



UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION

Commission Circular No. 934

No. 20, Ward Place,
Colombo 07.

21st October 2010

Vice-Chancellors of Universities,
Rectors of Campuses,
Directors of Institutes,

Strengthening of Career Guidance Services in State Universities

Your attention is invited to the Commission Circular No. 819 of 06th February 2003 issued on Establishment and Operation of Career Guidance Units. The **UGC Circular No. 819 issued on Establishment and Operation of Career Guidance Units** in Universities has provided very clear guidelines with regard to the functions of the Career Guidance Unit, activities to be pursued, and the staff cadre provisions for the unit and financing. All universities were directed to establish and operate career guidance services encompassing a wide spectrum of activities, namely i) career counseling, ii) career information service, iii) networking, iv) work experience (industrial placement programmes), v) graduate placement (internship programmes) and vi) integration of career guidance into the undergraduate curricular. And the universities were requested to commence at least 3 activities at the beginning and as the system matures to initiate other activities in addition to any other specific activities designed by the universities and faculties.

Recent review undertaken by the UGC Standing Committee on Career Guidance and Welfare has revealed that except few universities, most universities/higher educational institutions have not fully complied with the instructions issued through the UGC Circular 819 of 06th February 2003. Further, many universities/higher educational institutions have highlighted several constraints and issues that prevented the full implementation of the instructions issued by the UGC. Having taken into consideration of the constraints and issues faced by universities/higher educational institutions, the Standing Committee on Career Guidance and Welfare has prepared a comprehensive memo and submitted to the University Grants Commission for consideration, approval and necessary action. The University Grants Commission at its 803rd and 805th meetings held on 6th May 2010 and 3rd June 2010, respectively has approved the recommendations and has decided to issue directives all universities /higher educational institutions through a UGC Circular for compliance and necessary action. This Circular provides fresh directives to all universities/higher educational institutions on appropriate measures to be taken to a) refocus career guidance services, b) institutionalize career guidance services and c) facilitate Career Guidance Units to undertake

its mandatory functions. Accordingly, all universities/higher educational institutions are hereby directed to reorganize and strengthen the Career Guidance as prescribed below and submit to the University Grants Commission for information and approval.

A. Refocusing the Career Guidance Services

The main functions of Career Guidance Services should be centred on the need to produce highly employable graduates, who would fit into the diverse sectors i.e. private, NGO, state and self-employment sectors. Therefore, Career Guidance Services in universities needs to cover a wide area and encompass many activities, designed to support the undergraduates in their efforts to make right career choices and successfully manage their academic, personal and social lives. The **recommended focal areas** for conducting career related programmes in universities are as follows.

1. Facilitating the young person's transition from school to university
2. Counseling and Advising on Careers
3. Employability Skills enhancement
4. Career-related information provision
5. Networking with the industry
6. Availing Work Experience
7. Graduate Placement
8. Integration of Career Guidance within curricular in the form of instructional modules (i.e. Career Development Course Modules)
9. Entrepreneurship skills development
10. Training, Research and Development

The guidelines for formulating and designing training and learning exercises under the respective focal areas are given in **Annexure 1**. The Directors of Career Guidance Units and the Career Guidance Counsellors are required to structure their career guidance programmes emphasizing the ten focal areas listed above. The types of programmes conducted and their frequency will be decided by taking into account location-specific characteristics, student populations and other variables specific to each university. Expertise available in one university needs to be shared with others in the system for greater effectiveness. The guidelines for developing syllabus for Career Development Course Modules that are to be offered over the 3-4 year study period are given in **Annexure 2**.

B. Institutionalizing Career Guidance Services in universities

The universities shall undertake the steps to consolidate the activities of the Career Guidance Service in the following lines. University must establish a Career Guidance Advisory Board (CGAB) with clear Terms of Reference (TOR) and Career Guidance Unit (CGU) with required human resources, and infrastructure facilities and financial provisions.

1. **Career Guidance Advisory Board** – The Career Guidance Service must be operated as a centrally coordinated service and therefore it is recommended to appoint a Career Guidance Advisory Board (CGAB) under the Chairmanship of the Vice Chancellor with representatives from various stakeholders groups including staff, students, employers and industry appointed by the Vice-Chancellor in consultation with the Deans of Faculties and the Director of the CGU. The Registrar or his nominee (eg.

SAR/Student Services) shall function as the Secretary of CGAB. The Composition and Terms of Reference of CGAB are given in **Annexure 3**.

2. **Career Guidance Units in Universities** – Each university shall take steps to consolidate the functions of existing CGUs or take steps to establish CGUs in their respective universities in the following lines.

a) **Human Resources**

- i) **Director/CGU** – 01 post at Senior Lecturer Gr. I or Gr. II (U-AC 3(I) /U-AC 3(II) level on full time basis for a three (3) year term on (a) release from within the University or University System or (b) assignment/contract basis from outside by open advertisement. .

Duties: Design and implement career guidance programmes across the university in liaison with staff of the CGU and Academic Career Guidance Advisors of faculties of studies.

Recruitment: For the appointment on assignment/contract basis on open advertisement, the recruitment should be made according to the procedure outlined in UGC Circular 721 of 21st November 1997.

Note: The designation of **Director/CGU** is for the functional purposes. The recruitment to the post be made as **Senior Lecturer, Grade III/I** in order to provide promotional avenues aspects for the appointee.

- ii) **Career Guidance Counselor** – 01 post for first 1000 students and additional cadre positions at the rate of 1 per additional 3000 students at U-AS 2(I) level on full time basis as at present.

Duties: Assist the Director/Career Guidance in designing and implementation of career guidance programmes across the university in liaison with staff of the CGU and Academic Career Guidance Advisors of faculties.

Recruitment: Recruitment should be made according to the procedure outlined in the **Annexure 4**.

- iii) **Academic Career Guidance Advisor** – 01 post at Faculty level appointed by the Vice Chancellor in consultation with the respective Dean and the Director/CGU from among the academic staff of the Faculty on part time basis and to pay an allowance determined by the Commission.

Duties: Design and implement faculty specific career guidance training programmes and advisory services in liaison with the staff of the CGU.

- iv) **Computer Application Assistant** – 01 post on full time basis as per the existing scheme of recruitment

This person will function as multipurpose officer assisting the Director and Career Guidance Counsellors in all matters relating to the CGUs and operating career guidance services.

- v) **Labourer** – 01 post on full time basis as per the existing scheme of recruitment

- b) **Physical resources** – Career Guidance Units must be provided with the following minimum facilities

- i) Office space at a permanent location
- ii) Separate room for career counselling
- iii) Meeting or conference room (desirable)
- iv) Adequate furniture
- v) Computer with internet facilities
- vi) Office equipment

- c) **Financial resources** – adequate recurrent funds for the following.

- i) Operational expenses including telephone, electricity, stationery, water, and payments to visiting staff / resource persons
- ii) Training programmes , workshops, career fairs, etc

C. **Mandatory functions of CGU**

Career Guidance Unit of a university shall function as an integral component of the university with the responsibility of designing and launching appropriate career guidance service across the university. This goal is achieved by designing and conducting centrally operated as well as faculty-level operated multitude of activities that comes under the 10 focal areas given in **Section 2 in Annexure 1**.

- i) CGUs shall function in all universities and work in close collaboration with the Faculties and the Academic Departments, and particularly with the Staff Development Centres as the task of producing “employable graduates” is a joint responsibility where the academic community working closely with the undergraduates has a major role to play.
- ii) CGUs shall conduct programmes or facilitate the conduct of programmes, which fall into all, **or initially at least three of the categories identified as focal areas** – namely, i) facilitating the transition from school to university, ii) counseling and advice on careers, iii) employability skills enhancement, iv) career-related information provision, v) networking with the industry, vi) availing work experience, vii) graduate placement, viii) integration within curricula, ix) entrepreneurial skills development and x) training, research and development.
- iii) CGUs shall conduct/promote the conduct of *seminars, conferences, workshops, exhibitions, festivals, industry days, career fairs, etc*, aimed at

'soft skills' development and promoting university graduates among prospective employers that are organised by various departments and units of the university

- iv) In the absence of a dedicated unit to coordinate Industrial Training Programme, the CGUs shall facilitate the initiatives taken by university, and faculties for design and conduct of Industrial Placement Programmes for providing work experience to undergraduates which are to be organized and conducted through collaboration with industry and diverse professional bodies.

Commission Circular No. 819 of 06th February 2003 will be rescinded with effect from 31st October 2010.

Please take action accordingly with immediate effect.



(Prof. Gamini Samaranayake)
Chairman/UGC

- Copies :
1. Chairman's Office/UGC
 2. Vice-Chairman/UGC
 3. Members of the UGC
 4. Secretary/UGC
 5. Deans of Faculties
 6. Registrars of Universities
 7. Financial Controller/UGC
 8. Bursars of Universities
 9. Librarians/SAL/AL of the Higher Educational institutions/Institutes
 10. Deputy Registrars/Snr. Asst Registrars/Asst. Registrar of Campuses/Institutes
 11. Deputy Bursars/Snr. Asst. Bursars/Asst. Bursars of Campuses/ Institutes
 12. Chief Internal Auditor/UGC
 13. Govt. Audit Superintendents of Universities
 14. Snr. Asst. Int. Auditor/Asst/Int. Auditor of HEIs
 15. Secretaries of Trade Unions
 16. Auditor-General

File No. UGC/IUA/CG/03/09

Guidelines for Conducting Career Guidance Programmes in Universities

1. Introduction

The main functions of CGUs should be centred on the need to produce highly **Employable Graduates**, who would fit the diverse sectors i.e. state, private, NGO, and self-employment sectors. Producing graduates capable of securing employment in the global market is also considered as a desired goal. CGUs will attempt to make it possible to reach these goals by collaborating with the University, Faculties and Academic Departments and by liaising with the world of work outside.

Career Guidance in universities needs to cover a wide area and encompass many activities, designed to support the undergraduates in their efforts to make right career choices and successfully manage their academic, personal and social lives.

2. Focal Areas for Designing Career Guidance Services

The UGC's Standing Committee on Career Guidance and Student Welfare identifies the following focal areas for conducting career related programmes in universities:

- I. Facilitating the young person's transition from school to university
- II. Counselling and Advising on Careers
- III. Employability Skills enhancement
- IV. Career-related information provision
- V. Networking with the industry
- VI. Availing Work Experience
- VII. Graduate Placement
- VIII. Integration within curricula. in the form of instructional modules (i.e. Career Development Course Modules)
- IX. Entrepreneurship skills development
- X. Training, Research and Development

The above focal areas are expanded below to indicate possible activities to be undertaken by Career Guidance Units of universities:

I) Facilitating the transition from school to university

Ensuring the transition from school to university is a vital process as the two systems emphasize different needs and mindsets. School education, especially at the GCE (A/L), emphasizes the obtaining of good grades needed to enter a university. However, taking responsibility for personal development and adoption of a proactive approach to both study and life are necessary to produce a graduate sought after by the world of work. The university career guidance programmes need to focus on this aspect **particularly in the first two years.**

II) Counseling and Advice on Careers

Provision of guidance, counselling and training to undergraduates in areas such as career exploration, self-assessment, career planning, effective job search techniques, etc. The undergraduates should also be made aware of requirements of the 'world of work' today and on ways to make an effective transition to the 'world of work'. Imparting skills needed to secure employment in the private sector (including CV writing, facing of interviews, aptitude tests, etc.) is recognized as a vital area. This would have to be done at two levels i.e. awareness creation and advice provision involving a large number of students per session, and counselling conducted on an individual basis.

III) Employability Skills enhancement

Development of appropriate soft skills (transferable skills) and helping the students to adopt a **proactive approach to acquisition of knowledge, skills other competencies throughout their stay in university** are emphasized as critical areas, as such skills may not be acquired within a short period of time.

IV) Career-related information provision

Provision of information on availability of employment opportunities, avenues for profitable self-employment, labour market trends, suitable added professional qualifications or training and skills profiles in demand would be made available to students to facilitate their employability skills enhancement.

V) Networking with the industry

Networking with persons, trade and professional bodies and voluntary organizations outside the university is emphasized as an important activity. The CGUs will pay particular attention to interface with these organizations to facilitate the provision of internship opportunities and feedback to improve academic programmes. Awareness creation among students using professionals from the industry and facilitation of graduate placement are also considered as important aspects.

VI) Availing Work Experience

Collaborating with diverse parties to facilitate short exposure programmes, which would enable undergraduates to experience the world of work, is considered a high priority area. It is recognized that CGU, with limited staff strength, would not be able to handle industrial placement, internships, job placements, vacation work, or support course-related projects or research. However, CGUs could facilitate or support the process of carrying out effective industrial placement, internship or vacation employment programmes by providing information, linking with the industry or guiding students, where necessary.

VII Graduate Placement

Facilitation and provision of work-search services to final year undergraduates and recent graduates, and recruitment services to prospective employers are considered as important areas.

VIII) Integration within curricular in the form of instructional modules (i.e. Career Development Course Modules)

Introduce Career Development teaching into the regular academic programme as a non-credit compulsory course is emphasized. **Experience has shown that students tend to pay scant attention to subjects, which are not part of the academic programmes and are not tied to grades and examinations.** It is recommended that "Career Development" be a component of the academic programmes similar to English and Computer Literacy. CGUs will focus on creating awareness on transferable skills/competencies such as leadership, social skills, teamwork, critical/creative thinking, problem solving, etc.

IX) Entrepreneurship skills development

Development of entrepreneurial skills in the undergraduates would facilitate the emergence persons capable of starting self-employment ventures and would make it possible for the graduate to directly contribute to the economy and hopefully also provide employment opportunities to other interested parties. Imparting knowledge on legal, financial and operational issues applicable to starting a new business could help undergraduate get a head start in establishing a new venture and successfully operating it.

X) Training, Research and Development

It is important for CGUs to conduct training and awareness programmes, using own resources as well as persons from the industry and other professionals, on work-related attitudes, skills and competencies. Such training would have a far reaching effect on the graduate and would extend beyond securing employment. Research studies (tracer studies) need to be conducted to identify current trends in employment-related issues, determine the status quo in respect of employability of university graduates and also to facilitate revising and updating specific training components and course modules of career guidance training programmes.

3. Recommendations on Functions of Career Guidance Services in Universities

- 3.1 Career Guidance Units shall function in all universities and work in close collaboration with the Faculties and the Academic Departments, and particularly with the Staff Development Centres as the task of producing "employable graduates" is a joint responsibility where the academic community working closely with the undergraduates has a major role to play.
- 3.2 Functions of the Career Guidance Units shall be guided and supported by an advisory board (of between 8 to 15 members) representing the various stakeholder groups including staff, students, employers and industry appointed by the Vice-Chancellor in consultation with the Deans of Faculties and the Director of the CGU.
- 3.3 All universities shall consider University-Industry collaboration as an essential requirement to carry out its mandatory functions. Industry collaboration should be sought by the University, the Council and the Faculties in strategic planning sessions and in matters of curriculum development and review both on a regular basis and through short duration brainstorming sessions and workshops. Further, participation of

industry representatives in faculty boards, university councils, and inter-university committees should be promoted to develop meaningful study programmes relevant to the 'world of work'. Moreover, universities need to actively solicit collaboration of diverse professional bodies interested in career development including Chambers of Commerce, the OPA, IPM, etc. to initiate a broader dialogue on the subject.

- 3.4 Career Guidance Units shall conduct programmes or facilitate the conduct of programmes, which fall into all, **or at least three of the categories identified as focal areas** (Facilitating the transition from school to university and Counseling and Advice on Careers; Employability Skills enhancement; Career-related information provision; Networking with the industry; Availing Work Experience; Graduate Placement; Integration within Curricula; and Entrepreneurial skills development and Training, Research and Development). The types of programmes conducted and their frequency will be decided by taking into account location-specific characteristics, student populations and other variables specific to each university. Expertise available in one university needs to be shared with others in the system for greater effectiveness.
- 3.5 University shall provide minimum infrastructure and other facilities that include, office space at a permanent location, separate room for career counselling, medium size meeting or conference room, adequate furniture, computer with internet facilities and office equipment should be provided to CGU.
- 3.6 University shall allocate adequate funds need to be allocated for operational expenses (including telephone, electricity, stationery, water, and payments to visiting staff / resource persons) and for training programmes , workshops, career fairs, etc.
- 3.7 Universities shall appoint Academic Counselors (Faculty Coordinators of Career Guidance) who will collaborate with the CGU in providing services relevant to each Faculty and in integrating Career Guidance within the curricula. They shall be appointed by the Vice-Chancellor in consultation with the relevant Deans of Faculties and the Director of Career Guidance. Such coordinators may be paid a monthly honorarium. Their contribution towards the assignment shall need to be given due credit with regard to their own career progression.
- 3.8 In universities where career development has taken off fairly well, teaching career guidance as a subject in the regular academic programmes, emphasizing career-related skills development, is strongly recommended. Such career development teaching would have to take into account faculty-specific features in respect of job opportunities available to their graduates. This course preferably should consist of 3 modules (**preferably 3 credits**), offered over the 3-4 year degree programme as a non-GPA but compulsory course. The syllabus for the Career Development shall developed jointly by the relevant academic staff and staff of the Career Guidance Unit.

**Syllabus for the Course on Career Development
(3 modules for the first, second and third years, respectively)**

Year 1 - Module 1 (1 Unit)

Aims and Contents: This part of the course is designed to impart basic skills needed for successful knowledge acquisition and developing effective relationships and attitudes usable during the subsequent years in the university. The course will also create awareness on prevailing trends in the world of work and lay the foundation to the student's understanding of his or her choices and the future roles, upon graduation and entering the 'world of work'.

The course could be taught in a classroom environment using lectures, workbook type exercises and group work. It is also possible to impart some of the skills in 2-3 day workshops. Workshops are better suited for changing the attitudes of the participants and making them adopt new behaviors as a result of greater self-awareness achievable in a workshop setting.

- Introduction to Career Development:
 - Taking personal responsibility for self-development: self-driven and life-long nature of career development; using motivated behavior for future success
 - Current and emerging trends in the local and overseas job markets for graduates
 - Forces driving the new economy and ways to capitalize on available opportunities
- Making the best of opportunities available to university students within and outside the campus for career development
- Effective transition from school to the university:
 - Attitudes needed for success in university and subsequent world of work
 - The art of living with others and developing effective relationships
 - Understanding industry expectations for fresh graduates; Self-evaluation of students' awareness, attitudes and attributes
- Effective study skills and motivated goal-directed learning
- Personal organization and life management:
 - Time management
 - Managing stress and handling interpersonal conflicts
 - Achieving and balance between mind, body and spirit
- Programming for future success:
 - Personal SWOT analysis
 - Developing a personal vision
 - Goal setting

Year 2 – Module 2 (1 Unit)

Aims and Course Content: This part of the course imparts a broad understanding of how organizations function and consolidates the knowledge obtained during the first year and adds new skills and knowledge needed to prepare the student for a career in a chosen sector.

Note: Faculties/ departments which teach organizational management or organizational behavior as subjects in their regular academic programs may substitute the relevant sections with other relevant topics or expand other areas listed here.

- Understanding organizations and how they function:
 - Roles and functions of managers
 - Understanding management styles and getting along with your supervisor
 - Organizational culture/ climate
- Understanding leadership and its role in modern organizations
 - Leading vs. managing
 - Important leadership theories and key issues related to exercising leadership
 - Motivating people at work: Influencing and persuasive skills
 - Employability skills: understanding important transferable skills and their relevance to the world of work and personal development
 - Effective personality attributes for a leadership role
 - Creating a sustainable competitive advantage: Personal branding
 - Impression management
- Understanding effective team work:
 - Synergy
 - Resolving team conflict
- The concept of emotional intelligence

Year 3 – Module 3 (1 Unit)

Aims and Course Content: The course content of the 3rd year is designed to cater to immediate and future needs of the fresh graduate in the ‘world of work’, and builds on already imparted knowledge during the preceding two years. Lectures, workbook type exercises, interactive multimedia, self-assessments, case studies and group work may be used to teach this part of the course.

- Habits of effective people (Covey’s seven habits of effective people)
- Effective interpersonal communication: Eric Bern’s transactional analysis
 - The concept assertive behavior and the use of assertive techniques; Dealing with difficult people
- Dealing with conflicts:
 - Conflict resolution modes
 - Principled negotiation
 - Mediation skills
- Effective decision-making
- Making effective presentations
 - Persuasive communication
 - Understanding the role of verbal and non-verbal communication
 - Overcoming speech apprehension
- Projecting the right image:
 - Role of dress code
 - Grooming for success
 - Effective mannerisms and etiquette
- Preparation of CV and cover letter
- Guidelines for facing job interviews

Annexure 3

Composition and Terms of Reference of Career Guidance Advisory Board

A. Composition of Career Guidance Advisory Board (CGAB)

- i) Vice Chancellor as the Chairman of CGAB
- ii) Deputy Vice Chancellor (if the post is in place to function as the alternate chairman of CGAB)
- iii) Deans of Faculties
- iv) Director/CGU
- v) Academic CG Advisor – 1 per Faculty
- vi) Chairman/Senior Student Counsellors
- vii) Chairpersons of Committees/Coordinators of Units Handling CGSs at Faculty level
- viii) Chairperson of Committee/Coordinators of Units Handling Industrial Placement Programmes at Faculty Level
- ix) Registrar
- x) Bursar
- xi) SAR/Student Services as the Secretary of CGAB
- xii) Representatives from Employers and Industry (3-4 persons)
- xiii) Representatives from Students as and when required on invitation

B. Terms of Reference of CGAB

- i) Prepare the institutional policy and framework of Career Guidance Services of the university
- ii) Prepare action plan for the Career Guidance Services operating at Central and Faculty Level
- iii) Regular monitoring of progress of the implementation of agreed career guidance programmes and activities
- iv) Approval of the academic and technical corporation agreements that are to be reached between the university/faculty and industry.

SCHEME OF RECRUITMENT FOR THE POST OF CAREER GUIDANCE COUNSELOR

Post and Salary Code

Career Guidance Counselor
U-AS 2(I)

Salary Scale

Rs. 25145 – 3x585 - 26900(EB)
28655 - 13x585 = 36260 p.m.

Qualifications

Graduate of a recognized University with four years experience in the field of Student Affairs. (Applicants with postgraduate qualifications in the area of Counselling and/ or experience in Career Guidance activities will be given preference)

Efficiency Bar

The following requirements should be fulfilled for the efficiency bar on completion of four years of service from the date of appointment and having earned all three annual increments.

- i.) Obtain a postgraduate qualification in an area related to counseling
and
- ii.) Obtain good record of service during the four year period.

Provident Fund and Pension Benefits

10% and 7% of the salary by the employee and employer respectively will be credited to the University Provident Fund. 8% of the salary will be credited to the University Pension Fund by the employer.

Employees Trust Fund Benefits

3% of the salary by the employer