2. Module 2: How to select the right online tool?

Group Size: max 8   **Time:** 1.5-2 hours depending on how many activities completed.

Target group: Practitioner

Aims

The overall aim of this module is to provide practitioners with an understanding of a broad range of online tools. It will allow practitioners to evaluate when and how online tools can enhance guidance, and identify the skills that practitioners require in order to do this successfully.

Learning Outcomes

- To understand the varied purposes of different ICT tools in guidance and LMI;
- To understand the different types of online guidance services;
- To recognise the key skills of practitioners using ICT resources with clients;
- To be able to assess a client's ability and readiness to use ICT for job search, LMI and accessing government or organisation resources;
- To use problem solving skills to overcome barriers facing practitioners using ICT;
- To be able to critically assess the use of ICT in guidance services and make recommendations.

Skills required: competent user of ICT, familiar with the internet, some knowledge of social media. Qualified, experienced careers practitioner, familiar with the roles/task of the advisers.

Equipment required: Flipchart or white/smart board to write on, computer and projector with a screen, access to the internet. If possible, every attendee has the use of a computer with access to the internet.

Module 2: Self-assessment

Complete this self-assessment before commencing Module 1 using scale A. Repeat this assessment after completing Module 1 to measure your progress using scale B.

Your current assessment	Grade your current understanding/competence *1 = Basic understanding to 6 = Expert*
I can recognise and explain the purpose of different ICT tools in LMI and guidance.	A 1…………2…………3…………4…………..5……………6 B 1…………2…………3…………4…………..5……………6
I can identify and explain different types of online guidance services.	A 1…………2…………3…………4…………..5……………6 B 1…………2…………3…………4…………..5……………6
I can explain the different skills required by practitioners using ICT with a variety of clients.	A 1…………2…………3…………4…………..5……………6 B 1…………2…………3…………4…………..5……………6
I am able to assess a client's ability and readiness to use ICT for job search, LMI and accessing government or organisation resources.	A 1…………2…………3…………4…………..5……………6 B 1…………2…………3…………4…………..5……………6
I can assess the barriers facing practitioners in using ICT and provide solutions.	A 1…………2…………3…………4…………..5……………6 B 1…………2…………3…………4…………..5……………6
I can critically assess and provide recommendations for the improvement of ICT in guidance services.	A 1…………2…………3…………4…………..5……………6 B 1…………2…………3…………4…………..5……………6
I can recognise and explain the purpose of different ICT tools in LMI and guidance.	A 1…………2…………3…………4…………..5……………6 B 1…………2…………3…………4…………..5……………6
I can identify and explain different types of online guidance services.	A 1…………2…………3…………4…………..5……………6 B 1…………2…………3…………4…………..5……………6

2.1. Types of ICT tools in guidance practices

Activity: Identify the different purposes of online resources and tools in guidance and LMI. Give examples.

Time: 5mins

Put the following two tables on a projector slide for the participants to see.

The existing European ICT-based resources in the field of careers information and guidance has been classified by Offer[3] in relation to the type DOTS model[4] developed by Law & Watts (1977).

Decision learning	Resources concerned with **decision learning** include matching systems, which enable users to relate their personal profiles to relevant learning or work opportunities. The outcome is a list of the opportunities, which match the profile most closely. Also included here are content-free decision-making resources designed to help users to explore options in a systematic way, balancing the desirability of particular options against the perceived probability of achieving them.
Opportunity awareness	Resources concerned with **opportunity awareness** include databases of learning and/or work opportunities, with a menu of search criteria, which enable users to find data relevant to their needs. The databases may cover: a)education/training institutions or courses; b)occupations, employers, or job vacancies; c)voluntary-work opportunities; and d)information on how to become self-employed. Some include relevant labour market information on supply and demand. There are also some examples of work simulations that enable users to explore particular occupational areas in an experiential way.
Self-awareness	Resources concerned with **self-awareness** are designed to help users to assess themselves and to develop a profile that can be matched to eligible learning and work opportunities. These resources range from simple self-assessment questionnaires to psychometric tests; they also include more open-ended "brainstorming" approaches.
Transition learning	Finally, resources concerned **with transition learning** help users to implement their decisions. These may include support in developing action plans, preparing curricula vitae, completing application forms, and preparing for selection interviews; it may also include help in securing funding for learning opportunities or for becoming self-employed.

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[3] Offer, M., 1997, A Review of the Use of Computer-Assisted Guidance and the Internet in Europe, National Centre for Guidance in Education, Dublin.

[4] OECD, Watts, A.G, 2001. The Role Of Information And Communication Technologies In An Integrated Career Information And Guidance System

Trainer notes: The ARIADNE project has identified **five types of web-delivered guidance services**[5] See Case Studies (Annex 3) for further examples

Information delivery	A service supplying information both of a wide interest and also addressed to specific target users: • training and job opportunities available at a local, national and international level; • information about education and courses; • types of contracts, financing/incentives/special terms, local and national working standards and access to training opportunities; • job-market, productive sectors, occupations; • local centres for information, education/training and advice (addresses, opening hours, access and contact modes). Such information is selected and presented on the basis of: • needs analysis, based on the most frequently asked questions from specific target-groups (e.g. young people, adults, women, disabled people); • the duty of service provision; • the results consist of a preliminary dataset, with some degree of detail, offered to an unspecified number of people.
Information advice	This service supplies more detailed and customised information based on specific requests, either from a single user or by a limited and well-defined user group.
Guidance training	This service offers support for users to develop career management competencies, including research, decision-making and job-hunting techniques. This service can be set for a general supply of self-guidance by using guides, interactive online resource like forum topics, time planners, job-seeker calendars, decision-making tools, instruments for measuring and improving self-efficiency, etc. Career training can also be customised for the specific needs of a limited and well-defined group of users. In this case, autonomous guidance materials (i.e. self-assessment questionnaires, simulations) are integrated with other tools that require closer interaction between guidance practitioners and users. Individualised support (online job coaching) for addressing specific skills can be offered by video conference, for example in a job interview with a client.
Self-assessment questionnaires	This service offers evaluation and/or self-evaluation tools for attitudes, skills and knowledge relating to specific training/educational pathways, professional profiles and domains, vocational guidance skills and professional expertise. The use of such tools can include the interaction between the user and the practitioner (e.g. the user completes a

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[5] Ariadne project - http://www.ariadneproject.org/index.php?id=64

	questionnaire, the guidance practitioner evaluates it, and the user receives feedback). If the tool has been designed for self-assessment, no such interaction is needed.
	Self-assessment can also be enhanced with simple, non-formal methods like interviews, or structured lists that clients can be encouraged to fill in. This does not require any specific preparation from the career counsellor with the exception of understanding what kind of information she/he needs to help the clients achieve their goals.
Career counselling/guidance	A customised service for users, involving the development of the user's action planning.

Activity: Using the Case Studies in Annex 3, identify the different purposes of online resources and tools in guidance and LMI. Give more examples that you use at local level.

Time: 20mins

2.2. Key skills for practitioners using online resources

Activity: What are the main skills required by guidance practitioners when using online guidance and LMI resources in practice?

Break into small groups and write the answers on a flipchart (Time 10 mins).

You are looking for the following key skills.

- Communication and counselling skills;
- Analytical skills;
- Digital literacy and technical skills (knowing how to apply ICT in counselling and how to take advantage of social networks, LinkedIn, Skype, new platforms for e-portfolios, etc.);
- Sound knowledge of the labour market;
- Willingness to learn and improve; being aware of one's professional and personal limitations, especially in online environment;
- Recognise the need for supervision when working online.

Read out some of the following quotations from the PROMETHEUS Online Career Counselling Guide - The principles of a good Careers Counsellor http://prometheus-eu.net/

"The most important competence is related to the digital literacy of career counsellors. The specifics of online counselling call for going beyond standard use of digital technologies and creating a tailor-made set of tools to enhance the counselling process. The counsellors would need to have an in-depth understanding of digital environment, so as to easily adapt it to the needs of the respective client." (Lachezar Afrikanov, Bulgaria)

"The most important skills and competences necessary for providing high quality career counselling are communication skills and the ability to select the most significant information among the information flow nowadays. For career counsellors it is also very important to be supportive but not pressing." (Atanas Dimitrov, Bulgaria)

"The most important skills and qualities of the career counsellor include skills for effective communication, short period for establishing trust, prompt reactions, good knowledge of the labour market trends, prompt feedback providing skills. What will be mostly missed in the online career counselling is non-verbal communication. Thus, emphasis on content and on oral and written expression will gain more significance. There is also another new challenge that we as career counsellors should take into account – our online reputation." (Galina Petrova, Bulgaria)

"Depending on what kind of online guidance, good qualities that a careers advisor should have differ. If this is a simple "e-mail us a question and we'll e-mail you a response", then firstly I'd question whether this is actually good guidance as opposed to good information giving. However if your online guidance is true guidance then technically it would require an interface that allowed for true human interaction. In this case a careers advisor would require all the traditional skills such as empathy, open-mindedness, use of open questions and good base knowledge of career opportunities." (Mick Carey, UK)

Explain - A key skill for the adviser delivering online careers services will be the initial assessment of the readiness of the client for career research and activities. We can use the following levels as a guide. Time: 10 mins

Clients with a **high level** of readiness	After the initial interview refer to self-help services - career resource and websites designed to assist them in selecting, locating, sequencing and using needed resources with little or no staff assistance.
Clients with **moderate level** of readiness	After the initial interview refer to staff-assisted services – written instructions in the form or a Career Action Plan, practitioner-guided use of resources, group sessions etc.
Clients with a **low level** of readiness	After the initial interview decide on the most appropriate support or service. This can be a continuation by the adviser who conducted the initial interview. It can be a referral to an individual case-managed services: individual counselling or longer-term group counselling. It may be a combination of one or more services.

Activity: Case Study

Time: 15 mins

Trainer: The trainees should work in pairs and write down their conclusions. The pairs should feedback to the group.

Trainee: Is this client ready to use LMI? What questions would you ask them so you can make this assessment? What LMI would be useful for them? What tools would you recommend and why?

Your client (age 55) has been unemployed for 5 weeks. Their previous job was as a team leader in a medium size business. The company was a clothing manufacturer that has closed due to lack of business. The client has been in the same job for 12 years. They are looking for another job but they have said that clothing manufacturing is all they know. The client has expressed a concern that employers will think they are too old.

2.3. Challenges and limitations of using ICT tools

Activity: Clustering

Time: 20 mins

How to: Explain you want to know the challenges and limitations of using ICT tools with clients.

Give group members a number of post-it notes and ask them to write down what they think e.g. what the issues are, what solutions they would suggest, etc. Then, ask them, in groups, to place their post-its on the flipchart paper you have provided (separate sheet of flipchart paper for challenges and limitations.

Next, ask them to cluster the post-its that have similar views/suggestions etc., and give a title to the cluster. This helps to narrow them down into common themes, which can be explored further.

You are looking for comments such as:

- Environment - lack of face-to-face contact and limited counsellor intervention;
- Counsellor training - need to identify competencies and train for them;
- Could some online advisers step outside their area of expertise? When we conduct interviews in an office environment and your colleagues can potentially overhear or observe you there can be a natural limitation and we stay within our job role and training. Is there a danger that the normal limitations on your role do not exist in an online interview?
- Questionable quality of some career assessments and career information;
- Clients – assess their cognitive, emotional and physical state and readiness and address them with adequate services;
- Supportive services and referral;
- The Internet is not a secure environment. The counsellor has to protect confidentiality of client records;
- Poor implementation of ICT applications - access and operation may be slow - use of audio and video may not be feasible because of bandwidth and other technical issues;
- Reduced access for specific populations;
- Some individuals do not suit using technology because of learning or personality style. For then a combination of technology and counsellor support is most effective;
- Building trustworthy client – counsellor relationship.

Activity: Write a set of recommendations for anyone involved in providing or managing online career guidance or support.

Time: 30 mins + 10 mins for feedback

How to: Print out the following questions so each trainee has a copy to work on individually. When the task has been completed, get the group back together for feedback. Use flipcharts to record the main points. Then rank the points in order of priority.

What service or services will you provide? List below	Describe the person you expect to provide this service. Personal qualities and interpersonal skill, attitude etc.

What IT knowledge and ability will the adviser need? List below	Will staff need additional training? If so, what?

What IT equipment / internet, etc. will the adviser require? List below	Currently have	Will need

What quality, safeguarding and supervision checks will you put in place? List below	Who will be responsible for the checks?

Anything else? List below	Describe the solution

Time: 5 mins

What have I learnt from this training session?

How can I use this information when working with a client?

What other skills or information do I require in order to select ICT tools for LMI and/or guidance?

What do I need to change?

Are there some simple steps I can take to improve how I choose ICT tools for clients?

How do I know LMI has an effect on the decisions and outcome for clients?