5. Module 5: Practical and technical requirements of ICT

Group Size: max 8   **Time:** 3.5 hours if completing all the sections.

This module is useful for anyone who writes a briefing paper for a) ICT technology in an advisory centre providing face-to-face guidance; b) ICT technology for use with online guidance; c) a careers information website; and d) a software programmer to develop 'careers' software or an app.

Target group: Manager

Aims

The purpose of this module is to provide managers with a basis for assessing current provision of ICT in guidance services. It aims to support managers in identifying a business need and leading a project team to develop online services.

Learning Outcomes

- To be able to evaluate the effectiveness of current IT provision;
- To be able to identify the IT needs of the organisation, practitioner and the impact on clients;
- To be able to brief IT companies to develop online guidance tools and career websites;
- To be able to draw up a contract for IT/web development;
- To know how to gain feedback from users of the IT tools/services.

The module is for managers of careers services that have a thorough understanding of IT and the internet.

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 5: 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 how your current understanding/competence 1 = Basic to 6 = Expert
I understand all the IT requirements of practitioners working with clients.	A 1............2............3............4.............5..............6 B 1............2............3............4...........5..............6
I know what factors should be considered when assessing IT provision.	A 1............2............3............4...........5..............6 B 1............2............3............4............5..............6
I know how to brief IT companies to develop online guidance services.	A 1............2............3............4............5..............6 B 1............2............3............4...........5..............6
I know how to brief IT companies to develop a careers website.	A 1............2............3............4...........5..............6 B 1............2............3............4...........5..............6
I understand the contractual aspects of working with IT providers and how to draw up an agreement of services.	A 1............2............3............4...........5..............6 B 1............2............3............4...........5..............6
I can find solutions for the day-to-day problems in accessing IT.	A 1............2............3............4...........5..............6 B 1............2............3............4...........5..............6
I know how to monitor usage of IT tools and services and ask for feedback from users.	A 1............2............3............4.............5..............6 B 1............2............3............4...........5..............6

5.1 Writing a briefing paper for ICT providing face to face guidance

Background reading:

http://www.oph.fi/download/145632_lmi-ict-and-iag.pdf

www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/bimrose_lmi_and_ict_in_guidance.pdf

Ask the group if anyone has experience writing a briefing paper for ICT or has written a specification paper. If someone has written a paper, use his or her experience to direct the discussion.

Activity: You have been given the task of writing a briefing paper for the upgrading of ICT in an Advisory Centre.

Staffing: 20 staff work in the centre but only 8 – 10 staff are seeing clients at any one time. The remaining staff is involved in backroom tasks such as administration, meetings, training, research, etc. There is one manager and one team leader.

The clients are adults over the age of 18. Many are unemployed but are only recently unemployed as three large factories recently closed making hundreds of people redundant.

You can work independently or in pairs.

Time: 30 mins

Task	Actions / possible answers	Time
Ask the group if they want to consider **The first time installation of IT** **Or the upgrading of existing IT equipment and software.**	Write answers on screen /flip chart	30 mins
Assess why you need IT? What do you need it to do?		
What equipment will enable users to carry out their role?		
What is the minimum equipment that will be required?		
What will an individual user require?		
What items will be for general use by all staff?		
How many sets of equipment will be required? (number of staff interviewing at any one time)		
What tasks will they do using IT?	Using a database to record the interaction/register for job search etc. Use websites for LMI, job search etc.	
Print (black & white or colour?)		
Photocopy (black & white or colour?)		
Will staff offer online guidance? *See the online guidance module.*		
What is the budget for the purchase of IT?		
What is the budget for the installation of IT?		
Who will advise on the equipment?		
Will you employ the services of at least one external IT consultant?		
What are the long-term plans for IT?		
How long do you want this IT equipment to last?	The latest IT equipment will often be future proof for longer but may require a larger initial investment.	

	Less expensive equipment may require a smaller investment but may have a shorter useable life which could be detrimental to the service
Are there any tasks that can be automated? Is the equipment cost effective? What could you save on staff costs?	For example if you post out lots of items using the mail service is there a machine which can automate the process – print, fold, stuff into envelopes and frank?
Will you put out the specification for tender? Are you limited to a preferred supplier?	
Will staff require training? What is the cost of this training?	Trainer cost and the staff costing when not delivering to clients due to training. etc.
What safeguarding procedures do you need?	
What safeguarding training do you need to put in place?	

5.2 Writing a briefing paper for ICT in online guidance

Activity: discussion

Task	Action	Time
Why you need to provide online guidance? What do you need it to do?	Write answers on screen /flip chart	45 mins
What types of online guidance are possible?	E-mail, Skype/VoIP, telephone, messaging, online chat.	
What equipment will enable users to carry out their role?		
What is the minimum equipment that will be required?		
What will an individual user require?		
How many sets of equipment will be required? (number of staff interviewing at any one time)		
What tasks will they do using IT?		
Will the practitioner use a database to record the interaction/register for job search etc.?		
Will they use websites for LMI, job search etc. while conducting the online guidance?		
Is there a requirement to Print (black & white or colour?)		
Is there a requirement to Photocopy (black & white or colour?)		
What is the budget for the purchase of IT?		
What installation is required? If installation is required what is the budget for the installation of IT?		
Who will advise on the equipment?		
Will you employ the services of at least one external IT consultant?		
Is your internet fast enough to carry all the new traffic?		
What are the long-term plans for IT?		
How long do you want this IT equipment to last?	The latest IT equipment will often be future proof for longer but may require a larger initial investment. Less expensive equipment may require a smaller investment but may have a shorter useable life that could be detrimental to the service.	

Task: Each manager to write briefing paper for their organisation to use ICT in online guidance (if managers have little experience of writing a briefing paper they could work in pairs)

5.3 Writing a briefing paper for a careers information website

Activity: discussion

Task	Action	Time
If you have a website what are your current traffic statistics? You need stats for each page. Which is the most popular page and why?	Write answers on screen /flip chart	45 mins
Is there an opportunity for users to give feedback about your site? What do you learn for that information?		
Assess why do you need the website? What do you need it to do?		
Who is your audience?		
What equipment will clients use to access the website?		
What will an individual client access?		
What features on the website will be for general use by all staff?		
Will there be any sections for staff only?		
Will any sections require a password, registration or payment?		
Is there a requirement to print (black & white or colour?)		
What is the budget for the purchase of the website?		
What is the hosting / on-going service fee?		
Who will advise on the site content?	Note – see the module Writing copy for the web for useful information about content, reading ages, etc.	
Will you employ the services of at least one external IT consultant?		
What are the long-term plans for the website?		

Activity: Ask each manager to write briefing paper for a careers information website (if managers have little experience of writing a briefing paper they could work in pairs).

Many organisations will have a finance department with responsibility for contracting so in this section we will only cover the basics, as you will need to build in some aspects in your final briefing.

Contracting

A contract is an agreement between two parties to provide a service or product. You are looking for:

Start date and end date for the contact.
Penalty Clause for late completion, etc.
Detailed description of what is being supplied.
Guarantee/ warranty
On-going service costs
Payment schedule (At the end of the contract? A series of part payments? Upfront payment?)
Anything else?

5.4 Gaining evaluation and feedback when end users access information remotely

Task	Action	Time
How can you get real time feedback about your website?	Online survey that closes when the web page is closed.	15 mins
Other types of feedback	Focus groups, staff questionnaire, employers	
What questions would you ask?		
Should you structure different questions for different groups based on age, education, gender, ethnicity or locality?	How will the questions be different for different client groups?	

Trainer notes: The responses should be captured and shared with the group, as feedback is essential to allow an organisation to respond to both positive and negative comments.

Suggested reading:

Case Studies: Employment service.se (SE), Pathfinder (EE), CareersPortal.ie, CIOFS-FP e-portfolio (IT), Teens Gate (EL).

5.5 Other points

Activity: Discussion "What should a manager recognise or resolve as the organisation and clients move to accessing information online?"

The clients is unable to access online resources due to	Solution	Time
No broadband/no smartphone	Recommend the client uses a public service such as libraries/ public government offices/internet café/employment centre	30 Mins
IT illiterate	Will require showing what to do by the adviser either in a one to one situation or in a group for other people with low level IT literacy. Some people will not be capable of using IT on their own.	
Non-native speakers: what is available to help this group of people access LMI?	Some websites/pages available in their home language, a friend to translate, group work led by a home language speaker.	
Non-native speakers with low oral comprehension	Language lessons, support into employment	
Non-native speaker with good oral skills but low reading ability in the native language	Online translator such as Google translator. WARNING how do you know the translation is accurate or is a warning to the client sufficient?	
Question to discuss. What LMI is useful for anyone who cannot speak the native language?	Consider what jobs can they do? Where will the jobs be? Are they available in this area? Are there any useful websites or printed materials available in their home language?	
Are there freely accessible ICT tools and LMI resources you can draw upon?	EU Skills Profile Tool for Third Country Nationals http://ec.europa.eu/migrantskills Examples on this website https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/employability/careers/resources/sourcesoflmi.aspx	

Suggested background reading about ICT in LMI:

www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/bimrose_lmi_and_ict_in_guidance.pdf

https://www.researchonline.org.uk/sds/search/download.do?ref=B27682

www.labourmarketnortheast.co.uk/app/assets/.../ukces_lmisummaryreport_sep12.pdf

This article deals with older people's ICT learning and support needs but is a good overview of the ICT illiterate person of any age. http://sus-it.lboro.ac.uk/SusIT_Briefing_Paper_5.pdf

5.6 Template for a Website Brief

[Organization Name]
[Date]
Project Title: [Insert name here]

1. Client Contact Details

- [Name]
- [E-mail address]
- [Phone number]

2. Budget & Timing:

3. Project Outline

[Why would you like a new website? What do you need a website for: traffic, sales, response rates, leads generated, online authority? Who is the target audience of the website?]

4. Websites you like

[Provide examples of those websites (or parts of websites) with the type of design and functionality you like ((from any industry)]

5. Your Current Website

What is good about your existing website?	
What is bad about your existing website?	
What levels of traffic is it currently receiving? If possible please provide access codes to your statistics trackers.	
How is your website performing for your objective? (Traffic/ Sales / Response rates/ Leads generated/Reputation):	…
Which host and hosting package do you currently use?	…
Are you happy with your hosting services?	…

6. Website architecture

Do you have a site map?	…
Number of sections:	…

Number of pages:	…
What features should your website have?	[ ] Easy–to–update for non-technical people
	[ ] SEO-friendly
	[ ] Ecommerce
	[ ] Newsletter
	[ ] Members section
	[ ] E-mail marketing
	[ ] Mobile-ready
	[ ] Photo and media galleries
	[ ] Feedback & contact forms
	[ ] Surveys
	[ ] Blog
	[Other required features]

7. **Website design and style. What impression do you wish to create?**

Humble	High-tech
Helpful	Corporate
Prestigious	Modern
Simple/Clean	Authoritative
Approachable	Funky
Caring	Playful
Natural/organic	Elegant
Credible/expert	Sophisticated
Fresh	Helpful

8. Search engines

[List the top seven search phrases that people use (will use) to find your site]

9. Social Media

Do you have an existing social media strategy?	
Do you need help with social media profiles setup?	…

Include links to your social media profiles and other external websites linked to this project (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, YouTube)	

10. Content

What types of content will be on your website – e.g. text, photos, audio, and their current format – e. g. digitized hard copy?	
What content is now produced?	
What new content needs to be produced?	
Do you need assistance with producing new content?	

11. Competition and Niche

List your competitors' websites and other important websites in your market/niche?	…
What are they doing well?	…
What are they doing badly?	…

12. Any Other Comments?