhanova

[lmalahova12957@ada.edu.az](mailto:lmalahova12957@ada.edu.az), [lbayramova13219@ada.edu.az](mailto:lbayramova13219@ada.edu.az),

[uulukhanova12997@gmail.com](mailto:uulukhanova12997@gmail.com)


Supervisor: Dr. Vafa Yunusova


Course Instructor: Dr. Samira Hajiyeva


Baku, May 26, 2022

**STATEMENT OF AUTHENTICITY**

We have read ADA's policy on plagiarism and certify that, to the best of our knowledge, the content of this paper, entitled Career Counselling Services Centres in Public Universities in Azerbaijan is all our work and does not contain any unacknowledged work.

Signed:  \_\_\_\_\_

Signed:  \_\_\_\_\_

Signed:  \_\_\_\_\_

Date: 14.07.2022

**School of Education**

**Public Policy and Strategy: Capstone**

**Approval Form**

Student Name/Surname: Lamiya Malahova

Student ID number: 12957

Program Name: Master of Arts in Educational Management

Student Name/Surname: Latafat Bayramova

Student ID number: 13219

Program Name: Master of Arts in Educational Management

Student Name/Surname: Ulkar Ulukhanova

Student ID number: 12997

Program Name: Master of Arts in Educational Management

Academic Track Selection:

Research Track  Professional Track

Comments:

The Course Instructor: Dr. Samira Hajiyeva

The Supervisor: Dr. Vafa Yunusova



SE Curator of the Graduate Programs: Natella Tarverdiyeva

Dean of SE: Dr. Vafa Kazdal

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### **Abstract**

Career counselling services centres are essential for many public university students in the Republic of Azerbaijan. The purpose of this explorative qualitative study was to explore career counselling services centres at three public universities in Azerbaijan, the roles and responsibilities of career counsellors and administrators of the career counselling services centres, and the third- and fourth-year students' perceptions of career counselling services.

For planning and modifying the main study, the pilot study was conducted in one of the public universities in Azerbaijan. Qualitative semi-structured interviews were carried out with three administrators of the career counselling services centres, three career counsellors, and six students from three public universities in Azerbaijan. Additionally, the Capstone team wrote memos to avoid losing any detail of the collected data. Moreover, we conducted member checks to re-establish the results by seeking participant comments on the accuracy of verbatim claims.

The collected data were analyzed based on the thematic map. The thematic analysis revealed several findings regarding the roles and responsibilities of administrators and career counsellors (organizing meetings, establishing contact with enterprises, and providing career advising), third- and fourth-year students' perceptions of career counselling services (getting experience in professional and educational fields, being involved in internship programs), and obstacles that career counselling services centres encountered (lack of financial support, small number of staff members).

### **Acknowledgment**

We, the Capstone Project team members, would like to extend our deepest gratitude to our supervisor Dr. Vafa Yunusova, for her invaluable advice, continuous support, and patience. Her immense knowledge and great experience have encouraged us all the time. Dr. Vafa Yunusova provided the resources we needed to make the best decision and finish our project successfully.

We are extremely grateful to Dr. Samira Hajiyeva, our course instructor, for her indispensable assistance, time, and support throughout our studies. Her advice, feedback, and encouragement have been crucial to us during our Capstone Project.



## **Chapter 1. Introduction**

This study highlights that career counselling services centres are a solution to students' concerns about their future career choices and pursuing further education. As a world practice, career counselling services centres are considered to assist an individual in making that decision about career choices and education by aiding, informing, and promoting an optimal matching between an individual's interests and job demands (Richițeanu-Năstase & Stăiculescu, 2015). When students enter universities, they should not only complete academic activities, but they should also prepare for the future by researching and selecting a future profession thoroughly (Yang et al., 2012). Furthermore, career counselling services centres primarily refer to educational and professional development and the process of providing students with the knowledge and skills they need so that they can effectively manage their education and professional paths (Lacatus et al., 2015). It is a method of training and directing students to subjects, specializations, and domains based on their personalities. Lacatus et al. (2015) believe that any specialized activity is an advantage for students regarding a career choice, career growth, professional retraining, employability improvement, and techniques to continue or change a job. Besides, any other features associated with a job are referred to as career counselling (Lacatus et al., 2015).

The career counselling services centres aid students in clarifying their goals and expectations, understanding their own identity, making informed decisions, taking responsibility for their actions, and managing their careers (Lacatus et al., 2015). Hence, the fundamental goal of career counselling services centres is to recommend acceptable fields of study to students and, as a result, to improve job seekers' employability through the use of information, technical advice tools, and activities. Job seekers' employability improvement is done by acquiring and developing critical skills that help overcome obstacles in the job search (Milan et al., 2017).

The Capstone Team interviewed career counsellors and administrators of career counselling services centres to better understand their roles and responsibilities as well as how students perceived career counselling services.

### **1.1. Background**

Graduate employment is one of the indicators of a university's success since it represents the labour market demand for professionals created by an educational institution (Sun & Yuen, 2012). The quality and efficiency of the university whose graduates are employed are determined by various variables, including the condition of the labour market, the quality of the obtained education, university support systems for career planning, selecting the right profession, and pursuing education (Keshf & Khanum, 2021). The university support system is provided by the career counselling services centres, a kind of advice and assistance that career counsellors offer to their students so that they can manage their paths through education and career challenges (Koech et al., 2016). Career counselling services centres encompass job exploration, career selection, career management, lifetime career growth, and other career-related difficulties. Sun and Yuen (2012) state that career counselling services centres in university settings may assist students in establishing individual goals and determining current and future paths. Given that career counselling services, centres assist individuals in overcoming misconceptions about jobs, choosing study courses, and discovering their prospective abilities to increase their competitiveness for opportunities (Sun & Yuen, 2012).

Career counselling services centres are an essential bridge between universities and the labour market as it plays a fundamental role in assisting students and graduates in their transition from the university to the labour market (Radhika, 2018). In addition, career counselling services centres offer students appropriate internship programmes and occupations and assist them in developing their professional skills. Besides, a university with

intense career counselling services centres will be more attractive to future students (OECD, 2004). According to Keshf and Khanum (2021), when students start their higher education, they are often going through the exploration period, and then they have to work toward their future careers. If their career development is adept, they are likely to transition to the establishment stage before graduation and grow professionally (Keshf & Khanum, 2021).

During the exploratory period, university students may face several challenges, such as topic and specialty selection, skills development, internship search, job-seeking efforts, workplace changes, and other probable career counselling requirements (Chircu, 2014). Hence, Chircu (2014) emphasizes career counselling as a real need, with an increasing number of students expressing difficulty about which university to study at and how to choose a career that meets their background.

### **1.2. Statement of the Problem**

The essential element in a student's life is access to career counselling services (Radhika, 2018). Considering its importance, this study may benefit students in choosing a career path (Bright et al., 2005). For several reasons, students may seek career counselling and guidance for making professional choices, such as selecting a profession, developing skills, participating in an internship, or gaining experience (Keshf & Khanum, 2021), which are crucial. In addition, the capacity to make informed judgments, a clear sense of direction and purpose, self-awareness, access to relevant resources, and experience is what students need to add to their theoretical knowledge (Keshf & Khanum, 2021). Therefore, universities should provide the appropriate career counselling services to assist students in determining what sort of specialization they need and what type of occupational choice they should make (Chen, 2001).

Scott et al., (2008) assert that students engaged in a career exploration course report substantial increases in self-efficacy in making career decisions and their sense of

professional identity. Also, the study reports that students have a better feeling of occupational identity if they are provided with career counselling.

Competition and a wide range of professional opportunities make students have difficulty deciding which profession to pursue (Longhi & Brynin, 2007). For that reason, colleges and universities should focus on preparing students for the workforce. What is more, they should make an effort to institutionalize career counselling and guidance utilizing cognitive (such as decision-making, problem-solving) and emotional (self-awareness and self-management) techniques to serve their students better (Spokane & Cruza-Guet, 2005).

As career counselling is emerging in public universities in Azerbaijan, senior students, particularly the third- and fourth-year students, are not certain about what they desire to achieve in their academic and work lives, especially they have concerns about the future employability of what they study (Asia Pacific Career Development Association, 2022; Country Office Annual Report, 2020; Junior Achievement of Azerbaijan, 2022). That being said, addressing the problem related to the theory and practice of career counselling in public universities in Azerbaijan necessitates further efforts to be made (Strategic Roadmap for Vocational Education and Training in the Azerbaijan Republic, 2016). Even though Azerbaijan State University of Economics, Baku State University, Baku Engineering University, Khazar University, and ADA University provide career counselling and the third- and fourth-year students are engaged in training and seminars for professional development, individual advising sessions, and other professional services, senior students in most public universities across Azerbaijan cannot benefit from career counselling services centres (UNEC, 2018). For the third- and fourth-year students to become more proficient future candidates for the labour market, career counselling services centres at universities should be expanded.

### **1.3. Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this explorative qualitative study was (a) to explore career counselling services centres in public universities in Azerbaijan, (b) to determine the roles and responsibilities of career counsellors, and (c) to discover what factors contribute to student's career choices, (d) to identify challenges third- and fourth-year students encounter while deciding on their future career choices.

#### **1.3.1. Rationale**

The increase in the working-age population outpaces the rate of job creation by a wide margin. As a consequence, university graduates experience difficulties getting appropriate jobs, and youth empowerment is a top priority on the political agenda (UNDP, 2022). Goal #8, Decent Work and Economic Growth, targets this problem directly by urging states to promote young people's labour market involvement (UNDP, 2022). The Republic of Azerbaijan has been implementing important programmes to modernize higher education to increase graduates' employability, and higher education reform programmes continue to prioritize efforts to increase graduate employment ("Azerbaijan 2020: Look into the Future" Concept of the development, 2012).

Given the importance to modernize higher education (HE), the establishment of career counselling centres in higher education institutions (HEIs) and improving career counselling services centres to strengthen the integration of students from higher education to the labour market have become priorities in the Republic of Azerbaijan (Order of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan on approval of "Action Plan for 2020-2025 on the implementation of the Employment Strategy", 2020). The president's order targets increasing employment, securing full employment, supporting decent work, and amplifying labour productivity.

While employment of university graduates has been a rising issue in the Azerbaijan Republic, many higher education institutions (HEIs) have been remaining unaccountable for

preparing their students to work. The official statistics show that around 50% of university graduates are able to find work in their field of study (Guliyev, 2021). On the other hand, official figures of the State Statistics Committee indicate a real unemployment rate of 4% among graduates (as cited in European Training Foundation, 2020). Preventing unemployment and preparing students for their future careers requires the establishment and/or enhancement of emerging career counselling services centres in public universities in Azerbaijan.

The rationale behind our choice of three public universities in Baku and Khirdalan has been that these universities have already established career counselling services centres. All three universities may have assisted students with their academic life and future jobs on campus as they have been embracing diverse students who are locals and internationals.

Over 45,000 students have been studying at these three public universities and overall, three administrators and five career counsellors serve in three career counselling services centres (State Statistical Committee, 2022).

The rationale for selecting third- and fourth-year students has been that they may be better informed of their specialties and seek guidance for their future career options and education.

Based on the rationales mentioned above, our Capstone Team was highly optimistic that we would be able to gather sufficient information about career counselling services centres, the roles, and responsibilities of career counsellors and their administrators, and also explore students' perceptions for identifying their needs related to career counselling services centres.

### **1.3.2. Research Questions**

1. What career counselling services do public universities provide?
2. What are the roles and responsibilities of career counsellors in assisting students to make career choices?
3. What are the third- and fourth-year students' perceptions of career counselling services centres?

### **1.4. Significance of the Study**

Our Capstone Team aimed to investigate the function of career counselling services centres in public universities, the roles and responsibilities of career counsellors and administrators of those centres, and identify students' perceptions of career counselling services.

The results of this study may benefit public university stakeholders. Particularly, administrators at public universities may be in a better position to make the appropriate changes in their policy of solving their students' career concerns. In addition, university students may be aware of their career uncertainty and the factors that maintain it. Such acknowledgment may enable students to seek appropriate assistance when it is needed.

Finally, we aimed to create a handbook for administrators and career counsellors of career counselling services centres in three public universities that comprised their responsibilities and roles. Therefore, the handbook may have assisted their future performance and productivity of their services.

### **1.5. Definitions of Terms**

Several terms are important to this study. As such, the following terms are operationally defined:

The first term, "career counselling", is a process that may help students better analyze their abilities and interests and comprehend the vast array of occupations available to them by

engaging in career counselling, which allows them to make informed decisions about their future academic and professional development (Haneef et al., 2020).

The second term, “career counsellor”, is a staff member of the career counselling services who helps students make career choices, explore professional alternatives, prepare for a job, and involve them in an internship (University of South Florida, 2017).

The third term that needs some clarification is the senior students in their third and final year of university (Cambridge University Press, n.d.).

The fourth term, “administrator” of the career counselling services centres, is often found in the position of leadership in the mentioned organization or department. This individual is the decision-maker and planner who establishes and executes rules and procedures (Collins dictionary, 2022).

The fifth term, a public university, is a higher institution primarily supported using public funds from the government (Cambridge University Press, n.d.).



## **Chapter 2. Literature Review**

### **2.1. Career Counselling Services**

According to Watts and Fretwell (2004), career counselling services is the process of supporting a person in recognizing, accepting, and appropriately using their talents, skills, and interests in line with their goals and values. Hence, career counselling service is a demand in higher education, with an increasing percentage of students expressing uncertainty about which profession to pursue based on their education. Obtaining career goals needs well-planned jobs that lead to thriving professions (Hall, 2002). Given the importance of a career goal choice, the presence of career counselling services at universities is critical (Sharif et al., 2017). The centres for career development in higher education institutions have become an increasingly important segment of higher education institutions in the world's most industrialized countries (Kosanovic et al., 2020).

As stated by Choudhary (2014), career orientation is both a concept and a process. As a concept, career counselling services strive to guide individuals in their process of self-knowledge (Choudhary et al., 2014). As a process, it focuses on distinguishing strengths and weaknesses in self-direction as well as decision-making and problem-solving (Choudhary et al., 2014). Career counselling services are a solution to students' concerns about their future professional choices. It does not only assist students in making decisions but also provides them with the confidence and information necessary to make the right educational and career-related decisions in the future. Besides, it also helps a student learn about himself and the world of work to make career, educational, and life decisions (Sharif et al., 2017). Therefore, career counselling services can aid in the most effective use of human resources in the labour market and education by providing better matches between people's talents and interests and available employment and learning possibilities (OECD, 2004).

### **2.1.1. Contemporary Career Counselling Services**

Historically, career counselling services were primarily focused on the unemployment group (OECD, 2004). Although competition in the labour market has constantly been rising, organizations today cannot offer their workers lifetime employment (Savickas, 2000; Storey, 2000). Due to that mismatching, current career counselling services should be available to everyone at any stage of their lives, with an emphasis on career management abilities rather than immediate career choices (Cedefop, 2005; Herr, 2003).

Contemporary career counselling services encompass continuous services that are face-to-face and group meetings, telephone, and online guidance, all of which aim to assist individuals in making educational and career choices, as well as to develop the competencies necessary to plan and manage their careers (Cedefop, 2005; OECD, 2004).

Most educational institutions monitor their graduates' employability to show the effectiveness of their educational programmes and gather feedback for future enhancements (Humburg, Verhagen & Velden, 2013). Monitoring graduates' employability is critical to striking a balance between academic preparation and labour market requirements (Humburg, Verhagen & Velden, 2013).

The primary tasks of the career counselling services at the public universities in the Republic of Kazakhstan are to secure stable employment for students, coordinate students' employment, and create opportunities for graduates' careers to grow effectively (UNIWORK, 2013). That being said, the career counselling services serve the following target groups: applicants (by assisting them in adapting to contemporary socio-economic conditions in the educational field and monitoring their educational needs), students (by enhancing students' suitability for employer requirements; helping the students adapt to the labour market), and graduates (by cooperation with regional enterprises to address issues of their employment; promotional activities to assist them in finding jobs; updating information on alumni career

development). On average, 5-6 staff members work in the career centres at Kazakhstan's public universities (UNIWORK, 2013).

Career counselling services offered by universities in European nations, particularly in the United Kingdom, are designed to help students enhance their abilities via extracurricular activities not covered by their degree programmes. Career counselling offers skill development workshops and contests and assists student organizations in becoming more entrepreneurial and efficient. The Career counselling team promotes entrepreneurship by advising and assisting students in creating their enterprises. Moreover, the services indicated above provide seed money and hire a skilled consultant to guide students on how to start their projects. Staffing levels vary between 12 and 14 for an educational institution with 4,000 students (UNIWORK, 2013).

According to Korean practice, career counselling services benefit students in choosing majors, preparing them for the profession, planning for a lifetime, and even developing job and life skills (Lee & Goh, 2003). Career counselling services are also designed to aid individuals in finding their place in the world of work and encouraging the involvement of members of their support system (family and friends), as well as those trained to assist others in this process – career counsellors (Lee & Goh, 2003).

## **2.2. Roles and Responsibilities of Career Counsellors**

Brott (2004) has professed that previous counselling theories have claimed that counsellors should answer clients' questions based on quantitative data. However, the opposite constructivist theory required that metaphors from the clients' own stories were the most crucial source of data. Such an approach presented more information about the client; therefore, counsellors could help them be more aware of themselves (Brott, 2004). Consequently, counsellors moved from psychometric evaluation to story-based evaluation

because quantitative studies focused on the problem. In contrast, story-based evaluation could keep their attention on a client as an individual (Patton & McMahon, 2006).

At present, career counselling services involve a unique type of communication between two people, a counsellor and a client. Based on the principle of personal development and increasing the motivation of the client, a career counsellor is actively involved in solving their clients' career or educational problems and taking responsibility for professional decisions (Lacatus et al., 2015). Therefore, the career counselling process is a collaborative work between the counsellor and the students (Brown & Ryan Krane, 2000).

The National Association of College and Employers has reported that the average student-to-career counsellors' ratio is 1,889 to 1, and around one-third of students questioned in the college believed that their career counselling services are understaffed (NACE, n.d.). Considering NACE (n.d.), counsellors serve as advisors and mentors to assist their clients in gaining self-awareness, understanding of behavioural alternatives available, informing decision-making and achieving these objectives through counselling connecting the academic environment and the workplace (Lim & Patton, 2006). Hall (2004) reported that self-awareness and adaptability are necessary components of professional self-direction. Because of self-awareness, individuals choose their job path, adapt to the workplace, and become engaged in their work. Adaptability allows individuals to remain flexible, cope with a constantly changing environment, and self-correct to new environmental demands (Hall, 2004). Therefore, career counsellors should be specially trained to assist students in being informed about today's rapidly changing labour market. Possible knowledge of career counsellors has been inherited from more traditional counselling (e.g., dealing with the psychological impact of change) to career management strategies (e.g., exploring career options, goal setting, action planning, and facilitating an effective job search) (Neault, 2000).

The role of the career counsellor is to help students make the right decisions about their jobs by making them more aware of their values, interests, abilities, and skills and aiding to gain more self-confidence (Maingi et al., 2007). Besides, listening ability and communication skills are necessary for career counsellors to provide support and guidance to the students (Neault, 2000). In the job descriptions of career counsellors, there are no specific educational requirements for becoming a career counsellor; nonetheless, the majority of counsellors have a master's degree in counselling. However, a bachelor's degree in counselling or related to the human services field is preferable for the career counsellor position due to an extensive understanding of human development, counselling skills, and career development (The University of South Florida, 2017).

In theory, career counselling services should serve students throughout their time at the university, offering suitable guidance at each step of their professional development. Thus, a career counsellor is responsible for: (a) assisting individuals in developing great self-awareness; (b) providing students with resources so that they can be more aware of professions; (c) aiding students' involvement in the decision-making process regarding career choice; and (d) helping students become active organizers of their lives (Post et al., 2002).

Another responsibility of career counsellors is to conduct individual and group meetings to assist students in making decisions related to their career and education choices. Literature suggests that individual career counselling is appropriate for investigating the counsellor-student relationship (Heppner & Heppner, 2003; Whiston & Rose, 2015). Ryan Krane (1999) identified five intervention components: written activities, personalized interpretation and feedback, job information, modeling, and attention to developing support. Moreover, Whiston, Goodrich Mitts, and Wright (2017) introduced one more crucial intervention component: psychoeducational interventions.

During the individual consultation, which may last approximately 50 minutes, a career counsellor should ascertain the student's professional or educational choices. Besides, the career counsellor should assist in resolving any concerns or obstacles that may be impeding students' professional progress. For this reason, during the session, the career counsellor develops a strategy for overcoming these obstacles. In the next step, the career counsellor should regularly follow up with the student to verify that their objectives are relevant and attainable (University of York, 2022).

The University of South Florida has been providing career services to students to build the career readiness and career literacy skills they need, which will help them succeed now and in the future. The career services centre has been organizing group meetings and career seminars, encouraging students to make an appointment for online one-on-one assistance meetings, and preparing for job interviews, job fairs and events, and other career-related activities (University of South Florida, 2017).

According to Bright (2015), career development and computer skills are inextricably connected, so career counsellors should stop ignoring the potential of computer skills to improve their practice. So, career counsellors might benefit from using computer tools for compiling a database of alumni work positions, creating slides, and writing emails and documents (Zainudin, et al., 2020).

### **2.3. Students' Needs**

Spokane and Cruza-Guet (2005) believe that while selecting a profession, individuals look for conditions where they can put their talents and skills to use and reveal their attitudes and faith. The relationship between a person's personality and their surroundings determines their behaviour. This concept proposes that individuals are drawn to a particular profession because it contains characteristics comparable to their unique personalities and other background factors. Based on Holland (as cited at Spokane & Cruza-Guet, 2005), the

perspective emphasizes the need for self-knowledge and professional information as essential preparations for making career choices.

Keshf and Khanum (2021) state that career planning can support students in developing personal goals and determining current and future paths. Consequently, various counselling needs may arise when students want to make occupational or educational decisions for the future as they are likely to be concerned about acquiring new skills, internships, placement, job application, changing workplace, and other possible career counselling needs. Students may also feel that, in addition to theoretical education, they need self-awareness, the capacity to make decisions, and improved emotional control (Keshf & Khanum, 2021).

As mentioned by Kavale (2012), students' career counselling requirements were often addressed in attitudes, faith, prospective solutions to issues, satisfaction or dissatisfaction, and the degree of ambition. The requirements necessitate counselling to be assessed for being dynamic, finding gaps between the existing condition and the desired scenario by providing adequate strategies to enhance the real setting (Watkins et al., 2012). The research reveals that students "experience career decision difficulties" and indicates a need for career counselling and career services (Kavale, 2012, p. 29). Need is increasingly recognized as a critical normative phrase that provides a foundation for various policy-driven career guidance initiatives, programs, or single career advice and counselling interventions (Kavale, 2012). Specifically, undergraduates faced different career-related demands during their university education, each of which has been discussed in further depth. In addition to delivering information about internships and jobs, career counsellors also need to provide services such as drafting CVs, preparing for interviews, stress management (Sultana, 2004; Szilagyi, 2008), and career counselling (Sultana, 2004).

### **2.3.1. Career Counselling to Third- and Fourth-year Students**

Various types of counselling have been more popular and better supplied in most colleges worldwide over the years (Sun & Yuen, 2012). That is said, career counsellors should attend to students' concerns in the career choice process, deliver information about career choices, and aid students in developing decisions, particularly those who have trouble making decisions (Goliath, 2012). Mylonas (2012) evaluated the association between professional decision-making challenges, problematic career thinking, and generalized self-efficacy among students and found that one of the most important differences between decided and undecided students was a lack of awareness. Besides, the value of a student's career decision in terms of efficacy is determined by the information available to them when they need to make that choice (Goliath, 2012).

Sharif et al., (2017) conclude that many young people with college degrees do not have a job, and on the other hand, many positions in fields need to be filled by high-skilled employees. To bridge the gap between students' offers and company needs, career counselling services at the university level can be vital as they may match students' career ambitions with the labour market and supply career assistance services (Sharif et al., 2017). However, a minor influence of career counselling services was discovered, with nearly half of the students claiming to have received no help from career counsellors. Also, students place a high value on information from family and friends, showing a lack of autonomy when choosing professional selections (Crishana et al., 2014).

In his study, Beggs (2008, p. 381) found the criterion "match with interest" was judged more important than work features, significant characteristics, and social advantages by students when they chose a major. Today's university students are more focused on their financial future than ever before, on the contrary, students can achieve their goals, even though the majority focus their essential decisions on their academic performance (Beggs et



al., 2008). Nevertheless, some students' academic achievement may not enable them to succeed in certain majors that demand more time and effort than others.

## **Chapter 3. Research Methodology**

### **3.1. Description of Methodology**

Our capstone team utilized a qualitative methodology for this study. The purpose of this explorative qualitative study was (a) to explore career counselling services centres in public universities in Azerbaijan (b) to determine the roles and responsibilities of career counsellors (c) to discover what factors contribute to students' career choices (d) to identify challenges third- and fourth-year students encounter while deciding on their future career choices. The exploratory research design may have added new knowledge, understanding, and meaning to career counselling services (Yin 2018; Merriam, 2012).

The research objective determined the research design chosen to address the research questions (Crotty, 1998). The flexibility of the qualitative research design was helpful because it allowed us to determine perceptions of third- and fourth-year students of career counselling services centres in public universities in the Republic of Azerbaijan. We were interested in how third- and fourth-year students, career counsellors, and administrators constructed meaning or made sense of their environment and their experiences within it (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Besides, qualitative research design allowed us to observe participants in their natural environments and consider contextual aspects of a phenomenon (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018).

### **3.2. Design of the Study**

We used exploratory design since conducting interviews with respondents was appropriate. However, it was undertaken to obtain a better knowledge of the current situation but did not provide decisive conclusions (Creswell, 2013). The data were collected based on semi-structured one-to-one interviews with the third- and fourth-year students, career counsellors, and administrators. We inquired about the perceptions of third- and fourth-year students, career counsellors, and administrators as well as an understanding of the importance

of career counselling services centres. Additionally, our team members wrote memos to keep a record of our thoughts and clarify thinking about the research issue (Birks et al., 2008).

This study addressed novel issues that had no prior attention in Azerbaijan to gain a better understanding of students' perceptions of the career counselling services centres at public universities A, B, and C in the Azerbaijan Republic.

### **3.2.1. Target Population**

The participants of this study were third and fourth-year students, administrators, and career counsellors of the career counselling services centres at three public universities in Azerbaijan. Moreover, the university's administration received permission letters (Appendix A) from the ADA University so that we were able to conduct our research. The third- and fourth-year students were identified as Azerbaijani citizens and had attended public universities under the supervision of the Republic of Azerbaijan's Ministry of Education, while such requirements were not necessary for administrators working with students.

### **3.2.2. Setting**

The study took place at public universities A, B, and C in the Azerbaijan Republic. The selection of three public universities was based on the access to the targeted audience and the fact that we did not want to limit our study site to a single university and to interview students for acquiring a more profound knowledge about the absence or existence of a career counselling services centres in them. The reason for the selection was that all three universities did not provide enough information about career counselling services on the universities' websites though they had career counselling services centres. Another main reason for choosing these universities as research sites were their diverse faculties and students with different needs.

### 3.2.3. Recruitment

Our team recruited eligible participants through face-to-face inquiry, and then we informed our potential participants about the study, shared informed consent, upheld ethical standards, and kept them until the study was done (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). We recruited third- and fourth-year students, career counsellors, and administrators working with them based on their availability rather than selecting from the whole population.

The Capstone team gained approval from the management of A, B, and C Universities to get access to conduct the interviews. Additionally, we contacted individuals via telephone and offered them to participate in this research. The participants were guaranteed that their replies would remain confidential, and they could withdraw from the research at any moment.

As a further step, we reached out to the participants to arrange the dates and places for conducting interviews that were convenient for all of them (Saldana, 2011).

### 3.2.4. Sampling Method and Sample Size

We used non-probability “convenience sampling” (Creswell, 2013) to choose participants based on their willingness and availability to participate in the study. Thus, we selected a sample based on factors such as time, money, location, and accessibility of venues or participants (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The sample size was twelve participants in total. We visited the universities and interviewed three administrators, three career counsellors, and six third- and fourth-year students both face-to-face and via Zoom (See Table 1).

**Table 1**

*Demographic Profile of Research Participants*

Participants	Position	University	Years of experience
Aysha	Administrator	B	2 years
Leyli	Administrator	C	1 year
Aydan	Career Counsellor	C	6 months

Eldar	Career Counsellor	A	2 years
Farid	Career Counsellor	B	3 years
Nigar	student	A	fourth-year
Khanum	student	C	fourth-year
Hasan	student	C	fourth-year
Lala	student	B	third-year
Nazrin	student	A	third-year
Ruslan	student	B	third-year

### 3.3. Data Collection

Our Capstone Team used interviews and memoing for this research, which meant three of us contacted the participants to obtain their confirmation and then decided who would do interviews. Memoing assisted us in making conceptual bridges from raw facts to abstract concepts that clarified research phenomena in the study context (Birks et al., 2008). The one-to-one interviews were conducted at three public universities in Baku in the middle of February and at the beginning of March 2022.

Using semi-structured interviews was the most appropriate source of data collection (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016) as we wanted to better understand the roles and duties of career counsellors, students' perceptions about career counselling, and their needs. Semi-structured interviews aided to discover factors contributing to students' career choices and verify conclusions based on the qualitative data (Creswell, 2009).

The semi-structured interviews allowed us to ask probing questions. Besides, this structure assisted in responding to current conditions and finding out the respondent's worldview and new insights on the topic (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). We prepared a series of open-ended and closed-ended questions and then interviewed participants for 45 minutes.

Interviews were conducted in the Azerbaijan language. We also piloted the study to develop our study (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

We kept a record of our thoughts while collecting data and wrote memos that helped identify the strengths and weaknesses of the process. Memos served to clarify thinking about a research issue, as a tool they helped articulate our assumptions and subjective viewpoints regarding career counselling and facilitated the creation of the study design from the time a study was conceptualized (Birks et al., 2008).

### **3.4. Data Analysis**

After conducting the interviews, we transcribed the interview, which lasted until the middle of March. The third step was coding and later categorizing data for the interview, which was held at the end of March 2022 (Carl & Louise, 2003).

We did the thematic analysis on the interviews since it allowed us to thoroughly study the data to uncover common themes, i.e., ideas and thoughts (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The thematic analysis assisted in modifying the specific objectives of our study, resulting in a rich and thorough but complicated account of data. We conducted the following six stages: familiarisation (transcribing the data), coding, categorizing (collecting codes), reviewing categories (modifying and developing the preliminary categories that we have defined in the categorizing stage), defining (determining the essence of each category), naming categories, and writing up (Creswell, 2009). The collection and analysis of the data took a month, and the data first was analysed in the Azerbaijan language and then translated into the English language.

### **3.4.1. Trustworthiness**

Ensuring the trustworthiness of this study, we recorded the interviews, transcribed them, and applied systematic coding of the data (Guba & Lincoln, 1981; Guba & Lincoln, 1982; Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

### **3.4.2. Credibility**

The qualitative inquiry's credibility was determined by respondent validation. We got feedback on our preliminary or emerging results from the interviewees and coded the interview transcripts in the original language (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Patton, 1999). Additionally, we utilized Krueger and Casey's (2009) seven-step procedure to increase the credibility of the interview protocol (Appendix C), including brainstorming (questions were discussed and written), phrase questions (questions were rephrased based on participants' understanding), sequence question (to order questions from general to specific sequence), and we estimated time for each question, got feedback from others, revised the questions, and tested questions.

### **3.4.3. Confirmability**

Interviews were conducted by three team members. We transcribed, coded, and analysed the collected data extensively, consulted one another, made input, and reached a consensus among us. To ensure confirmability (objectivity), the first member of the team documented any possible assumptions and biases before doing the study, thus minimizing subjectivity. Besides, the second member of the team rigorously analyzed all methods and stages of the study to eliminate subjectivity (Guba & Lincoln, 1981; Guba & Lincoln, 1982; Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

### **3.4.4. Ethical Issues**

As the confidentiality, data access, and informed consent form were included in Patton's (2015) checklist, from the beginning of the recruitment process, study participants

were given extensive information on the data collection procedure, analysis, and data access. The participants signed an informed consent (Appendix B) form that included a description of their rights and our research team's obligations. As a part of this study, to protect participants' identities, their true names were substituted with other names provided by ourselves, and the university's names changed into A, B, and C.

#### **3.4.5. Member Check**

Furthermore, we did member checks to reassert the findings. We solicited participant feedback on the correctness of verbatim statements and gained their consent to use their direct personal quotes in written or vocal research reports (Creswell, 2013). All twelve participants confirmed that the summary of the findings sufficiently and correctly reflected their viewpoints on career counselling services whose direct statements appeared in the study granted permission to use them.

### **3.5. Limitations**

This study had limitations that needed to be considered. Literature on this topic related to the Azerbaijani context was limited. More than that, six students from three public universities represented a small size compared to the total population of students at public universities in Azerbaijan. Another limitation was the time constraint since the Capstone Team was obligated to complete this project within a certain period from mid-February to mid-May. One administrator's refusal to participate in the interview might be seen as a limitation. As the final year students were doing internships, three out of six scheduled face-to-face interviews were conducted online via Zoom.



## **Chapter 4. Findings**

The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine career counselling services in public universities in Azerbaijan, investigate the roles and responsibilities of administrators and career counsellors, determine the students' perceptions of career counselling services centres and identify students' needs regarding future career and education. This chapter presented the following sub-topics: career counselling services centres, roles, responsibilities, and skills of career counsellors and administrators, and students' perceptions of career counselling services.

### **4.1. Career Counselling Services Centres**

After analyzing the collected data, the findings indicated that career counselling services centres in these three public universities selected as research sites in Azerbaijan have been emerging regarding structure, functioning, and services delivered. The career counsellors may have attempted to help students with career planning, prepared them for future work, offered internship programs and assisted them in building resumes, and provided career guidance to graduates by informing them of the available job vacancies in the labour market.

#### **4.1.1. Staff expertise**

The findings of this study indicated that career counsellors and administrators in all three research sites had different educational backgrounds, which were not relevant to counselling, as they did not have a bachelor's degree in the discipline of human services. Moreover, staff members of the career counselling services centres did not participate in training or had certificates of completion of courses related to student counselling, student professional development, career theories, career development, counselling theories, and the psychology of human development. But despite relevant training and certificates in career counselling, career counsellors actively participated in the training related to social subjects

that may have helped them do their work. Given the different types of training, Aydan, a career counsellor from University C emphasized the following:

...mən Birləşmiş Millətlər Təşkilatında işləyərkən öz peşəm üzrə təcrübə əldə etdim və burada müxtəlif təlimlər aldım. Onlar yaxşı təşkil olunmuşdu və mən artıq bu bilikləri işdə istifadə edirəm...

[... I received practice in my profession while working at the United Nations, where We had varied training. It was well-organized, and I am already using it at work...]

Likewise, Aysha, the administrator of the career counselling services centre at

University B reported:

...mənim bakalavr təhsilim Biznesin təşkili və idarə olunması olub, magistratura təhsilim İstehsalat və Xidmət sahələrinin idarə olunması olub. Yəni bir növ idarəetməni bitirmişəm...

[...My bachelor's degree was in business organization and management, and my master's degree was in production and services management. That is, I finished a kind of management...]

Both participants argued that despite their varied educational backgrounds, they had management skills and had undergone training, though not directly related to career counselling. They were determined that they were able to perform their work at the career counselling services centres.

The number of people required to deliver career counselling services was insufficient in these public universities as only 1 to 2 counsellors were working in career counselling services centres. On average, about 700 students could participate in training and individual interviews with career counsellors during the academic year. Given the number of students, the career counsellor could only be conducted with about 15 students per year in each university, meaning only a small number of students could benefit from the services available in the centres. Eldar, the career counsellor of the career counselling services centres at University A believed that a small number of employees impeded the development of the career counselling services centres. He professed:

...minlərlə tələbəsi olan universitetin tələbələrinə xidmət göstərmək fiziki cəhətdən mümkün deyil... onlarla effektiv ünsiyyət qurmaq fiziki cəhətdən mümkün deyil...

[...it is physically impossible to provide services to the university with thousands of students... it is physically impossible to communicate effectively with them...]

Similarly, Farid, the career counsellor of the career counselling services centre at the

University B stated:

...Açıqı, işçimiz yoxdur. Ayan xanım, demək olar ki, il yarımındır ki, analıq məzuniyyətindədir. Beləliklə, fiziki işçimiz yoxdur ki, onunla fikir mübadiləsi aparaq, onun məsləhətlərini dinləyək...

[...Frankly, we do not have an employee. Alone, Ayan khanum has been on maternity leave for almost a year and a half. So, we do not have a physical employee with whom we can exchange ideas and listen to his or her advice...]

The quoted administrators believed that the number of career counsellors delivering services and the third- and fourth-year students remained disproportional. They desired to have more career counsellors in the centres to manage the increasing number of students who may have needed their assistance.

The study also revealed that students who were first involved as volunteers in the career counselling services centres in three universities and then after graduation were hired as career counsellors. The administrations of the career counselling services centres ascertained that they were aware of student needs, interests, and problems, but they also acknowledged that students they were recruiting for being a career counsellor were more informed about all that. Leyli, the administrator of the career counselling services centre at University C shared her insights related to career counsellor recruitment:

...Mən əvvəllər bu universitetdə tələbə olmuşam və nəticədə burada işlərin necə getdiyini hərtərəfli başa düşürəm. Keçmiş bir tələbə kimi tələbələrin karyeraları ilə bağlı düzgün qərarlar qəbul etmələrinin nə qədər çətin olduğunu başa düşürəm...

[...I used to be a student at this university, and as a result, I have a thorough understanding of how things work here. As a former student, I can understand how hard it is for students to make good decisions about their careers...]

Leyli's quote manifested an employment practice that was applied in her and the other two universities to staff the career counselling services centres as well as utilize graduates' experiences regarding career counselling once they gained in their respective universities.

Noticeably, the employee number was limited in the career counselling services centres in all three research sites, which may have impeded the development of the career counselling services. The lack of training and certificates in career counselling services may have hindered its development and success as well.

## **4.2. Administrators of Career Counselling Services Centres**

### **4.2.1. Roles and Responsibilities of Administrators**

The Capstone team discovered that career counselling services centres were managed and led by administrators. Administrators of career counselling services centres in two research sites were faculty members. Hence, the career counselling services centres in the third site were headed by the leader of the Student Youth Organisations' Union. The staff of the three centres was ascertained to be cognizant of the university's conditions and the students' needs and problems.

According to administrators, they attempted to receive the necessary job experience and sought many networking possibilities as building friendships and cooperative connections with other instructors, students, and public and governmental organizations were critical to them. Their network connections could serve as references later in their advancement to the position, which was an administrator of a career counselling services centres. Administrators also were required to communicate with public and governmental enterprises to engage them in providing students with training, seminars, and job opportunities through the career counselling services centres.

Moreover, career counselling services centres' administrators, according to the research, were obliged to perform as career counsellors due to the small number of career

counsellors. They were supposed to organise group meetings, training sessions, and job fairs (See Table 2). Regarding the roles and responsibilities, Leyli, the administrator of the career counselling services centre at University C emphasised:

...Daha çox biz burda, təlimlər təşkil edirik, tədbirlər təşkil edirik, buda iş dünyasından olan şəxslərin, başqa sığorta şirkətlərindən, banklardan olan şəxslər bura gəlirlər, tələbələrimizi iş dünyasına hazırlayırlar. Belə deyək ki, bizə dəstək olurlar, məsələn, düzgün CV necə hazırlayıb, özünü bir iş dünyasında necə göstərə bilər, onlarla bağlı tələbələrə yol göstərirlər...

[... Mainly, we organize training and events. As a result, people from the business world, other insurance companies, and banks come here and prepare our students for the business world. Let's say that they support us, for example, how to prepare a proper CV, how to show themselves in the business world, and they guide the students...]

Besides organizing group meetings, training sessions, and job fairs, the administrators monitored the development process of a database on statistics related to graduates' employment and informed them about vacancies available in the job market. About the data collection and informing students on job vacancies, Aysha, the administrator of the career counselling services centres at University B noted:

...Məzunların davamlı olaraq statistikasına nəzarət eləyirəm. Onlar çünki Universitetdən bitirmə kağızı aldıqda biz onlardan birinci mərhələdə işləyib-İşləmədikləri axırıncı məlumatları yeniləyirik, ondan sonra da həmin məlumatlar üzərindən izləyirik. İşləməyənlərlə yenə də əlaqə saxlayırıq...

[...I constantly monitor the statistics of graduates. We get up-to-date information on whether they worked in the first step because they obtained a graduation paper from the university, and then we follow up on that information. We still keep in touch with unemployed graduates...]

Furthermore, administrators had a significant role in selecting career counsellors and were responsible for upgrading their skills.

**Table 2***Roles and Responsibilities of the Administrators*

Function	Description
Planning	Planning of the career counselling services
Designing	Designing activities (career fairs, training) Establishing a relationship with organizations
Managing	Recruiting career counsellors Improving skills of career counsellors Managing the collected data about students' job positions
Monitoring	Monitoring how career counsellors provide career counselling

To sum up, administrators have been working with students and seemed to be useful for them by identifying their needs. Furthermore, they may have attempted to develop relationships with private and public sector organizations to provide students with employment opportunities and offer internship programmes. Besides, administrators may have served as career counsellors in their absence by arranging group training for students.

**4.2.2. Skills of the Administrators**

Administrators of career counselling services centres assumed that they needed to possess administrative skills to complete both their duties and to ensure the success of their teams and the university they worked at.

They also mentioned good communication skills to be a requirement for administrators not only to strengthen professional relationships with their workforce but also to understand students and provide guidance to them.

Moreover, administrators emphasized the importance of interpersonal skills they had to have to build a good relationship with everyone from students to enterprises. They ascertained that career counsellors should also have interpersonal skills as the most important

skill to enable them to perform at career counselling services centres. The ability to connect with students and collaborate well with employees would make the administrator approachable. Thus, accessibility was indicated to be critical in providing career services.

Leyli, the administrator of the career counselling services centres at University C stated:

...Mərkəzdə əlçatmazsınızsa, işçiləriniz vəzifəsinə zidd olan rəhbərliyiniz üçün məsləhət istəməzlər. Tələbələrlə məşğul olduğumuz zaman onların bizim əlçatan olduğumuzu düşünmələri və onların narahatlıqlarını dinləməyə can atmaları çox vacibdir...

[...If you are unapproachable at a centre, your personnel will not ask for advice your guidance, which contradicts the administrator's duty. It is vital that when we deal with students, they think we are available and eager to listen to their concerns...]

Furthermore, administrators should communicate with students, collaborate with foreign companies, and learn from other educational institutions across the world in both their native language and a foreign language. Therefore, they expected themselves and other career counselling services members to have good communication and language skills. Aysha, the administrator of career counselling services in University B, highlighted:

...Bu vəzifə üçün dil biliyi önəmlidir. Lap yüksək səviyyədə olmasa da, digər universitetlərin, xarici universitetlərin baza olaraq, və yaxud da müəssisələrlə əlaqələr qurmaq üçün önəmlidi, məsələn indi hamısı Azərbaycan müəssisəsi olmur axı. Mail gəlir, məktub gəlir bunlara cavab vermək lazımdır...

[... Language skills are essential for this duty. Although not at a high level, it is significant for other universities, particularly foreign universities, to use it as a tool or create relationships with enterprises, not all of them function as Azerbaijani enterprises now. Mail and letters are being sent and you must respond to them as well...]

Moreover, administrators should ensure their workforce has the appropriate information for doing their job, keep them informed on changes, give and get feedback, and do many other important professional activities. Time management skills were underlined to help administrators arrange their time more effectively, be more productive, and complete all

tasks assigned at work. For instance, Aysha, the administrator of the career counselling services at University B, added:

...Bizim təşkilati keyfiyyət bacarıqlarımız olmalıdır. Çünki, burda tədbirləri də təşkil edilir, tədbirə uyğun tələbələrin vaxtını nizamlamalıdır. Yəni sənin həm bu tərəflə əlaqən yaxşı olmalıdır...

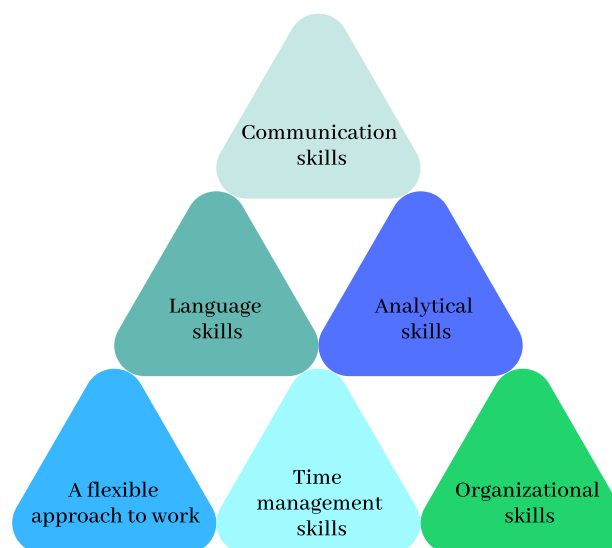
[...We must have organizational skills. Because the events are organized here. Therefore, students' time must be regulated according to the events. For that reason, you must have a good relationship on this side....]

Having analytical skills to make the right decisions about any urgent matter was required for administrators.

To summarise, administrators of career counselling services centres should possess a variety of skills, including communication, linguistic, management, organizational, time management, and analytical skills, as well as a flexible attitude to work to be successful in their jobs (See Figure 1).

### Figure 1

#### *Skills of Administrators*





### 4.3. Career Counsellors

#### 4.3.1. Roles and Responsibilities of the Career Counsellors

Career counsellors claimed that their duties and responsibilities had changed during the services' existence. Due to the students' lack of requirements and demands, they did not have much to do at the start of the academic year, as they stated. Students, on the other hand, usually made appointments with career counsellors near the beginning of the second semester, as a result, career counsellors assisted a significant number of students during this time. As Aydan, University C career counsellor mentioned:

...Bu, bizim məsuliyyətimizdir və tələbələrımızlə karyera məsləhətləşmələri əhəmiyyətli dərəcədə fərqlənir. Bəzi günlərdə çoxlu tələbə olur, bəzilərinə isə heç yoxdur. Bir qayda olaraq, tələbələrin buraxılış imtahanları, tətilər və s. əsasında semestr boyu baş verir...

[...This is our responsibility, and career counselling appointments with our students differ significantly. On some days, we have a large number of students, whereas, on others, we have none. Typically, it comes and goes throughout the semester, based on students' final exams, holidays, etc...]

All career counsellors talked about their responsibilities, such as drafting papers and documents assigned to them by the Head of the career counselling services centres. When we asked questions about their key responsibilities, career counsellors said the following:

- establishing ongoing contact with enterprises to attract the best and the most successful in their fields, especially alumni of their university; creating an internship program for students; organising training and seminars in the university; and cooperation agreements with enterprises;
- creating database statistics of students to help them to find appropriate internship programs or jobs for alumni;
- arranging labour fairs, training, and masterclasses for the students.

Farid, the career counsellor at University B, emphasised:

...Tələbələrin müraciətləri qrup şəklində olur həm fərdi şəkildə olur. Fərdi şəkildə daha çox olur. Özləri müraciət edirlər iş imkanları ilə bağlı, ixtisaslarında hansı işlər əldə edə bilirlər, bunlarla bağlı müraciətlərə suallar olur. Qrup haqqında biz mütamədi təlimlər həyata keçiririk. Məncə, hər bir tələbəyə fərdi yanaşmaq lazımdır ki, onun problemini həll olunsun, ona düzgün yol göstərsin...

[...The meetings with students are organized individually and as a group as well. It happens more individually. They approach job opportunities and they ask questions about what jobs they can get based on their professions. For group meetings, we conduct regular training. In my opinion, each student should be approached individually, to solve his problem and show him the right way...]

Eldar, the career counsellor of University A, also added:

...Fərdi söhbətin köməyi ilə biz tələbələrin potensialını kəşf edə bilirik...

[...With the help of individual conversation, we can discover students' potential...]

Another major finding is that the career counsellors were also responsible for supporting students with the design of projects and start-ups, the design implementation of the project, and the launch of the project as well. Aydan, the career counsellor at University C, added:

...Karyera Mərkəzi hər zaman startap layihələri üçün açıqdır. Bundan əlavə, istənilən tələbə mərkəzimizə yaxınlaşaraq biznes konsepsiyasını bizimlə bölüşə bilər. Biz ona kömək etmək üçün əlimizdən gələni edəcəyik...

[...the Career Centre is always open for start-up projects. Additionally, any student can approach our centre and share their business concept with us. We will make every effort to assist him/her]

In contrast, the career counsellor of University A, Eldar, believed it was not their responsibility to assist students in developing their ideas and start-ups:

...Tələbələr hərdən bizə qeyri-adi tələblərlə müraciət edirlər. Məsələn, bu yaxınlarda bizdən grant təklifinin hazırlanmasında köməklik etməyimizi xahiş etdilər. Bu bizim məsuliyyətimiz deyil...

[...Students occasionally approach us with unusual requirements. For instance, we were recently requested to assist with developing a grant proposal. This is not our responsibility...]

Career counsellors in three public universities perform a range of duties. They mainly conduct training, seminars, and other events for students to improve their planning and employability skills as well (See Picture 1). Besides, after developing database statistics related to graduates' employment, the administrators also explore available job vacancies in the job market and inform graduates about vacancies.

### Picture 1

#### *Roles and Responsibilities of Career Counsellors*



#### 4.3.2. Skills of the Career Counsellors

Career counsellors also need to have good communication and listening skills to assist students in making decisions about their future careers. To connect with students and work with foreign companies, career counsellors must be able to speak and write in both their native language and a foreign language. As, Aydan, the career counsellor Aydan from university C, noted:

...ilk növbədə ünsiyyətçil olmağın vacibliyi. Bu mütləqdir. Əgər ünsiyyətə üstünlük verilsə, mənim fikrimcə, o, ilk növbədə nə istədiklərini başa düşmək, sonra isə tələblərini yerinə yetirmək və uğurla ünsiyyət qurmaq üçün zəruri olan dil bacarıqlarına malik olmalıdır...

[...the importance of being communicative first. This is a must. If communication is prioritized, he or she, in my opinion, must possess the language abilities necessary

first to understand what they want and then to meet their demands and communicate successfully...]

Time management skills also help career counsellors arrange their time more effectively, be more productive, and complete all tasks assigned at work. They also need to have problem-solving skills to provide instant help for work problems. Farid, the career counsellor from university B, stated:

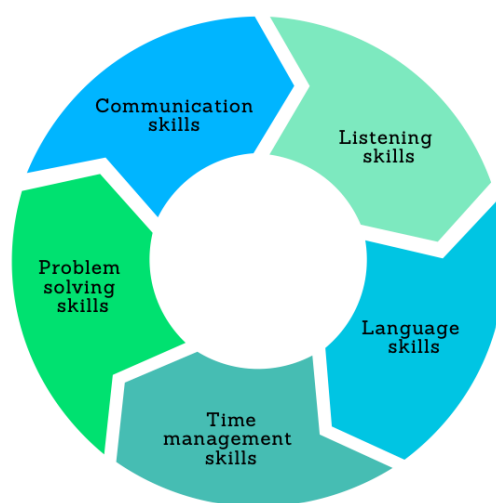
...Əlavə olaraq, time management bacarıqlarınız olmalıdır. İkinci olaraq deyim sizə- problem həll etmə bacarıqlarınızəə olmalıdır. Spontan ele problem çıxır ki, onu həll etmək lazımdır...

[... In addition, you must have time management skills. Secondly, I must say that you must have problem-solving skills. You should be able to solve a spontaneous problem...]

To conclude, career counsellors need to have different skills to assist students in making realistic decisions about their education and career (See Figure 2). They should provide the most appropriate advice to the students who have concerns regarding their career and future education.

## Figure 2

*Skills of the Career Counsellors*



#### 4.4. Obstacles of Career Counselling Services Centres

The findings indicated that career counselling services centres were under the control of the university administration, which defines the duties and framework that members of the organization fulfill (See Table 3). Career counselling services centres in these three universities were dependent on the heads of the universities, as a result, it creates obstacles to bringing the innovations which intervene in the development of career counselling services centres. According to Farid, the career counsellor of University B:

...Bütün fəaliyyətləriniz, etmək istədiyiniz bütün işlər iyerarxik olaraq müəyyən bir bölmə ilə bağlıdır. Yenilik gətirmək bir az çətinidir...

[...All your activities, all the things you want to do, are hierarchically connected to a certain section. It is a bit difficult to bring innovations...]

In addition, financial support was also important to bring innovations to career counselling services. The career counselling services centres would benefit if funded by public and private goods. The lack of funding was a reason for services' low-quality standards and a lack of projects and internship programs.

Other findings show that the parents served as a major influence in the students' career decision-making and career development. Career counsellors believed that the parents had influenced their children's careers and educational choices because parents themselves made career-related decisions for their children. The career counsellor of the career services centres at University A, Eldar emphasized:

...Deyərdim ki, valideyn təzyiqi ən böyük problemdir. Çünki valideynlər övladlarının özlərinin sahib olmadıqları peşələrə sahib olmasını istəyirlər... Burada valideyn təzyiqi, məlumatsızlığı ən böyük problemdir; Başqa heç nə müşahidə etməmişəm...

[...I would say that parental pressure is the biggest problem. Because parents want their children to have professions that they themselves were not able to pursue... Parental pressure and ignorance are the biggest issues here; I have not observed anything else...]

The other biggest obstacle for the development of the career counselling services centres was that the majority of students did not hold an interest in career counselling activities, such as training, group meetings related to career advice, or internship programs. The students were unsure of their career path and undecided about their future. As Eldar, the career counsellor of University A, mentioned:

...Onlar üçün təcrübə proqramının əhəmiyyətini izah edirik, maaş almasalar belə, ən azı 3-5 ay əmək bazarında olacaqlar, iş dünyası haqqında məlumat əldə edəcəklər, onların qazanacaqları təcrübə əvəzsizdir onlar üçün. Biz tələbələri təcrübəyə göndərə bilmirik, çünki tələbələr təcrübə proqramlarından ödəniş tələb edirlər. Tələbələr arasında nə qədər tənbəlliyin olduğunu düşünün, bu da əhəmiyyətli bir maneədir... [ ...We explain the importance of internship programs for them, even if they are not paid, they will be in the labour market for at least 3 to 5 months, you will learn about the business world, and the experience they will have is invaluable for them. And we cannot send students for an internship because the students require payment from internship programs. Consider how much laziness exists among students, which is a significant obstacle... ]

**Table 3**

*Obstacles of Career Counselling Services Centres*

being under the control of the university administration

---

financial support

---

parental pressure

---

unwillingness among students

---

unawareness of students

In conclusion, the findings revealed that parents play an important role in their children's professional decisions and development. Besides, students were unwilling to participate in the training, meetings, and seminars organized by career counselling services centres. Career counselling services centres had difficulty getting students to attend their career counselling sessions, seminars, and workshops.

#### 4.5. Students' Perceptions of Career Counselling

The major findings of this study showed that although career counselling services centres provide services for guidance students, the students' perceptions of career counselling services centres were quite the opposite. Based on the findings, we have found that the students' perceptions of the career counselling services centres were limited. Furthermore, there were no resources of career counselling services or information available for students that they could use to meet their needs (See Figure 3).

Career counselling services were charged with the delivery of comprehensive programs, which includes providing counselling on career and assisting students in selecting the proper future education. However, according to our findings, career counsellors assigned these responsibilities to the educators or faculty mentors. For example, Eldar, the career counsellor from University A, stated:

...Biz tələbələrə gələcək təhsilləri ilə bağlı məsləhət verməkdən məsul deyilik. Lakin biz tələbələri arzuladıqları karyeranın müsbət və mənfi tərəfləri haqqında məlumat verən müəllimlərimizə yönləndiririk...

[...We are not responsible for advising students on their future studies. Nevertheless, we direct students to our lecturers, who inform students about the pros and cons of their desired career...]

Farid, another career counsellor, from University B also noted:

...Tələbələr gələcək ixtisasları ilə bağlı narahatlıqlarını bildirdikdə, biz onları fərdi söhbətlər üçün müəllimlərinə göndəririk.

[When students express their concerns regarding their future specialty, we send them to their lecturers for individual conversations...]

The results of this study also indicated that third- and fourth-year students expressed an interest in pursuing a relevant master's degree. Lack of awareness about educational possibilities was mentioned as one of the difficulties students encountered. For that reason, some students were advised by career counsellors to have consultations with professors and other faculty members about the advantages and disadvantages of professions and the

universities where they intended to continue their education. Nigar, the fourth-year student, noted:

...Universitetimizin müəllimləri ilə yanaşı, fakültə mentoruna da yaxınlaşıb soruşdum ki, xaricdə hansı universitet daha yaxşı reputasiyaya malikdir və hansı ixtisas mənim üçün daha faydalı olacaq...

[...I have approached our university teachers as well as the faculty mentor and asked, which university abroad had the best reputation and which specialty would be most beneficial to me...]

Another major finding was that the students failed to attend events organized by career counselling services such as seminars, workshops, and appointments because they did not show any interest in the services given by career counselling. As a result, they did not approach career counselling services centres to get advice related to their future career or education.

Students' perceptions of career counselling challenged themselves since they believed the services' primary objective was to discuss broad career concepts without offering specific guidance related to students' needs. Thus, Khanum, the fourth-year student, mentioned her and her groupmates' ideas regarding career counselling:

...Mən hesab edirəm ki, Karyera Məsləhətçiliyi tələbələrin öz karyera yollarını toplamaq və müzakirə etmək üçün fəaliyyət göstərir. Ancaq eşitməmişəm ki, bu məsləhət proqramı tələbələrə universitet və iş seçimləri haqqında fərdi söhbətlər təqdim edir...

[... I believe career counselling is a time for students to assemble and discuss their career paths. However, I have not heard that this counselling program provides students with individual conversations about university and work options...]

Third and fourth-year students emphasized the need for internship programs in the commercial sector and government. The value of freshman internship programs was also emphasized by the students, but regrettably, the university did not include them for the first two years. So, fourth-year student, Hasan, highlighted the importance of expanding the Career Counselling services' responsibilities:

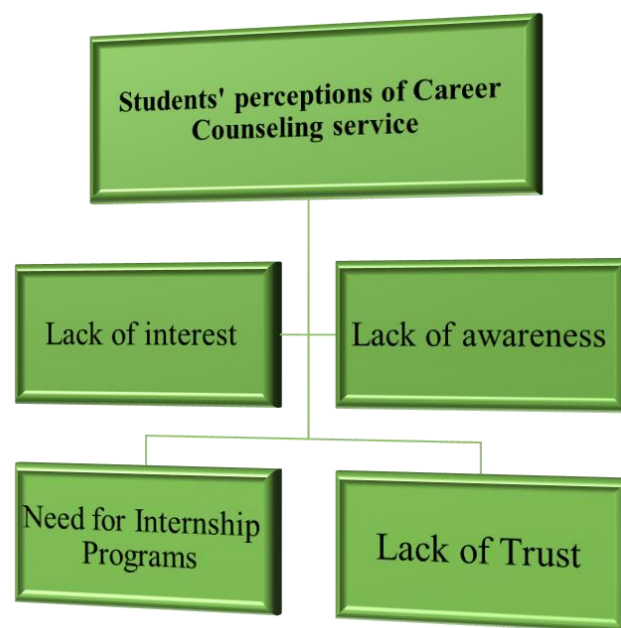


...Birinci kursumun sonunda təcübə proqramında iştirak etmək istəyimlə bağlı Karyera Məsləhətçiliyi xidmətinə müraciət etdim, lakin birinci kurs tələbəsi olduğum üçün mənə heç bir seçim təklif edə bilmədilər...

[...At the end of my freshman year, I approached the career counselling services about my desire to participate in an internship program, but they were unable to provide me with any options due to my status as a freshman...]

### Figure 3

*Students' perceptions of career counselling services centres*



To conclude, students did not demonstrate a willingness to approach career counselling services centres, because they had a lack of trust. It may stem from a lack of mutual understanding of responsibilities and expectations between students and counsellors, as a result, students have no interest in participating in the events organized by career counselling services centres.

According to our findings, career counselling services overestimate the quality of their activities because all career counsellors gave an 8 out of 10 rating to the counselling activities. However, none of the interviewed students had participated in training or seminars and had only heard about the centre's activities from their groupmates or seniors.

The main purpose of this study was to explore the roles and responsibilities of career counsellors and administrators, as well as the students' perceptions of career counselling services. More specifically, we wanted to determine students' needs regarding career decisions and their perceptions of career counselling services.

#### **4.6. Discussion**

Career counsellors should have specialized training in career counselling and professional development (Litoiu & Oproiu, 2012). Insufficient or inadequate training for career counsellors has substantial consequences for the quality of services provided and creates considerable obstacles to career counselling services' ability to contribute to the implementation of lifelong learning and active labour market strategies (Pukelis & Navickiene, 2010). There is a need to consider one or possibly two additional training programs: one for career counsellors who have no prior job experience in the field, and another for career counsellors who have prior work experience but require specific competencies and abilities in the sector (Pukelis & Navickiene, 2010). To conduct their job successfully, career counsellors need to acquire a diverse set of skills and knowledge (Pukelis & Navickiene, 2010). In addition, career counsellors must develop abilities in dealing with a variety of client groups, using ICT, and organizing and implementing research (Pukelis & Navickiene, 2010). They also need training in community engagement, management, and evaluation of information (Pukelis & Navickiene, 2010). The Capstone team found out that career counsellors did not have specialized knowledge of the field. Their educational and personal experiences were significantly different. Besides, there was a lack of focus on career counselling specialists' training and professional development, and they were not given any certifications.

To improve students' professional development, career counselling services centres should work collaboratively with other departments such as academic departments, academic

advising, counselling centres, alumni, and employers. The career counselling services centre may be able to expand or tailor its services as a result of the collaborations to address the varying needs of various student groups on campus (Cheung, 2012). To support the diverse student population, career centres should implement improvements in crucial areas such as career assessments, career theories, hiring and training of career centre staff, the career centre atmosphere, and specialized services (Cheung, 2012).

According to Gogoi and Das (2014), parent, teacher, and friend influence, and career counselling services centres all play a role in deciding on a career and education selection. Career counsellors stated that efforts to engage parents frequently appear unplanned and not purposeful (Young, Friesen, & Borycki, 1994). Moreover, Hoffman, Hofacker, and Goldsmith (1992) report that extremely “attached” students may pursue careers to please their parents rather than themselves. On the other hand, parental expectations can occasionally emerge due to an own child’s abilities being carefully observed (Isaacson & Brown, 1993).

Students could: (a) explore the nature of their career consideration; (b) take computer-assisted career guidance inventories or paper and pencil tests followed by test interpretation, if necessary; (c) use computer and career library resources to research jobs and the job market; (d) use computer and career library resources to research employers, companies, and opportunities to contact alumni for networking; and (e) prepare résumés and practice interviewing techniques (Goh & Lee, 2003). According to (Goh & Lee, 2003), career centres not only assist students in choosing majors and preparing for the workforce but also in making long-term plans and developing job and life skills.

### **Chapter 5. Final Product**

As a final product (Appendix D), we have created a handbook for career counselling services centres. This handbook can contribute to the development of the emerging career counselling services centres as well as the establishment of such centres at public universities in Azerbaijan. The handbook may assist administrators and career counsellors to acknowledge their roles and responsibilities. They may also find relevant and valuable information about the internship, career fairs, creating portfolios, workshops such as CV workshops, self-assessment workshops, networking workshops, cover letter workshops, and interview workshops including how students present themselves confidently in their resumes. Additionally, helpful resources and facilities provided by career counselling services centres may map out students' future career paths. Finally, we propose a sample of a career counselling services structure that may be established at the public universities in the Republic of Azerbaijan.

## **Chapter 6. Conclusion**

In conclusion, the above-discussed findings indicate career counselling services centres have been developing in three public universities in Azerbaijan in terms of structure, functioning, and services provided. This qualitative study provided the Capstone team with insights into the roles and responsibilities of administrators and career counsellors in career counselling services centres currently functioning. The main roles of administrators include establishing links with private and public sector organizations to assist students in seeking employment offers and internship programs. Likewise, career counsellors primarily deliver training, seminars, and other activities to help students enhance their employability abilities, researching available job opportunities in the job market and map out their future career paths.

The major finding was the insufficient number of employees in career counselling services centres and the staff lacking training and certificates which may have limited their development and success. Besides, administrators and career counsellors may need a variety of skills to perform promptly and properly.

Secondly, as the career counselling services centres are governed by the university administration, it created barriers to bringing innovations that might aid in the growth of such centres. Students' unwillingness to attend training, meetings, and workshops delivered by the career counselling services centres may also be considered as one of the obstacles that may need to be removed. To sum up, the reason behind students' unwillingness was that the students had a lack of trust which may have stemmed from missing mutual understanding of responsibilities and expectations between students and career counsellors.

### **Recommendation**

This study's review of the literature and findings gave significant insights into how career counsellors and administrators of career counselling services centres understood their roles and responsibilities. In addition, the data revealed many challenges associated with career counselling services centres. The primary goal of this study was to better comprehend students' perceptions regarding career counselling services centres and the roles and responsibilities of the career counsellor and administrator of the career counselling services centres at three public universities. As a result, the Capstone team made suggestions to maximize the potential benefits of career counselling services centres at these universities.

Even though several training sessions have been held at Universities A, B, and C, this study indicates that training is insufficient for administrators and career counsellors of career counselling services. According to the Capstone team, all members of the Career counselling services centres at Universities A, B, and C should get intense training and extensive, year-long guidance.

Based on our findings, we believe that the most important priorities of career counselling services centres at public universities are to provide the necessary resources such as technical resources, training, job fairs, and workshops for students. As a Capstone team, we consider that the organizing of career fairs may be highly beneficial for third- and fourth-year students. Students may get the opportunity to connect with organizations at a well-organized job fair, which may boost their performance. Employers from different companies need to find appropriate candidates for their companies, and for senior students to see the university's efforts to aid them with career issues. Such events bring together prospective employers and students thus they should be organized.

The Capstone team designed a new detailed handbook for career counselling services at public universities because there was no handbook in the Azerbaijan context to provide detailed information about career counselling services.

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APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A

**Permission Letter**

**... Univeristy Career and  
Alumni Relations  
sector manager executor ...**

Dear ...,

We would like to inform you that for the final research work conducted by the second-year students of ADA University MAEM 2022 master's degree program Education Management, Lamiya Malahova, Ulkar Ulukhanova and Latafat Bayramova (Career Counselling Services Centre in Public Universities in Azerbaijan) are required to conduct an interview with the third- and fourth- year students and the Career counsellors of Career and Alumni Relations at ... University.

The purpose of the study is to investigate career counselling services in public Universities in Azerbaijan; define the roles and responsibilities of career counsellors; to identify what factors contribute students career choices and the challenges third-and fourth-year students encounter while deciding on future career choices.

For this purpose, we kindly ask you to create conditions for conducting the research.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

...

Program director

**İcazə Məktubu****... vəzifisini****icra edən ...**

Hörmətli ... ,

Nəzərinizə çatdırmaq istərdik ki, ADA Universitetinin MAEM 2022 “Təhsilin İdarəedilməsi” ixtisası üzrə magistr proqramının ikinci kurs tələbələri Lamiyə Malahova, Ülkər Uluxanova və Lətafət Bayramovadan apardıqları yekun tədqiqat işi üçün (Career Counselling Services in Public Universities in Azerbaijan - Azərbaycanda Dövlət Universitetlərində Karyera Məsləhəti Xidmətləri) ... vəzifəsini icra edən... və 3-cü və 4-cü kurs tələbələri, arasında intervyu keçirilməsi tələb olunur.

İntervyunun məqsədi Azərbaycanın dövlət universitetlərində karyera məsləhəti xidmətlərini araşdırmaq; karyera məsləhətçilərinin rol və məsuliyyətlərini müəyyən etmək; tələbələrin karyera seçiminə hansı amillərin təsir etdiyini və üçüncü və dördüncü kurs tələbələrinin gələcək karyera seçimlərinə qərar verərkən qarşılaşdıqları çətinlikləri aşkar etməkdir.

Bu məqsədlə tədqiqatın aparılması üçün şəraitin yaradılmasını Sizdən xahiş edirik.

Əməkdaşlığa görə təşəkkürümüzü bildiririk.

Hörmətlə,

...

Proqram direktoru

## APPENDIX B

**Consent Form**

**Capstone Project Title:** Career Counselling Services in Public Universities in Azerbaijan

**Researchers:** Lamiya Malahova, Latafat Bayramova, Ulkar Ulukhanova

**Purpose of the Capstone Project:** The purpose of this study is to explore career counselling services in public universities in Azerbaijan, to determine the roles and responsibilities of career counsellors, to discover what factors contribute to students' career choices and to identify challenges third- and fourth-year students encounter while deciding on their future career choices.

**Participants' responsibilities:** The participants will be asked to participate in a semi-structured interview, which will last 45-60 minutes, and answer the questions given by the researcher.

**Research Benefits:** The researcher believes that if the phenomenon of career counselling is explored, it will contribute to the knowledge about it and the development of emerging career counselling services in Azerbaijani public higher education institutions.

**Withdrawal from the Study:** You have a right to stop your participation in the study at any time and for any reason. If you decide to withdraw from the study, or not provide an answer to a specific question, it will not impact your relationship with the researcher and all information will be destroyed.

**Confidentiality:** The researcher will record the interviews with your consent only. Your identity will be protected, and all responses will be kept anonymous. Only the researcher will have access to the research data.

**If you have questions about the research, please feel free to contact us by e-mail:**

lmalahova12957@ada.edu.az, lbayramova13219@ada.edu.az,

uulukhanova12997@ada.edu.az

If needed, you can also contact our supervisor Dr. Vafa Yunusova.

**Address:** Ahmadbey Aghaoglu str. 61 Baku, 1008

**Tel:** +99412 437 32 35 ext. 476

**E-mail:** vyunusova@ada.edu.az

Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed as part of the above-mentioned Capstone Project.

This consent form is necessary for us to ensure that you understand the purpose of your involvement and that you agree to the conditions of your participation.

I have read and understood this consent form and I agree to participate in the study.

**Signature**

**Date**

**Participant**

**Signature**

**Date**

**Researchers**

### **Razılıq məktubu**

**Capstone Layihəsinin Başlığı:** Azərbaycan Dövlət Universitetlərində Karyera Məsləhəti Xidmətləri

**Tədqiqatçı:** Lamiyə Malahova, Lətafət Bayramova, Ülkər Uluxanova

**Capstone Layihəsinin məqsədi:** Bu tədqiqatın məqsədi Azərbaycan dövlət universitetlərində karyera məsləhəti xidmətləri üzrə tədqiqat aparmaq, karyera məsləhətçilərinin rol və məsuliyyətlərini müəyyən etmək, tələbələrin karyera seçiminə hansı amillərin təsir etdiyini müəyyən etmək, üçüncü və dördüncü kurs tələbələrinin gələcək karyera ilə bağlı qərar verərkən qarşılaşdıqları çətinlikləri müəyyən etməkdir.

**İştirakçıların öhdəlikləri:** İştirakçılardan 45-60 dəqiqə davam edəcək yarı strukturlaşdırılmış müsahibədə iştirak etmələri və tədqiqatçının verdiyi suallara cavab vermələri xahiş olunacaq.

**Tədqiqatın faydaları:** Tədqiqatçı hesab edir ki, karyera məsləhəti fenomeni üzrə tədqiqat aparılarsa, onun nəticələri Azərbaycanın dövlət universitetlərində fəaliyyət göstərən karyera məsləhəti xidmətinin inkişafına töhfə verəcək.

**Tədqiqatdan imtina:** İstənilən vaxt və ya hər hansı səbəbdən tədqiqatda iştirakınızı dayandırmaq hüququnuz var. Tədqiqatdan çıxmaq qərarına gəlsəniz və ya hər hansısa sualı cavablandırmaq istəməsəniz, bu, tədqiqatçı ilə münasibətlərinizə təsir etməyəcək və bütün məlumatlar silinəcək.

**Məxfilik:** Tədqiqatçı müsahibələri yalnız sizin razılığınızla səs yazısı vasitəsi ilə qeyd edəcək. Şəxsiyyətiniz qorunacaq və bütün cavablar anonim saxlanılacaq. Yalnız tədqiqatçı əldə olunan tədqiqat məlumatlarından istifadə edə bilər.

Tədqiqatla bağlı suallarınız yaranarsa, bizimlə elektron poçt vasitəsi ilə əlaqə saxlaya bilərsiniz:

lmalahova12957@ada.edu.az,

lbayramova13219@ada.edu.az,

uulukhanova12997@ada.edu.az

Lazım gələrsə, elmi rəhbərimiz Dr. Vəfa Yunusova ilə də əlaqə saxlaya bilərsiniz.

**Ünvan:** Əhmədbəy Ağaoğlu küç. 61 Bakı, 1008

**Tel:** +99412 437 32 35 ext. 476

**E-mail:** vyunusova@ada.edu.az

Yuxarıda qeyd olunan Capstone Layihəsinin bir iştirakçısı kimi müsahibə almağa razı olduğunuz üçün təşəkkür edirik.

Bu razılıq forması sizi tədqiqat barədə məlumatlandırmaq və iştirakınızın şərtləri ilə tanış etmək üçün tərtib olunub.

**İştirakçı :**

Mən bu razılıq formasını oxudum, məlumatlarla tanış oldum və tədqiqatda iştirak etməyə razıyam.

**İmza**

**Tarix**

**İştirakçı**

**İmza**

**Tarix**

**Tədqiqatçılar**



## APPENDIX C

**Interview Protocol***For administrators of career counselling services centres*

1. What position do you hold, and how many years of experience do you have in university career counselling as an administrator? Can you tell us how your activity in the career counselling service started?
2. How do you describe your job and responsibilities?
3. Can you tell me about your educational experience and the training or preparation you have received for your current position? Basically, are you certified as a university counsellor, if so, who granted the certification?
4. Generally speaking, what qualities and competencies do you think are most important for a career counsellor and an administrator position?
5. What are the needs of university students to enhance career decision-making skills?
6. How do you assist/ help career counsellors you supervise to develop students' self-awareness?
7. What are some of the career decision-making issues that students seek career counsellors' help for?
8. How do you assist career counsellors in contributing to the stress management of students?
9. Imagine, a third or fourth-year student is planning to drop out of university. What would you do? How will you help and/or guide that student to avoid or move away from that idea/plan, or to change his/her mind?
10. How does the university career counsellor's role support the university's mission? Or, how does the career counselling service support a university's improvement plan?
11. What are the most essential characteristics of a career service counsellor in a university?

12. Please, describe your ideal career counselling service. Include some specific examples of what it will include.

13. How do you develop a positive relationship with career counsellors you supervise, and students who may seek individual counselling with you?

14. Which is the most effective way of career counselling: an individual career counselling session or small-group counselling? Why? Please, be specific and provide a few reasons to support your choice.

15. How will you evaluate the university counselling services you lead? Are you satisfied with the work of the university's career counselling services? If yes, why? If not, why?

Please, provide a few examples.

16. How do you monitor your career counsellors' work? Do you collect information/data? If yes, how? If you obtain data, how do use that data to reflect on career counselling you deliver and administer in your respective university? How do you use the data to inform career counselling growth in your respective university?

17. Are you professionally supported by the university? If yes, what opportunities for professional development have you been provided by the university? Please, be specific and name some of them.

18. Do you have experience in networking? If yes, how do you network with the career counselling administrators/community outside the university and why do you do networking?

19. In your experience, what is the key to developing a good career counselling service?

20. What innovative and new ideas would you like to employ as a career services administrator to support students' selection of their future career choices or pursuing higher education?

*Administratorlar üçün tərtib olunmuş müsahibə suallar*

1. Hansı vəzifəni tutursunuz və idarəçi kimi universitetdə karyera mərkəzində neçə illik təcrübəniz var? Karyera məsləhəti mərkəzində fəaliyyətinizin necə başladığını barədə biza məlumat verə bilərsinizmi?
2. İşinizi və öhdəliklərinizi necə təsvir edirsiniz?
3. Təhsil təcrübəniz və hazırkı vəzifəniz üçün aldığınız təlim və ya hazırlıq barədə məlumat verə bilərsinizmi? Universitet məsləhətçisi kimi sertifikat almısınızmi, əgər varsa, sertifikatı hardan əldə etmişiniz?
4. Ümumilikdə desək, sizcə, hansı keyfiyyətlər və səriştələr sizin vəzifəniz üçün ən vacib hesab olunur?
5. Karyera üzrə qərar vermə bacarıqlarını artırmaq üçün universitet tələbələrinin karyera məsləhətinə hansı ehtiyacları ilə bağlı müraciət edirlər?
6. Universitetdə karyera mərkəzinin məsləhətçisi kimi fəaliyyət göstərən əməkdaşınıza tələbələrin özünü dərk etməyinə necə köməklik göstərirsiniz?
7. Tələbələrin karyera məsləhətçilərinə müraciət etməklərin karyera qərarlarının qəbulu ilə bağlı bəzi problemlər hansılardır?
8. Tələbələrin stressinin idarə edilməsinə töhfə verməkdə karyera məsləhətçilərinə necə kömək edirsiniz?
9. Təsəvvür edin, üçüncü və ya dördüncü kurs tələbəsi universiteti tərk etməyi planlaşdırır. Siz nə edərdiniz? Siz həmin tələbəyə bu fikirdən necə uzaqlaşmaq və ya fikrini dəyişdirmək üçün necə kömək edərdiniz və/yaxud rəhbərlik edərdiniz?
10. Universitet karyera məsləhətçisinin rolu universitetin missiyasını necə dəstəkləyir? Və ya karyera mərkəzi universitetin təkmilləşdirmə planını necə dəstəkləyir?
11. Universitetdə karyera mərkəzinin məsləhətçisinin ən vacib xüsusiyyətləri hansılardır?

12. Zəhmət olmasa, ideal karyera mərkəzini təsvir edin. Nələri əlavə edərdiz. Və ya karyera məsləhəti xidməti universitetin təkmilləşdirmə planını necə dəstəkləyir?
13. İdarə etdiyiniz karyera məsləhətçiləri və sizinlə fərdi məsləhət almaq istəyən tələbələrlə necə müsbət münasibət qurursunuz?
14. Karyera məsləhətinin ən effektiv üsulu hansıdır: fərdi karyera məsləhət sessiyası, yoxsa kiçik qrup? Niyə? Zəhmət olmasa bir neçə səbəb göstərin.
15. Rəhbərlik etdiyiniz universitet karyera məsləhət xidmətini necə qiymətləndirərsiniz? Universitetin karyera mərkəzinin fəaliyyətindən razısınız mı? Əgər razısınızsa, niyə? Əgər narazısınızsa, niyə? Zəhmət olmasa bir neçə nümunə göstərin.
16. Karyera məsləhətçilərinizin işini necə nəzarət edirsiniz? Siz məlumat/data toplayırsınız mı? Əgər belədirsə, necə? Əgər data əldə edirsinizsə, bu məlumatları necə istifadə edirsiniz? Universitetinizə karyera mərkəzinin inkişafını məlumatlandırmaq üçün bu datadan necə istifadə edirsiniz?
17. Universitet tərəfindən sizə peşəkar dəstək verilir? Əgər belədirsə, universitet tərəfindən peşəkar inkişafınız üçün hansı imkanlar yaradılıb? Zəhmət olmasa bəzilərinin adını çəkin.
18. Effektiv ünsiyyət qurma təcrübəniz varmı? Əgər belədirsə, siz universitetdən kənar karyera məsləhəti əməkdaşları ilə necə münasibət qurursunuz və niyə?
19. Sizin təcrübənizə əsasən yaxşı karyera mərkəzinin inkişafının təmin edilməsində nə əsas rol oynayır?
20. Tələbələrin gələcək karyera seçimlərini və ya ali təhsillərini davam etdirmələrini dəstəkləmək üçün karyera mərkəzinin administratoru kimi hansı innovativ və yeni ideyaları tətbiq etmək istərdiniz?

## **Interview Protocol**

### *For career counsellors of career counselling services centres*

1. What position do you hold, and how many years have you been in this position?
2. How do you describe your job and responsibilities?
3. Can you tell me about your educational experience and the training or preparation you have received for your current position? How many years of experience do you have in university career counselling? Are you certified as a university counsellor, if so, who granted the certification?
4. Generally speaking, what qualities and competencies do you think are most important for your position?
5. What did you know about CCS, and what made it attractive to you? What unique assets did you bring to CCS?
6. How many students do you currently assist as a career counsellor?
7. What are the needs of university students for career counselling to enhance career decision-making skills?
8. How do you build relationships with the students you provide career counselling? Do you deliver individual and/or small group career counselling sessions/meetings? Which one do you prefer and why?
9. What factors relate to the career choice uncertainty of the students?
10. How do you develop students' self-awareness as a career counsellor at a university?
11. How do you help students select a profession or pursue higher education?
12. What are some of the career decision-making issues that students seek your help for?
13. What strategies do you implement to ensure that students find college programs that work for them?
14. What events do you plan to increase students' interest in attending college?

15. What activities do you deliver to identify students' potential such as abilities, interests, strengths, and weaknesses to facilitate their career decision-making?
16. How would you address a student who lost interest in the study or want to drop out of university?
17. How do you as a career counsellor contribute to the stress management of students?
18. How would you help a student who hesitates to choose the right profession?
19. What are the factors and barriers affecting career counselling services in your university?
20. How will you evaluate the counselling services you deliver? Are you satisfied with the work of the university's career counselling services? If yes, why? If not, why? Please, provide a few examples.
21. What innovative and new ideas would you like to employ as a university career counsellor to support students' selection of /her future career choice or pursuing higher education?
22. Are you professionally supported by the university? If yes, what opportunities for professional development have you been provided by the university? Please, be specific and name some of them.
23. Do you have experience in networking? If yes, how do you network with your core workers and career counselling community and why do you do networking?

***Karyera Məsləhətçisi üçün tərtib olunmuş Müsahibə suallar***

1. Hansı vəzifədə çalışırsınız və neçə ildir bu vəzifədəsiniz?
2. İşinizi və onunla bağlı öhdəliklərinizi necə təsvir edə bilərsiniz?
3. Təhsil təcrübəniz və hazırkı vəzifəniz üçün aldığınız təlim və ya hazırlıq barədə məlumat verə bilərsinizmi? Universitetin karyera mərkəzində neçə ildir ki, fəaliyyət göstərirsiniz? Universitet məsləhətçisi kimi sertifikat almısınız mı, əgər varsa, həmin sertifikata necə sahib olmusunuz? (kim tərəfindən sertifikat sizə təqdim olunub)?
4. Ümumilikdə desək, sizcə, hansı keyfiyyətlər və səriştələr sizin vəzifəniz üçün daha zəruri hesab olunur?
5. Karyera Mərkəzi Xidməti haqqında nə bilirdiniz və onu sizin üçün cəlbedici edən nədir? Karyera Mərkəzi Xidmətinə hansı yenikliklər gətirmisiniz?
6. Hazırda neçə tələbəyə karyera məsləhətçisi kimi köməklik edirsiniz?
7. Karyera ilə bağlı qərar vermə bacarıqlarını artırmaq üçün universitet tələbələri karyera məsləhəti xidmətlərinə hansı tələbələrlə müraciət edirlər?
8. Karyera məsləhətinə müraciət edən tələbələrlə necə münasibət qurursunuz? Fərdi və/yaxud kiçik qrup karyera məsləhəti sessiyaları/görüşləri keçirirsinizmi? Hansına üstünlük verirsiniz və niyə?
9. Tələbələrin peşə seçimində qərarlılığı hansı amillərlə bağlıdır?
10. Universitetdə karyera məsləhətçisi kimi tələbələrin öz potensiallarını üzə çıxarmaları üçün necə köməklik göstərirsiniz?
11. Siz tələbələrə peşə seçimində və ya təhsillərini davam etdirməklə bağlı seçimlərində necə köməklik edərdiniz?
12. Tələbələr karyera qərarlarının qəbulu ilə bağlı hansı məsələlərdə sizdən kömək istəyirlər?
13. Tələbələrin bilik və bacarıqlarına (potensialına) uyğun ixtisas seçimini təmin etmək üçün hansı strategiyaları həyata keçirirsiniz?

14. Tələbələrin universitetə marağının artması üçün hansı tədbirləri planlaşdırırsınız?
15. Tələbələrin karyera qərarlarını asanlaşdırmaq məqsədilə qabiliyyət, maraq, güclü və zəif yönlər kimi potensiallarını müəyyən edərkən hansı fəaliyyətləri həyata keçirirsiniz?
16. Təhsilə marağını itirmiş və ya universiteti tərk etmək istəyən tələbə üçün nə edirsiniz?
17. Siz karyera məsləhətçisi kimi tələbələrin stressinin idarə olunmasına necə töhfə verirsiniz?
18. Düzgün ixtisas seçməkdə tərəddüd edən tələbəyə necə kömək edərdiniz?
19. Universitetinizdə karyera məsləhəti xidmətlərinə təsir edən amillər və maneələr hansılardır?
20. Xidmət göstərdiyiniz karyera məsləhət mərkəzinin fəaliyyətini necə qiymətləndirirsiniz? Universitetin karyera məsləhət xidmətinin fəaliyyətinə razısinizmi? Əgər razısinizsə, niyə? Əgər narazısinizsə, niyə? Zəhmət olmasa bir neçə nümunə göstərin.
21. Tələbələrin gələcək karyera seçimini və ya ali təhsil almasını dəstəkləmək üçün universitetdə karyera məsləhətçisi kimi hansı innovativ və yeni ideyaları tətbiq etmək istərdiniz?
22. Universitet tərəfindən sizə peşəkar dəstək verilmirmi? Əgər belədirsə, universitet sizə peşəkar inkişaf üçün hansı imkanları yaradıb? Zəhmət olmasa onlardan bəzilərinin adını çəkəsiniz.
23. Effektiv ünsiyyət qurma təcrübəniz varmı? Əgər belədirsə, siz əsas işçilər və karyera məsləhətləri əməkdaşları ilə necə əlaqə qurursunuz və nə üçün?



## Interview Protocol

### *For students*

1. Year of study

- Third
- Fourth

2. School/ department

3. (a) Have you ever received any career guidance/career advice in your education life?

(b) If yes, where and from who did you receive it?

4. Is there a career counselling services office or centre at your university? If yes, what are the main roles and responsibilities of it?

5. What services does that career counselling services office or centre provide?

6. What resources related to career counselling services are available? Name at least three of them.

7. What specific area do students in your university benefit most from career counselling services?

8. Which of the following best describes the benefit of career counselling in your university?

- acquiring new skills
- doing internships
- writing job placement application
- assisting in making a job/career decision
- preparing a CV
- preparing for interviews

9. How do career counselling services help you identify your potential? (self-awareness)

10. Does the CCS schedule individual meetings with students? If yes, what is the frequency of these meetings and how are they organized?

11. Have you ever requested a meeting with the career counsellor to receive advice? If yes, please, briefly describe that meeting.
12. Does the career counselling counsellor assist students in creating a student portfolio? If yes, how?
13. Do CCS provide scheduled meetings on the latest career news, information, and updates? If yes, what do you think about these training sessions? How do these training sessions align with today's labor market requirements?
14. What may hinder career counselling services in your university in helping students to learn about the labor market needs and integrate and develop themselves socially and professionally in an adequate manner?
15. How do career counselling services contribute to the stress management of students in your university?
16. What tools do career counselling services utilize to identify students' interests, strengths, and weaknesses?
17. What are you going to do after you graduate? Do you have any plans regarding your further studies?
18. Have you been provided with appropriate guidance in pursuing higher education or relevant planning in choosing a profession by Career Counselling service? If yes, how?
19. What services or assistance would you like your university's career counselling services to provide?
20. In your opinion, how can career counselling services be improved in your university?

*Tələbələr üçün müsahibə sualları*

1. Təhsil ili

- Üçüncü
- Dördüncü

2. Fakültə / ixtisas

3. (a) Həyatınızda heç karyera ilə bağlı məsləhət almısınız mı?

(b) Əgər cavabınız hədirsə, haradan və kimdən məsləhət almısınız?

4. Universitetinizdə karyera məsləhət xidməti və ya mərkəzi varmı? Əgər varsa, onun əsas rol və öhdəlikləri hansılardır?

5. Bu karyera xidməti və ya mərkəzi hansı xidmətləri göstərir?

6. Karyera məsləhət xidmətləri ilə bağlı hansı qaynaqlar (resurslar) mövcuddur? Zəhmət olmasa onlardan üçünün adını qeyd edə bilərsiniz?

7. Universitetinizdə tələbələr karyera məsləhət xidmətlərindən ən çox hansı şəkildə faydalanırlar?

8. Aşağıdakılardan hansı universitetinizdəki karyera məsləhət xidmətinin üstünlüklərini daha yaxşı təsvir edir?

- Yeni bacarıqlar əldə etmək
- Təcrübə proqramları
- İşə qəbul ərizəsi yazmaq
- İş/ karyera qərarları ilə bağlı köməklik göstərmək
- CV hazırlamaq
- Müsahibələrə hazırlamaq

9. Karyera məsləhət xidmətləri sizə potensialınızı müəyyən etməkdə necə kömək edir?

10. Karyera məsləhət xidməti tələbələr ilə fərdi görüş təyin edir mi? Əgər edirsə, neçə müddətdən bir təşkil edirlər və necə?

11. Məsləhət üçün karyera məsləhət xidmətindən görüş üçün müraciət etmisinizmi? Əgər etmisinizsə, qısaca bu görüşü təsvir edə bilərsiniz?
12. Karyera məsləhət xidmətinin məsləhətçisi tələbələrə öz portfellerini yaratmağa kömək edir? Əgər edirsə, necə edir?
13. Karyera məsləhət xidməti ən son karyera xəbərləri və yeniliklər ilə bağlı görüşlər təşkil edir mi? Əgər edirsə, siz bu təlim seminarları haqqında nə düşünürsünüz? Bu təlimlər bugünkü əmək bazarının tələblərinə uyğundur mu?
14. Universitetinizdə fəaliyyət göstərən karyera mərkəzinə, tələbələrin əmək bazarının ehtiyaclarını öyrənməyə, sosial və peşəkar olaraq doğru şəkildə inkişaf etdirməyə nə mane olur?
15. Karyera məsləhət xidməti universitetinizdə tələbələrin stresslə idarəedilməsində necə kömək edir?
16. Tələbələrin maraqlarını, güclü və zəif tərəflərini müəyyən etmək üçün karyera məsləhəti xidməti hansı vasitələrdən istifadə edir?
17. Məzun olduqdan sonra nə etməyi düşünürsünüz? Gələcək təhsillə bağlı hər hansı planınız var?
18. Sizə ali təhsil almaq və ya peşə seçimində müvafiq planlaşdırma ilə bağlı doğru təlimat verilibmi? Əgər verilibsə, necə?
19. Universitetinizdə fəaliyyət göstərən karyera mərkəzi tələbələrinə hansı xidmət və ya köməklik göstərməsini istərdiniz?
20. Sizcə, universitetinizdəki karyera məsləhət xidməti hansı formada inkişaf etdirilməlidir?

APPENDIX D

Career Counselling Services Centre



## HANDBOOK

### Career Counselling Services Centre

FOR CAREER COUNSELLORS AND ADMINISTRATORS

Supervisor: Dr. Vafa Yunusova  
MAEM 2022: Lamiya Malahova, Latafat Bayramova, Ulkar Ulukhanova

Career Counselling Services Centre

### REQUIREMENTS FOR CAREER COUNSELLOR RECRUITMENT AND HIRING PROCESS

Career counsellor at a career counselling services centre should be a specialist who meets the qualifications and has the necessary abilities. For recruiting and hiring career counsellors, and education entity should have online platforms where candidates can apply by providing an application link. Graduates who satisfy all necessary prerequisite skills and abilities may apply for the Career Counselling program. All qualified applicants are invited to an interview with the administrator of the career counselling services centre:

- applicants who do not pass the interviews for a career counsellor position are contacted via mail
- candidates who pass interviews for a career counsellor position successfully are informed via phone

Before beginning the employment, the documentation of the new-enrolled career counsellors should be prepared:

- establish a tax identification number and a bank account;
- sign Service Contract (State Tax Service under the Ministry of Economy of the Republic of Azerbaijan, 2018);
- complete career counselling internship;
- contract termination may occur for the following reasons: failure to follow the rules of the university and the career counselling services centre

Career Counselling Services Centre

### WHAT IS THE CAREER COUNSELLING?

Career counselling is a process that may help students better analyze their values, abilities, and interests and comprehend the vast array of occupations available to them. Besides, it allows them to make informed decisions about their future academic and professional development (Haneef et al., 2020).

Career Counselling Services Centre

### MISSION

The career counselling services centre assists students in developing their self-confidence, advancing their skills, and exploring career options. The career counselling services center takes advantage of its relationships with private and public sector organisations, alumni, faculty, and staff to provide students with meaningful experiences, internships, job opportunities as well as mentoring students for selecting and succeeding in their future careers and education (Donald & Susan, 2008).

Career Counselling Services Centre

### WHAT IS CAREER COUNSELING SERVICE CENTRE?

The activity of career counselling services centre is regulated by essential acts such as the Order of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan on approval of the "Action Plan for 2020-2025 on the implementation of the Employment Strategy" (2020) and Decisions of the Cabinet Ministers of the Azerbaijan Republic on approval of "Rules for the implementation of vocational guidance services in general education institutions" (2020).

A career counselling services centre links university and workplace by assisting students in taking the job opportunities and connecting them as job candidates with employers (Lacatus et al., 2015).

Career Counselling Services Centre

### VISION

The career counselling services centre instills hope in students for the future, supports and mentors them in defining their career and educational paths. Furthermore, the career counselling service centres envision an atmosphere where all students and graduates have access to professional and educational development and advancement opportunities during their studying years and throughout their lives (The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 2022).

<p>Career Counselling Services Centre</p> <h3>REQUIRED SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE OF CAREER COUNSELLORS</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to exhibit good oral, writing, and interpersonal communication skills (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2022);</li> <li>• to demonstrate a desire to assist students in exploring opportunities that exist in the world of work (OECD, 2004);</li> <li>• to possess professional training and experience in one the fields such as counselling, career counselling, education development, and human service (The University of South Florida, 2017);</li> <li>• should be able to deliver individual and group meetings (Cedefop, 2005; OECD, 2004);</li> <li>• to have experience in teaching students self-awareness and decision-making, as well as developing a career and educational plan (Keshf &amp; Khanum, 2021);</li> <li>• to demonstrate a desire to contribute to the university's growth (Chen, 2001).</li> </ul>	<p>Career Counselling Services Centre</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to conduct interviews, administer and analyze tests to ascertain students' needs, interests, and skills;</li> <li>• to provide guidance for students to become acquainted with themselves, discover their potential, and have access to pertinent information to make career or vocational and educational decisions;</li> <li>• to cooperate and collaborate with other colleagues, such as teaching and academic staff to ensure that participants are accompanied and that everyone works as a team, with each member contributing to the career counseling process;</li> <li>• to observe, analyze and modify the activities performed by students;</li> <li>• to be able to solve students' problems related to career and educational decisions;</li> <li>• to communicate, interact, and work with students effectively (Grand Canyon University, 2021)</li> <li>• to use computer tools for compiling a database of alumni work positions, creating slides, and writing emails and documents (Zainudin, et al., 2020)</li> </ul>
<p>Career Counselling Services Centre</p> <h3>STRUCTURE OF AN INDIVIDUAL MEETING</h3> <p>Individual meetings between a student and a career counsellor should last roughly 60 minutes and include ascertaining the student's professional or educational choices with a career counsellor (UMBC, 2021).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to address any issue or obstacle related to the student's career and educational development;</li> <li>• to prepare a plan for overcoming obstacles during the session;</li> <li>• to follow up with a student to ensure that goals remain relevant and reachable after the session;</li> <li>• to help a student address needs linking to career development in an individual-specific manner;</li> <li>• to help a student make job choices and career preparation;</li> <li>• to aid in overcoming personal fears and inadequacies about choosing a career, parental pressure and conflicts;</li> <li>• to utilize a combination of pre-prepared intervention tools (e.g. interest inventories, aptitude tests, and questionnaires);</li> <li>• to maintain personalized interactions with a student and his/her family (Ortega et al., 2014).</li> </ul>	<p>Career Counselling Services Centre</p> <h3>STRUCTURE OF THE GROUP MEETINGS</h3> <p>Group counselling can be used by groups of people who have common interests, goals, or experiences and seek to achieve similar results through counselling. The reason for offering group career counselling instead of individual counselling is due to the unique demands of students and it can also save time for individual counselling. Moreover, group counselling extends the principles of counselling to simultaneously address the career development needs of more than one person (Chang et al., 2020).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A group of career counselling meetings includes small groups of approximately 15-30 students.</li> <li>• Small group information seminars are held in a workshop format.</li> <li>• The number of counselling sessions ranges between 5 and 8 hour-long sessions.</li> </ul> 

<p>Career Counselling Services Centre</p>  <h3>OBJECTIVES</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to assist students in acquiring information, knowledge, and skills that will benefit their career and educational development (Lacatus et al., 2015);</li> <li>• to develop relationships with private and governmental organizations in order to explore training, internship and professional employment opportunities for students and graduates (UNIWORK, 2013);</li> <li>• to develop and implement strategies to raise awareness about the career counselling services centre among students and alumni (Sharif et al., 2017)</li> </ul>	<p>Career Counselling Services Centre</p> <h3>THE ADMINISTRATOR OF THE CAREER COUNSELLING SERVICES CENTRE</h3> <p>The administrator of the career counselling services centre is responsible for the design, planning, coordination, and follow-up of the career counselling services centre for students to assist with career or educational development.</p> <p>The roles and responsibilities of the administration are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• observing how career counsellors deliver career counselling to students (in some educational institutions, professors and managers may act as career counsellors);</li> <li>• monitoring and evaluating the performance of career counsellors of the career counselling services centre;</li> <li>• recruiting and hiring career counsellors and then enhancing their skills and talents;</li> </ul>
<p>Career Counselling Services Centre</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• evaluating whether or not the career counselling services center is efficiently addressing student concerns about their career and educational development;</li> <li>• supervising the collection of data on former students' work status and employability;</li> <li>• planning events like job fairs and training, as well as monitoring and evaluating them (Ortega et al., 2014);</li> <li>• build and develop relationships with private and public sector organizations (UNIWORK, 2013);</li> <li>• maintain frequent communication with deans and other faculty members to ensure that the career counselling services centre fulfils university requirements (NACE, 2022).</li> </ul>	<p>Career Counselling Services Centre</p> <h3>THE CAREER COUNSELLORS OF THE CAREER COUNSELLING SERVICES CENTRE</h3> <h4>Roles and Responsibilities</h4> <p>A career counsellor possesses an awareness of integrating personal and career issues in counselling. They adopt prejudice-free perspectives and apply more holistic approaches while assisting students.</p> <p>A career counsellor conceptualizes personal characteristics and career counselling integration by expanding their own and students' knowledge and improving acknowledgement of life and career interrelationship. They utilize strategies and approaches to enhance students' career development (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2022). Additionally, they have the training and at least three years of professional experience in areas relating to career evaluations and assistance for youth (Ortega et al., 2014). This training is expected to have provided a firm orientation both in the theoretical and the practical aspects of service delivery.</p> <p>The career counsellor usually has a background in the behavioural sciences and holds a master's degree or postgraduate diploma in counselling.</p>

**CAREER COUNSELLING SERVICES CENTRE**

Counsellors for careers should have professional expertise in career counselling. Moreover, they should receive training or courses in individual and group counselling. Also, they may assist students in developing self-awareness, decision-making, and developing a plan of action for their career and education.

The career counselling services centre's goal is to assist students in preparing for careers through CV preparation, covering letter design, networking, internships, job sourcing, interview techniques, and career plans. This requires the use of resources like training and continuous connection with students and employers.

**Contacts with stakeholders**

The first step in contacting an external community is to visit a carefully selected set of public and private organizations (CEDEFOP, 2021). The career counselling services centre cooperates with enterprises:

- to provide students with the opportunities to do internship programs;
- to hold meetings frequently to find out what skills and knowledge they require from candidates;
- to organize workshops, seminars, and training;

**Staff expertise**

Given that a career counselling services centre for every 2,000 students should have one career counsellor (NACE, n.d.); universities with an average of 15,000 students should have at least seven counsellors.

**Career Counselling Services Centre**

**WHAT IS CAREER FAIRS?**

A well-organized job fair will allow the students to interact with employers which will improve students' performance. Employers from different organizations learn about university academic programs and the senior students see university efforts aimed at dealing their career concerns. Job fair events bring together potential employers and students therefore these events should be arranged.

- Fall or Spring semester, a professional fair career event needs to be held for students (New Jersey Institute of Technology, 2022);
- A job fair event should be offered to all students at least once each year;
- A day should be selected and an invitation should be sent to a large group of employers from different organizations. The invitation is followed by careful targeting of major employers, both public and private, who are vital to invite to the event;
- For organizing the event, personal phone contact or visit to key people at the employer's office should be done by the administrator of the career counselling services centre;
- When the job fairs events start, employers should be assigned to a table after their arrival;
- Drink and food tables should be placed on opposite sides of the reception area to make it easier for visitors to move around;
- Students, employers, administrators of the university, and faculty members should all be invited to participate in open discussions;
- The main event should be organized in such a way that students are encouraged to spend around 5 minutes at each employer's table learning about the potential job descriptions, and the application procedure and share their career concerns as well (Sharif et al., 2017).

**Career Counselling Services Centre**

**CV WORKSHOP**

The career counselling services centre staff should plan on providing a workshop on how to prepare student's curriculum vitae. A good CV is crucial to a student's success at networking events such as job fairs and interviews. Students who are confident in their ability to display their credentials professionally improve the university and university's various programs' reputations, as well as their own (Framingham State University, 2021).

**Materials**

- As often as a small group of 6-10 students can be gathered, the CV workshop should be held.
- A conference room for up to 10 students should be included in the career counselling service centre. For larger groups, a lecture room could be recommended. (EYE, 2014).



**Career Counselling Services Centre**

**NETWORKING WORKSHOP**

Networking is a skill, especially for students who are not extroverted and have not naturally and culturally trained to assert their capabilities to others. The purpose of a career counselling services center is to educate people and arrange networking events like job fairs. Furthermore, connecting students who share common interests is empowering because it allows them to share and exchange knowledge (Elia, 2021).

- At least once a week, this two-hour workshop should be taught.
- Most students and job seekers should network their way to interviews in the current regional economic climate.

**INTERVIEW WORKSHOP**

Getting an interview is never easy. An interview is an important asset because, in the selection process, more applicants are rejected than hired. A properly prepared graduate will add an essential image to the university. Helping students find employment through successful interviewing is critical.

- The interview workshops should be designed to teach students how to best present their academic and work credentials.
- The mock interview practice is one of the best teaching methods that should be designed for students to use in interview instruction for practising (William Jessup University, 2021).



Career Counselling Services Centre
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### COVER-LETTER WORKSHOPS

A cover letter is a one-page document that emphasizes an individual's qualifications and displays student's interest in the position. Career counsellors should hold workshops to help students create cover letters (University of Manitoba, 2016).

SAMPLE COVER LETTER

Your Name  
Street Address  
City, State Zip Code  
Date  
Recruiter Name (if known)  
Job Title (if known)

Dear Hiring Manager,

I am writing to express my strong interest in Finance and Accounting Specialist position at your Company. I am confident that I would be a valuable candidate to the team at your Company as a dynamic finance and accounting specialist with over two years of professional experience performing reconciliation of accounts receivable, resolving account problems, posting payments, and assisting in maintaining ledgers and other account actions.

Your job posting indicates that you are looking for someone who is experienced in finance and accounting both of which are areas I have extensive experience in. I am currently employed as an accounting specialist, where I have successfully implemented many account actions.

I am convinced that my work ethic, unparalleled attention to detail, and high-performing duties related to accounting assigned by the immediate supervisor will enable me to contribute to the success of the team. I would be delighted to get an opportunity to have an interview with you. Please feel free to contact me by phone at xx-xx-xx, or by email at xxx@gmail.com. Thank you for your attention and time.

Best Regards,  
Your Name, Surname

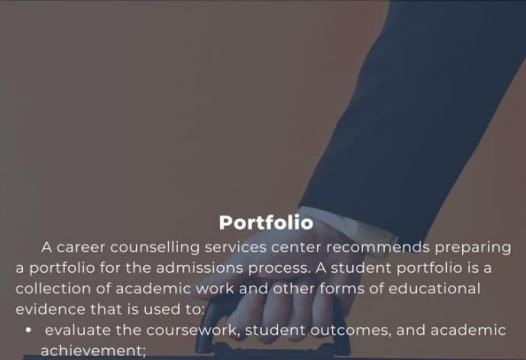
### SELF-ASSESSMENT WORKSHOPS

Self-awareness, identifying strengths and limitations, and exploring students' potential all require testing and assessment. Career counselors should use successful assessment and testing techniques. Career success and satisfaction are enhanced when a student's personalities, interests, attitudes, and capabilities are aligned (UMBC, 2021). Career counsellors should:

- assist students in identifying their personal motivations, abilities, and interests;
- use career and educational planning assessment techniques to assist students;
- organize Career Self-Assessment Workshops to help students in determining their career paths (Loyola University Chicago, 2022).



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### Portfolio

A career counselling services center recommends preparing a portfolio for the admissions process. A student portfolio is a collection of academic work and other forms of educational evidence that is used to:

- evaluate the coursework, student outcomes, and academic achievement;
- determine if either student has achieved educational objectives or other academic requirements for courses, grade-level promotion, and graduation;
- support students in reflecting on their academic goals and progress as learners.

Proponents of student portfolios argue that collecting, assessing, and evaluating student work overtime can provide a more comprehensive, detailed, and accurate picture of what students have learned and can perform (Barrett, 2000). The student's abilities, interests, distinctiveness, and hobbies should all be highlighted in the portfolio. Beyond academic grades, it should indicate a student's depth of knowledge and personality.

### ITEMS TO INCLUDE IN PORTFOLIO

- Accomplishments, such as awards or certificates of participation in special activities (If a student does not have the original awards or has an excessive number, a student may create a list of the awards and provide a copy of one.)
- Participation in sports activities (Every photo should be included a detailed and informative caption);
- Participation in artistic endeavours (e.g. pictures of modelling or theatre productions);
- After-school participation in extracurricular activities;
- Outstanding academic work completed elsewhere;
- Community Service and Volunteering experience;
- Work-related productivity (e.g. artwork, sketches, writing samples, poetry and other related outputs)

## Career Counselling Services Centre

## RESOURCES

**Information Technology**

Effective technology use includes more than just the Internet;

- It should include videotaping equipment for mock interviews, setting up teleconferences and videoconference capabilities for connecting with alumni and conducting job interviews.
- It should also include computer equipment for computer-assisted career guidance programs (EYE, 2014).

**Facilities**

Career counselling services centre should have various facilities for their clients. Computers are required for computer-assisted career advising services. Individual counselling demands the use of private rooms (Goh & Lee, 2003).



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