



Careers Education

Careers education in the Danish primary and lower secondary school

Careers education

The Danish term for careers education in primary and lower secondary school is “Uddannelses-, erhvervs- og arbejdsmarkedsorientering”. Directly translated, this means “Orientation about education and training, vocations and the labour market”. The objective of careers education in primary and lower secondary school is for each pupil to acquire a general knowledge about educational and vocational opportunities and to come to understand the value of completing an education or training programme.

Pupils must, on the one hand, acquire an understanding of their own interests and personal qualifications, including informal competencies, and, on the other hand, acquire an understanding of education as a means to obtain a future vocational and occupational goal. For this reason, the vocational aspects and the insight into more practical work functions have a central place in careers education.

Careers education is a compulsory topic in the Danish primary and lower secondary school from form 1 to 9. It is not taught as a separate subject with a certain number of hours per week but has to be integrated as an interdisciplinary topic in connection with other subjects such as Danish, civics or history.

Careers education constitutes a fundamental basis for individual and group guidance sessions, which guidance counsellors from a local Youth Guidance Centre organise for the pupils in forms 6 to 9 (see below).

Targets at three levels

In 2003, so-called “national common intermediary and final targets” for all subjects, including careers education, were introduced in primary and lower secondary education in Denmark. The Ministry of Education has defined the intermediary targets for careers education after form 3 and form 6, as well as the final targets after form 9.

The final targets are long-term goals that set the direction for careers education activities through all of primary and lower secondary school. The intermediary targets are short-term goals used in relation to planning and evaluating careers education activities and in relation to assessing to what extent the pupils have benefited from these activities.

Both the intermediary targets after forms 3 and 6 and the final targets after form 9 are divided into three central knowledge and skills areas:

1. The personal choice
2. Education, training and vocations
3. The labour market

These central knowledge and skills areas are to be developed through careers education throughout primary and lower secondary school. The aim is for the pupils to:

- develop professional, social and personal competencies;
- make an informed and realistic choice of education or training programme;
- understand the value of life-long learning;
- be able to deal with conditions related to education, training, vocations and the labour market.

Common intermediary and final targets

The tables below provide an overview of the common intermediary and final targets for the three central knowledge and skills areas.

The personal choice

Careers education should encourage pupils to acquire knowledge and skills that will enable them to:

Targets after form 3	Targets after form 6	Targets after form 9
Express own hopes and expectations	Articulate own strengths and interests	Use knowledge of own skills and qualifications
Give examples of different people's workdays	Give examples of different people's career paths	Explain the interaction between competency development, career and lifelong learning
Report simple information	Be familiar with various ways of searching for information	Search for educational and vocational information
	Explain the educational opportunities in the Danish primary and lower secondary school and the various options for fulfilling the requirements related to compulsory education	Explain the requirements and contents of youth education programmes (upper secondary education and vocational education and training programmes)
Be familiar with educational terms that are relevant to the pupils' everyday life	Have conversations about educational terms that are relevant to the pupils' educational planning	Apply educational terms that are relevant to educational and vocational matters
Make simple decisions	Make personal decisions and explain why they were made	Create a personal education plan

Education, training and vocations

Careers education should encourage pupils to acquire knowledge and skills that will enable them to:

Targets after form 3	Targets after form 6	Targets after form 9
Give examples of jobs and vocations from own immediate environment	Describe the relationship between education and future employment	Express knowledge of the relationship between educational choices and vocational opportunities
	Describe typical job functions in the local community	Give examples of job opportunities at local, national and international levels
	Be familiar with vocations and jobs abroad	Be familiar with the international dimension in education and vocation
Express examples of ideas	Convert ideas through project work in class	Relate to innovation and entrepreneurship
Give examples of different ways of communicating	Apply suitable ways of communicating	Select relevant techniques when searching for information about education and training programmes and jobs

The labour market

Careers education should encourage pupils to acquire knowledge and skills that will enable them to:

Targets after form 3	Targets after form 6	Targets after form 9
Give examples of paid and unpaid employment	Give examples of employment types and terms in public-sector and private-sector businesses	Analyse labour market conditions, including conditions for employees and self-employed businessmen
Account for simple production processes	Describe local businesses with an entrepreneurial background	Be familiar with the opportunity to set up and run a business
	Give examples of international cooperation on the labour market	Be familiar with the global labour market
Participate in discussions about the educational environment in the class room	Be familiar with regulations about educational environment and the employment of children and youth	Apply regulations concerning educational and working environments
Discuss the roles of boys and girls and the notion of equality between human beings	Discuss equality and inequality on the labour market, e.g. in relation to gender and culture	Form an opinion about equal rights and equal status in the educational system and on the labour market
Discuss various family pat-	Discuss quality of life in	Apply knowledge of living

terns and networks	terms of family life, spare time, educational life, vocational life and life in society	conditions and lifestyles
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Teachers, guidance counsellors and educational logbooks

Teachers at primary and lower secondary schools are responsible for the provision of general careers education from form 1 to 9. However, the local Youth Guidance Centres serve as a source of inspiration, coordination and further development in this area and therefore cooperate with the teachers on the provision of careers education.

Career guidance specifically related to the transition from compulsory to youth education, on the other hand, is the responsibility of the Youth Guidance Centres. In cooperation with the school principals and the class teachers, the Youth Guidance Centres organise guidance activities for pupils in forms 6 to 9 (10). These activities, e.g. individual and group guidance sessions, take place at schools – close to the pupils.

Careers education provided by teachers should be seen as the foundation for each pupil's future educational and vocational planning, and it is an important basis for the guidance sessions related to the development of the pupils' educational logbook. Through a learning process based on dialogue with a guidance counsellor from the Youth Guidance Centre, each pupil starts developing a personal educational logbook in form 6. The aim of this process is to develop the pupils' self-knowledge and ability to make decisions regarding education and career. It is concluded with the drawing up of an individual transition plan in form 9, describing plans and objectives after primary and lower secondary school.

Syllabus and guidelines for careers education

To facilitate the implementation of the common intermediary and final targets, the Ministry of Education has developed a syllabus as well as a set of guidelines for careers education that can be used by teachers and guidance counsellors.

In these documents, it is stressed that careers education should establish the foundation for each pupil's future educational and vocational planning and decision-making. It is seen as a topic that should be interpreted in a wide and holistic perspective. As a result of changes in family patterns, working life, new media habits etc., it can no longer be taken for granted that pupils bring with them a basis of stories about working life from home. Consequently, it is important that all – or many – aspects of life are included in careers education.

Importance is also attached to information management skills. Pupils should learn how to search for and make use of available and relevant careers information and guidance offers, including IT-based offers such as the national guidance portal (www.UddannelsesGuiden.dk).

Besides the class-based careers education, other activities are also organised in cooperation with the local Youth Guidance Centre; e.g., study visits to local companies, visits to youth education institutions, one- or two-week practical work experience periods etc. The school must, in cooperation with the local Youth Guidance Centre, establish cooperation with companies, public employment services, youth education institutions etc.

The following tables provide a schematic overview of the syllabus at the three levels; forms 1-3, forms 4-6 and forms 7-9.

Forms 1 to 3

Knowledge and skills area	Contents and methods	Specific focus on	Activities
The personal choice	Development of the pupil's ability to make choices, including knowledge of own strengths and knowledge of working life and leisure time. Activities will be very concrete and relate to what the pupils already know.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • leisure time and leisure time activities • choices and consequences of choices • the personal story • the notion of work in relation to the pupils' everyday life • dreams and expectations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • examine and discuss the leisure time activities of the class • discuss, plan and evaluate class activities • tell about themselves and their families • meet people in different vocations in the local environment • express own dreams and hopes
Education, training and vocations	Introduces the pupils to jobs and vocations, and prepares the ground for understanding the purpose of school attendance. Activities will be very concrete and relate to what the pupils already know	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • school attendance and its importance • job functions at school and their importance for the everyday life at school • jobs and vocations in the family • idea generation • ways of communicating with each other 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop an understanding of the value of schooling • examine job functions at school and within the family • classify ideas, plan and carry out class activities • develop norms for desirable behaviour
The labour market	Activities are based on the pupils' experience of the educational and working environment at school. Typical work terms are introduced and clarified to expand and adapt the pupils' picture of working life as it appears in their everyday life.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the notion of work • the educational environment • equal rights and equal status • family patterns and social networks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • examine the notion of work • find examples of production processes • gather information about the educational environment • find examples of gender roles and equal rights

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Forms 4 to 6

Knowledge and skills area	Contents and methods	Specific focus on	Activities
The personal choice	Goals, values and ideas in relation to education and future are key notions. From form 6, pupils begin working with their personal educational log-book with support from the Youth Guidance Centres and in cooperation with the school and family.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • self-knowledge and values • personal choices and justification of choices • educational offers of the public “Folkeskole” (primary and lower secondary school) and alternative ways of fulfilling compulsory education • the notion of careers and competency development • introduction of notions related to education and vocation • ways of searching for information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understand the meaning of personal competency development, formal as well as informal • form ideas about the future • make decisions and give reasons for them • articulate own interests and strengths • gather and assess information about career- and personal development opportunities • examine and explore the opportunities of an active leisure life
Education, training and vocations	Knowledge of the connection between education, training and vocation. The multiplicity of working life in relation to ways of being affiliated to the labour market must be reflected. Pupils must be made aware that education is the prerequisite for gaining foothold on the labour market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • education and training as the basis for future employment • innovation in practice • business community and work life in the local community • professions and jobs in a global perspective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • gather and discuss examples of career paths • understand the development process from idea to reality • examine the business community and work life in the local community • gather information about companies’

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • various ways of communicating 	<p>associations with foreign nations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use and discuss different forms of communication
The labour market	<p>Insight into the conditions of the labour market and the related political and social perspectives. Pupils will have the opportunity to analyse the different living conditions that working life entails for the individual and the family</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • business and vocation formats • public and private workplaces • the concept of entrepreneurship • the concept of globalisation • regulations concerning educational and work environment • equal rights and equal status on the labour market • ways of life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • gather information about different types of businesses and vocations • study the history of chosen entrepreneurial businesses • study and discuss globalisation • gather information about regulations concerning educational environments and work for children and young people • find examples of gender and cultural differences on the labour market • find definitions of and discuss the connection between family life, leisure life, educational life, vocational life and life in society

Forms 7 to 9

Knowledge and skills area	Contents and methods	Specific focus on	Activities
The personal choice	<p>Development of an understanding of the connection between choice of education and vocation in a lifelong learning per-</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • connection between wishes and qualifications in choosing an education • interaction be- 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • examine and understand vocation and education in a lifelong development perspective • find and assess in-

	spective	<p>tween education, vocation and career in relation to a meaningful life</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • search for information related to educational planning • requirements and contents of different youth education programmes • terminology related to education, vocation and career • processes that lead to the preparation of a realistic education plan 	<p>formation and interactive guidance opportunities relating to education and vocations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop an overview of youth education programmes (form 7) • evaluate mandatory youth programme introductory courses (form 8) • develop knowledge of terms related to education, vocation and career • assess own wishes, opportunities and potential in connection with educational planning
Education, training and vocations	Continue working with the connection between education, vocation and employment and relate their knowledge to the choice of a general or vocational upper secondary education programme; a choice they need to make after form 9.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • employment opportunities in a local, national and international perspective • the connection between educational paths and employment opportunities, including starting and running their own business • internationalisation in educational systems and in the business community • education and job search techniques 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use different channels, incl. ICT, to find information about relevant local, national and international employment opportunities and about learning opportunities abroad • examine and understand the connection between educational paths and employment opportunities • examine the possibilities of starting and running a business • practice education and job search techniques

<p>The labour market</p>	<p>Knowledge of a constantly changing labour market with a lifelong learning process and with different contrasts of interest is essential. Pupils build knowledge about employee responsibility and work conditions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • labour market conditions, including conditions for employees and self-employed businessmen • educational and working environments • equal rights and equal status in the education system and on the labour market • living conditions and ways of life • the notion of lifelong learning • examine the opportunity to establish and run own business 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • gather, select and process information about the labour market also the global aspect • assess the conditions for managers, employees and self-employed businessmen • assess the conditions for innovation and entrepreneurship • process data about educational and working environments • examine and discuss equal rights and equal status in the education system and on the labour market • analyse knowledge of living conditions and ways of life • examine critically the importance of continuous development of personal competencies and career planning
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Further information about guidance in Denmark

This fact sheet describes the main characteristics of careers education in Danish primary and lower secondary schools. The Danish Ministry of Education’s online publication “Guidance in Education – the educational guidance system in Denmark” gives an overview of guidance services in the educational sector: <http://eng.uvm.dk/Fact%20Sheets/Guidance.aspx>

For more information about careers education and guidance in Denmark, please contact Euroguidance Denmark at the Danish Agency for International Education: euroguidance@iu.dk

Euroguidance Denmark is part of a European network supported by the European Commission through the Leonardo da Vinci programme (www.en.iu.dk/euroguidance). One of the main aims of the Euroguidance network is to support the development of a European dimension in educational and vocational guidance and to promote mutual awareness and cooperation between guidance services in Europe.