

New Skills for New Futures Higher Education Guidance and Counselling Services in France

Nicole Leray
Association Bernard Gregory



FEDORA Project
New Skills for Vocational Guidance in Higher Education in the European Union

With the support of
the Commission of the European Communities
under the LEONARDO DA VINCI programme



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A country report of a study on
“New Skills for Vocational Guidance in Higher Education”
carried out under the auspices of FEDORA,
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FOREWORD

This country report is part of larger study on "New Skills for Vocational Guidance in Higher Education". The study has been carried out under the auspices of the European Forum for Student Guidance - Forum Européen de l'Orientation Académique (FEDORA). It has been funded by the European Commission as part of its LEONARDO DA VINCI programme.

FEDORA provides a platform for counsellors and advisers in higher education to meet and exchange their experiences. Its activities have enabled practitioners to gain insight into the wide range of guidance methods and activities in Europe, and to benefit from the richness of this diversity.

In particular, the FEDORA Summer Schools have provided opportunities for practitioners to learn from each other's experience, and to relate this experience to recent theoretical developments. The Summer Schools revealed the strong demand for more systematic training in this field, and the potential benefits of responding to this demand at a European rather than purely national level. It was felt, however, that before planning any initiatives of this kind, a clearer map was needed of guidance and counselling services in higher education in Europe, and of current training provision for practitioners. A proposal for the study was presented to the European Commission, and the Commission agreed to fund it under its LEONARDO programme.

The study is of wide significance. For the first time, a comprehensive analysis is available of higher education guidance and counselling services across the whole of the European Union. In several cases, the study has provided the first such analysis even at national level. Because it is based on a common structure and methodology, the study also enables practices in each country to be contrasted with the others.

This report, together with the 15 other national reports on all Member States of the European Union and the synthesis report written by A.G. Watts and R. Van Esbroeck, is an important one both for FEDORA and for guidance and counselling in higher education in Europe.

This resource will be invaluable for international and national policy-makers, for higher education managers, and for guidance and counselling practitioners, as well as for employers in planning their higher education recruitment links. In particular, it enables the strengths and weaknesses of the different national systems to be identified, and is a powerful source of ideas on how the services in each country might be improved. It will also give clearer direction to the work of the European Commission, FEDORA and other European bodies in supporting such development.

Joachim Klaus
President, FEDORA

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Foreword

This report has been written as part of the Europe-wide FEDORA (Forum Européen de l'Orientation Académique) project on "New Skills for Vocational Guidance in Higher Education". The project has been carried out under the European Commission's LEONARDO programme. Its aims are:

- To provide an up-to-date overview, within the university system, of:
 - structures specialising in educational, vocational and personal guidance,
 - the role of those working in these structures,
 - the training of these staff.
- To examine in particular the needs created by the numbers of students in higher education, the diversification of the student population (students with disabilities, foreign students, students who have gone back to university after time out), the use of new technologies and the appearance of a European labour market.
- To provide the basis for the setting up of postgraduate and post-experience training in this field, possibly leading to a European Master's Degree in Guidance and Counselling in Higher Education.

A similar report has been written in each member state of the European Union, based on strict common guidelines in terms of presentation, structure and tables (numbered 1 to 4), in order to facilitate comparisons between countries. The role and function of each structure have been described in terms of a common grid, with a system of evaluation that will be described in more detail later in the report. Given this international and comparative context, it has not always been easy to describe the occupational titles and guidance tasks to be found in our national system; we apologise to the reader for the simplifications that have been necessary in the drafting of this report.

1. Summary

In the French system of higher education, the tasks of guidance and help in finding employment are provided, first and foremost, by the *Services Communs Universitaires d'Information et d'Orientation* (University Information and Guidance Units, SCUIO). These units exist in almost all French universities and are answerable to the *Président* (Vice-Chancellor). Their role covers virtually all the tasks dealt with in this report, i.e. induction reception, information and guidance for students when they first arrive at university and throughout the whole of their studies; help in finding work, and follow-up; information for school-leavers and prospective students on what the system of higher education offers.

In the universities, an important role is played by the careers guidance unit which, when it exists independently of the SCUIO, develops contacts with employers and helps students with their job applications. In addition, tutoring services provide material and methodological support for first and second year students.

Another kind of support service to be found in universities - sometimes as part of the SCUIO, sometimes as part of specific units - targets different student populations: students with disabilities, foreign students, salaried students. The tasks of those working in these specific units must be considered carefully, since these students now have much greater access to university than they did a few years ago.

Lastly, other support structures outside the universities provide specialist psychological and medical help for those students suffering from somatic or psychiatric illnesses.

These structures, taken together, form a network of support, be it general, like the SCUIO, or more specialised, that the student can contact throughout his/her years of study, whatever the needs. A full description of these structures is given below in Part 2.

The staff who work in these structures and units perform a wide variety of tasks (described in Part 3b) which nevertheless have a number of features in common. In nearly all cases it is a matter of collecting and collating documentation on the different training courses, careers and professions, and companies; providing a place where students can come and get information, be listened to and helped to express and identify their difficulties so that the counsellor can give the best advice. Contacts with the teaching departments may even lead to the counsellors and other unit staff giving lectures. Sometimes the staff have to act as mediator and take action on behalf of the student, vis à vis training courses or employers.

Given the similarities between the different roles, this report gives three detailed job descriptions corresponding to the main tasks performed in the different units:

- A general counsellor working in a university information and guidance unit (SCUIO), whose job covers a wide variety of different guidance tasks ranging from advice to new university entrants to career guidance for graduates.

- A general counsellor working in a university information and guidance unit (SCUIO), whose job covers a wide variety of different guidance tasks ranging from advice to new university entrants to career guidance for graduates.
- A professional counsellor, who specialises in career and employment guidance.
- A counsellor responsible for support for students with disabilities, both on their arrival and throughout their studies.

The staff working in these different structures and units are recruited by competitive examination at different levels (ranging from school leavers with the baccalaureate to university graduates with five years' study behind them) and have civil service/public sector employee status. Special training to qualify them for their job is indispensable. It involves a number of courses organised and financed by the education authorities, by associations or by firms. Part 4 of this report gives a brief overview of the different possibilities.

2. Structures and systems

Introduction: the French system of higher education

Institutions

What is specific to the French system of higher education is that several different types of educational establishment coexist.

There are 82 *universities*, which award diplomas and degrees corresponding to two, three, four or five years of study.

In addition to nationally recognised degrees, many universities also offer engineering degrees and vocational training in special institutes they have set up to provide 4-5 year courses of higher education leading to work. Technical Institutes (*Instituts Universitaires de Technologie, IUT*) are also attached to most universities and offer two-year courses to train technicians. All but three French universities are public bodies and come under the Ministry of Education (*Ministère de l'Education Nationale, de la Recherche et de la Technologie - MENRT*). In universities, tuition fees are very low.

Each university is headed by a *Président* (Vice-Chancellor), who is a Professor from the university. The *Président* chairs three Boards:

- The *Conseil d'Administration* (CA - Senate), whose role is to define general university policy within the limits laid down by law.
- The *Conseil des Etudes et de la Vie Universitaire* (CEVU - Student Study and Welfare Board), whose role is to make proposals to the Senate concerning all aspects of student life. The main activity of this Board concerns the questions dealt with in this report.
- The *Conseil Scientifique* (Academic Board), whose role is to make proposals to the Senate concerning research, and the research budget.

Board members are elected by university staff. Each Board has a deputy chair (*Vice-Président*). The *Président* (Vice-Chancellor) is elected by the members of the three Boards.

Centralised offices are to be found in each university, their role being to deal with different aspects of student life covered in this report. They include the *services de scolarité* (registrars' office), whose job involves student enrolment, the organisation of exams and the delivering of degrees and records, among others; the *Service Commun Universitaire d'Information et d'Orientation* (SCUIO - university information and guidance units), whose job is to provide educational and vocational guidance; the international relations department

(*Relations Internationales*), the continuing education department (*Formation Permanente*) and, in some universities, the "one-stop shops" for students with disabilities (*Relais Handicap*) and the careers and placement units (*service d'insertion professionnelle*)

The *Unités de Formation et de Recherche* (UFR - faculty departments) are responsible for teaching and research in their respective fields. Each faculty department has a secretary's office, which deals with the organisation of the teaching, exams, grades and records, etc. If a student has a query concerning the organisation of the course, this is where the information is provided.

In addition to the universities, there are a number of *Ecoles*, which may be public bodies dependent on other ministries (Defence, Agriculture, Foreign Trade, etc.) or private establishments. In some of them, such as *Polytechnique*, the top level teacher training schools (*Ecoles Normales Supérieures*) and the *Ecole Nationale d'Administration* school for diplomats and top civil servants, students have "civil service" status. The quality of the teaching can vary considerably in the other *Ecoles*. In addition to the *Grandes Ecoles*, which enjoy a well-deserved reputation for excellence (engineering schools such as *Les Mines*, *Centrale*, *Les Ecoles Nationales Supérieures d'Ingénieurs*; business schools; the political science institutes - *Instituts d'Etudes Politiques*), there are a large number of other schools which award vocational qualifications after two, three, four or five years of post-baccalaureate study.

Entrance to these *ecoles* is by a competitive examination (*concours*), either after the baccalaureate or after two years of additional study in special preparatory classes (*classes préparatoires*) or at university. Tuition fees in some of the *ecoles* can be extremely high.

In addition, some secondary schools (*lycées*) have special *classes préparatoires aux grandes écoles* (CPGE) mentioned above offering two year courses to prepare for the *Grandes Ecoles* entrance examinations and/or classes for advanced technical education (*Sections de Techniciens Supérieurs*, STS).

There are also various other *vocational training centres*, including art schools, schools of architecture, schools preparing students for paramedical professions, and teacher training colleges (*Instituts Universitaires de Formation des Maîtres*, IUFM).

Statistics

The following two tables indicate the huge growth in the number of students in higher education since 1960 and the number of students studying in each type of establishment in 1996 [DEP 1996, tables 6-1, 6-2].

Year	1960	1970	1980	1990	1996
Number *	309.700	850.600	1.174.800	1.698.700	2.138.900

*In metropolitan France

Since 1960 there has been a considerable increase in the number of students at university. This is the result of the democratisation of secondary education and a deliberate policy, supported by successive ministers, to increase the number of school leavers who have the baccalaureate. Over a period of 40 years, university education has become mass education. But during the same period, the recession has led to problems of unemployment. It is precisely in order to meet the need for educational and vocational guidance which results from these two phenomena that the units and services described in this report started to appear in 1968 and have developed ever since.

Institution	**Number of students 1996
University	1,380,448
Technical Institutes (<i>IUT</i>)	103,036
<i>Ecoles</i>	126,308
<i>Classes préparatoires</i>	76,417
Advanced Technical Education (<i>STS</i>)	230,239
Other training centres	275,174
Total	2,191,622

** In metropolitan France and overseas territories

In addition, specific support units to answer specific needs have gradually been introduced since 1970. They concern the following categories of student:

- Foreign students, who today make up 8.9% of the total student population. The majority of them are from Europe and Africa (mainly North Africa), and they represent 28% and 51% respectively of all foreign students [DEP 1996, table 6-10].
- Students with disabilities, for whom a special effort has been made in the past ten years to introduce appropriate support units and facilities.
- Salaried students who, according to a survey carried out in 1996 by the *Centre d'Etudes et de Recherche sur les Qualifications (CEREQ)*, are 200,000 in number and make up roughly 15% of all students [BREF, June 1997]. In reality, however, the number of students who actually work during their studies without taking time off is certainly much higher, since many of them register at university without declaring that they work. In addition, the continuing education departments set up in 1971 enable working people wishing to go back to university, or anyone else wishing to get further training for that matter, to attend courses tailored to their needs or to register in traditional degree courses.

The second table shows the relative importance of university education (64%), the *Ecoles* only attracting 6% of students, and the technical schools (*Instituts Universitaires de Technologie* and *Sections de Techniciens Supérieurs*) 15%.

As can be seen, 1,300,000 students study in the 82 universities. Taking the figures overall, however, does not reflect the situation in each establishment since student numbers vary from about 3,000 in the smallest university to about 35,000 in the biggest.

2a. Main guidance and counselling services and systems

The University Information and Guidance Units (SCUIO) are the cornerstone of guidance facilities and often of career guidance to be found in French higher education. They have premises in the universities and their activities include the majority of tasks described in this report, i.e. to provide information and guidance for students throughout the whole of their time at university. The units are open to all students and, more generally, to anyone who is looking for information in this field.

In the universities, other units described later on in the report provide other services not provided by the SCUIO, dealing with specific problems (employment, for example) or targeting a specific population (foreign students or students with disabilities).

In the *ecoles*, information is provided concerning everything the students need to know about their studies within the establishment. Students from the *ecoles* can also go to the SCUIO for information concerning further studies or change of degree course. As far as employment is concerned, there is usually a structure or unit in each *ecole*, whose role is to provide counselling and advice. Some engineering schools and the Political Science Institutes (*Instituts d'Etudes Politiques*) have "employment" units run on similar lines to the SCUIO. In many other schools, courses include special sessions about job seeking techniques ("employment weeks"), while in other establishments, usually the private schools, it is the alumni association or other bodies who are responsible for this activity. It is impossible to go into detail of the different structures as they vary so much from one *ecole* to the next, both in terms of the staff involved and in the means at their disposal. *These structures are not described in this report.*

From 1968 onwards, a large number of universities opened units whose job was to provide students with educational, vocational and career guidance. These local initiatives were supported by the Ministry of Education and in 1974 the universities set up *Cellules d'Information et d'Orientation* (Information and Guidance Units) which functioned by a convention signed between the Ministry and each university. Twelve years later these units were given official status through the decree of 6 February 1986 which created the University Information and Guidance Units (SCUIO). Henceforth, each university could set up such a unit, answerable to the *Président* (Vice-Chancellor). Virtually every French university did so (80 universities out of 82), the function and role of these units being defined in the decree setting them up: "The role of the SCUIO is to organise information and guidance for students when they first arrive and throughout the whole of their studies. It is also to provide career guidance and follow-up."

More recently, in the framework of university autonomy, some *Présidents* (Vice-Chancellors) have set up units to meet needs that had often been poorly defined in the initial 1986 decree. It is in this context that units specialising in support for students with disabilities and in graduate job placements and career guidance have been set up, distinct from the SCUIO. In practice, these structures are extremely efficient and contacts often develop naturally with the SCUIO. In addition, international relations and continuing education departments exist in all universities. Part of their activity, i.e. reception of foreign students and salaried students respectively, overlaps with the activity of the SCUIO. The role of these structures goes well beyond this framework and only those activities which come within the remit of the report will be described here.

Lastly, a private association, the Association Bernard Gregory (ABG), acts in synergy with the university structures and works with the universities to help PhD graduates find employment.

The *Centre National des Oeuvres Universitaires et Scolaires* (National Centre for University and School Social Welfare, CNOUS) is present in each education authority. A local unit, the *Centre Régional des Oeuvres Universitaires et Scolaires* (Regional Centre for University and School Social Welfare, CROUS) helps students in all aspects of university life. The *Service de Médecine Préventive et de Promotion de la Santé* (The Preventive Medicine and Health Centre, MPPS), also present in all university establishments, offers psychological or even psychiatric support for those students who ask for it and for whom it can be very useful at some point of their university career.

Outside the universities, several establishments provide help for students in difficulty. They are the establishments which are recognised by the *Fondation Santé des Etudiants de France* (French Students' Health Foundation, FSEF): the *Relais Etudiants-Lycéens* (University-Secondary School Student One-Stop Shops, REL) and, in the case of psychiatric or somatic illnesses, "medico-pedagogical university clinics" for those who need treatment and wish to continue their studies at the same time. The *Bureaux d'Aide Psychologique Universitaires* (Bureau for University Psychological Support, BAPU) also provide support for students in difficulty but their role in terms of guidance is extremely limited.

The role and activity of some of these units is not limited to questions of educational and vocational guidance, but the students can find there somewhere to meet skilled people who can offer guidance and advice. All the tasks are carried out in these units by staff with very different backgrounds and qualifications (for more details, see Part 4 below).

Position	Qualifications	*Number
'Engineers' (<i>Ingénieurs de recherche</i>)	**Bac + 5 + doctorate	2
'Engineers' (<i>Ingénieurs d'études</i>)	Bac + 3 (often Bac + 4 or 5)	90
'Engineers' (<i>Assistants ingénieurs</i>)	Bac + 2 (often Bac + 3, 4 or 5)	30
University administrators (<i>Attachés d'administration</i>)	Bac + 3 (often Bac + 4 or 5)	28
Technicians (<i>Techniciens</i>)	Bac (often Bac + 1 or 2)	44
University administrators (<i>Secrétaires d'administration</i>)	Bac (often Bac +1 or 2)	60
University administrators (<i>Adjointes administratifs, agents administratifs</i>)	Vocational training	132
Technical assistants (<i>Aides techniques, agents techniques</i>)	Vocational training	12

*Approximate numbers

**Five years of higher education after the Baccalaureate

The director of a SCUIO is always a member of the university teaching staff. As for the employment unit, international relations department and continuing education department, the director is usually a member of faculty but may also be an administrator (*Attaché de l'Administration Scolaire et Universitaire*). The support units for students with disabilities are run by very different categories of staff, depending on the university, while the Preventive Medicine and health Centre, CROUS and medico-pedagogical university clinics are run either by doctors or by administrators.

All the staff on permanent contract working for the university structures and units mentioned in this report (SCUIO, employment units, continuing education departments, support units for students with disabilities) are recruited by entrance examinations at different levels. They are administrative officers positions in the university administration (*Attaché, Secrétaire, Adjoint administratif, Agent administratif*), or are "engineers" (*Ingénieur d'études, Ingénieur de recherche, Assistant ingénieur*), technicians or technical assistants (*techniciens, aides techniques, agents techniques*). The requirements to get to these different positions are very different, as is shown in the table below covering the 82 SCUIO (survey carried out by the authors).

A hundred or so staff on temporary contracts also work in the SCUIO. Some are waiting for a permanent position, other positions are very temporary. The survey shows that some of these people also work as vocational counsellors, counsellors for students with disabilities, general counsellors and statisticians.

The survey carried out as part of this study has shown that the work done by the different members of staff often has no relation with their formal qualifications and positions, so that "counsellors" are as likely to be *ingénieurs* as *techniciens, secrétaires d'administration* or *adjoints administratifs*.

Table 1 is an overview of these guidance and counselling structures and systems and gives, for each one, the administrative control, funding, location, target group and relation to the teaching structures ("level"). In line with the model developed by R. Van Esbroeck and A.G. Watts (1997) the structures and systems are classified in three levels:

- First-in-line (1) Part of the formal teaching.
- Second-in-line (2) Linked to the formal teaching but with some degree of specialisation.
- Third-in-line (3) Separated from the formal teaching function and offered by specialists.

2b. Commentary

2b.1 The SCUIO

(a) Administrative organisation

A SCUIO exists in every university and is answerable to the *Président* (Vice-Chancellor). Each university, being autonomous, defines the activity of its SCUIO. The Ministry of Education (*MENRT*) has created a department in charge of "student guidance and graduate employment" which works in close collaboration with the SCUIO.

Table 1: Main guidance and counselling services and systems in France
Structure and content

Service/System	Funding/Administrative Control	Location	Extent	(1) Level	Target Group
University information and guidance service (<i>Service commun universitaire d'information et d'orientation</i>)	Funded and controlled by university	within university	All universities	3	All students
'One-stop shop' for students with disabilities (<i>Relais handicap</i>)	Funded and controlled by university	within university	(10)	2, 3	Students with disabilities
International relations department (<i>Relations internationales</i>)	Funded and controlled by university	within university	All universities	3	Foreign students - European exchange programme students
Careers and placement service (<i>Services d'insertion professionnelle</i>)	Funded and controlled by university	within university	(25)	3	All students
Continuing education department (<i>Formation Permanente</i>)	Funded and controlled by university	within university	All universities	1, 2	Salaried students
PhD graduates employment unit (<i>Association Bernard Cregory-Roueres de l'emploi</i>)	Funded and controlled by university	within university	37 universities, 19 <i>Grandes Ecoles</i> , 17 research laboratories	3	PhD students and graduates
University system (<i>Universitair</i>)	Funded and controlled by university	within university	(30)	1	First year students
Medico-pedagogical university clinics (<i>cliniques médica-pédagogiques</i>)	Independent non-profit-making organisation	outside university	13	2	Students with disabilities or students with difficulties
University-secondary school student 'one-stop shop' (<i>Relais étudiants lycéens</i>)	Independent non-profit-making organisation	outside university	2	1, 2, 3	Students with difficulties
Preventive medicine and health centre (<i>Médecine préventive-promotion de la santé</i>)	University	within or outside university	All universities	3	All students
University and school social welfare (<i>VOSS (ROTS)</i>)	Public body	within or outside university	All Education Authorities (<i>Académies</i>) and universities	3	All students

The figures in bold indicate the level at which most activities are located

Each university is responsible for the funding, staff management, site locations and all other material aspects of the unit. The SCUIO always has its offices on university premises. If there is more than one site, it is not unusual to have SCUIO offices on the different sites frequented by the students.

The services provided by the SCUIO are always free of charge, reception and documentation are open to everybody: students from the university and from other universities, foreign students, secondary school pupils and their families, salaried workers who would like to go back to study. Only the more specific activities concerning vocational guidance and employment are reserved for students currently enrolled.

(b) Functions of the SCUIO

As defined in the decree of 1986 setting up these units, the tasks to be carried out are many and varied. The role of SCUIO is to inform, give educational and vocational guidance, and ultimately to provide a follow-up once students are in employment.

1. Reception. The SCUIO must receive all students, without distinction. Even if some categories of students consult specialised units, the SCUIO is the documentation resource centre to which all students must refer. This is particularly important when the student enrolls for the first time at the university. In particular, even before going to university, school pupils about to take their baccalaureate must be informed by the SCUIO of what university studies are available, and what jobs and professions exist. This information is given during forums and meetings in the schools or at the university, and in the unit's offices all year round. In addition, foreign students, students with disabilities and salaried students can ask the SCUIO counsellors for material help to resolve their problems. Lastly, in order to make sure that as many future students as possible are informed, the units spend a lot of time contacting staff in secondary schools (career guidance staff, form teachers and principals) so that they can act as relays in transmitting the information.

2. Participating in the university's information policy. The SCUIO works in close collaboration with the faculty departments in order to help define the university's information policy by collecting documentation on the courses taught in the university.

3. Documentation resource centre. The SCUIO documentation resource centre, used by both students and a broader public, is a place of exchange and dialogue. Students can be seen individually and will be given information on the courses offered in the university, in other universities and schools, both in France and abroad, on the different professions and how to make job applications.

4. Defining personal and career plans. SCUIO counsellors pay particular attention to first and second year students. It is during the first few months at university that the young student must be informed about more advanced studies and must be helped to define (or to clarify) his/her personal and professional plans. To do so, group workshops and/or individual interviews are offered. This must be pursued throughout the whole of the student's university career and must be adapted to his/her needs.

5. Career guidance and employment. In order to improve the chances of finding job placements and work for the students, the SCUIO builds up contacts with the world of work and prospective employers, organises group sessions for the students to learn the techniques necessary when looking for a job, and takes any other measures it can to support the students in their search for work.

6. Enquiries and surveys. In order to answer the many questions asked by users of the unit, the SCUIO must have up-to-date knowledge of what has become of former students (further studies, employment) and must therefore conduct surveys to obtain this information.

The role and functions of the SCUIO are vast, both in terms of objectives and the time span during which it may intervene in the life of the student.

Information and guidance come in at all stages of the student's university career and are particularly important when the student first enrolls and during the first two years at university. It is essential to make the right choice as to the course of study; if this choice turns out to be the wrong one (or the student fails) and the choice has to be made to enrol in a different course, it is extremely important not to make a mistake the second time. Today, many problems are raised by the high number of students who fail their first and or second year at university in France. It should be understood that any student who passes the baccalaureate can get a place at university without any other selection procedure. Since a large number of school leavers with the baccalaureate do not find a place in an establishment which does have a selection procedure, many of them enrol at a university without having really chosen to go there and without any real motivation. The role of the SCUIO in helping the students to define their personal and career plans is therefore very important.

Starting one's working life, after two, three, four or five years of study (or even longer after a PhD), is also a very important step. Here too the role of the SCUIO is essential, as was shown through the conference held in Paris in 1996 on the subject of "From university to work". Throughout the whole of the time spent at university, students are given the opportunity to take part in activities allowing them to familiarise themselves with the world of work, to clarify their career plans, to complete their studies by choosing the course that is the most suitable and the most useful to help them to find work and, when the time comes, to prepare their job applications.

It is therefore at each stage of a student's university career that the SCUIO, in the broadest sense of its mission, plays an essential role in the student's education. The huge variety of its tasks means that the unit's activities too are many and varied: structuring and organising the means of information, taking part in modules which are integrated in the university courses, collecting and providing documentation both inside and outside the university, developing job placement support systems, and using all available information (in particular, statistical data resulting from follow-up surveys on university education and work) that may be useful in defining choices.

In order to carry out its tasks correctly, the unit must have close contacts not only with the university authorities (*Présidence - Vice-Chancellor's Office, Conseil d'Administration -*

Senate, *CEVU* - other boards, *UFR* - teaching departments) but also with other offices responsible for different aspects of university activity: the *Service de scolarité* (registrar's office), tutoring unit, international relations and continuing education departments and, if distinct from the SCUIO, the office responsible for support for students with disabilities (*relais handicap*) and the employment unit. Contacts with outside bodies are also developed. They include the following :

-The **Rectorat** (local Education Offices). This is a regional education authority that is responsible for primary and secondary education. The universities are autonomous and are presided over by an elected *Président* (Vice-Chancellor). The Rector, appointed by the minister, is the *Chancelier des Universités* (University Chancellor) and in this capacity is the guarantor of decisions taken by the university authorities. The *Rectorat* has its own education, information and guidance unit (*Service Académique d'Information et d'Orientation* - SAIO), whose job is to coordinate all guidance activities organised for secondary school pupils.

-The **Office National d'Information sur les Enseignements et les Professions** (ONISEP - National Bureau of Information on Education and Work), whose role is to collect documentation about careers, professions and jobs. The Bureau publishes journals such as "Avenirs" and "InfoSup" and prepares and publishes general information files.

-The **Association Pour l'Emploi des Cadres** (APEC - executive employment agency) and the **Agence Nationale Pour l'Emploi** (ANPE - employment agency), whose role is to help people find work. Close ties exist between the SCUIO and the executive employment agency, the latter providing training for SCUIO staff on questions of vocational guidance.

-The **Centre d'Information Documentation Jeunesse** (CIDJ - Youth Information and Documentation Resource Centre) which publishes information about studies and careers.

Because of the huge number and variety of tasks mentioned above, some Vice-Chancellors have decided to set up separate units to deal with some of the activities covered by the SCUIO rather than to expand the SCUIO itself. When the directors of all the SCUIO were sent a questionnaire, 71 out of the 82 replied, and their answers show just how different things can be from one university to another. The table below shows the percentage of SCUIO which are responsible for each task (2 universities do not have a SCUIO).

From the questionnaire, a number of observations can be made :

- All the units provide reception, information and guidance.
- Career guidance and employment support are provided either by the SCUIO or by specific units: 70% to 80% of all SCUIO are involved to a greater or lesser degree in this work and about 30% of universities have set up a specific unit.
- The contractual documents (*conventions de stage*), which are signed by both the employer and the university when the student is on a job placement as a course requirement (and which exonerates the employer from certain national insurance contributions), are usually handled by the teaching departments and occasionally by the SCUIO.

- Salaried students who have gone back to university are looked after by the continuing education department which organises special sessions just for them and helps them to get places on traditional university degree courses. In this case, the continuing education department helps the salaried students obtain the necessary financial aid to be able to realise their projects, and the SCUIO provides educational guidance. 51% of the SCUIO said that they offer this service.

Mission	Number	Percentage
Reception	71	100%
Information	71	100%
Counselling	71	100%
Defining career plans	64	90%
Defining personal plans	55	77%
Coaching (CV and applications)	58	82%
Placements	26	37%
Contractual documents	22	31%
Help in finding work	45	63%
Introduction to the world of work (conferences, forums with employers)	47	66%
Reception of salaried students	36	51%
Reception of students with disabilities	33	46%
Coaching of disabled students (help in organising studies and getting a job)	9	13%
Reception of foreign students and help in organising studies	36	51%
Reception of European exchange students	6	8%
European exchange contracts	2	3%
Information about life in France	25	35%
Information about grants and general student welfare	22	31%
Contact with medico-pedagogical university clinics	3	4%
Reception or induction tutorials	36	51%
Contacts with departmental tutorial system	31	44%
Follow up	50	70%

- Most of the time it is the European and/or international relations departments which look after foreign students; sometimes they also provide information for French students wishing to study abroad. The European exchange programmes are rarely handled by the SCUIO; this is more often the domain of the teaching departments, working in collaboration with the international relations department.

- As for the support the SCUIO provides for students with disabilities, the situation varies considerably from one university to another. Of course, students with disabilities, like all students, can always go to see someone at the SCUIO. However, the questionnaire showed that 46% of all SCUIO (33) pay particular attention to this activity. In several universities, a special structure has been set up as part of the SCUIO to provide reception, coaching and job placements for students with disabilities. In the other universities, different types of structure have been set up, as described below (2b.2 (a)), to provide reception, support and coaching facilities for these students.

- Information about life in France and various sorts of financial aid are usually provided by specialised structures such as the CROUS (*Centre Régional des Oeuvres Universitaires et Scolaires*) or the grants office.

- In 51% of the universities, the SCUIO is involved in what is known as reception or induction tutoring (*tutorat d'accueil*). As for educational tutoring, the role of the SCUIO varies; sometimes it is responsible for organising this tutoring and it may even happen that a member of the SCUIO staff intervenes in special methodology sessions (learning how to learn, learning how to take notes, etc.).

(c) *The staff*

The SCUIO is run by a member of the teaching staff. The rest of the staff include engineers (*ingénieurs*), technicians and administrative personnel, but they are rarely psychologists. They are taken from the top echelons of the university administrators and technical managers. In addition, the local Education Offices (*Rectorat*) provide psychological guidance counsellors (*conseillers d'orientation psychologues*, COP) seconded from secondary education. With the exception of the above-mentioned members of faculty and psychological guidance counsellors, roughly 510 people work for the SCUIO in the 82 universities of France. 78% of them have permanent positions, 22% are on temporary contracts. On average, each SCUIO employs 7 people (5 or 6 on permanent contract and 1 or 2 on temporary contracts), but 9 units employ between 10 and 13 people and 15 employ under three people.

A small percentage of the people working for the SCUIO do purely administrative work without any contact with the students and with no responsibilities in terms of information, guidance and employment. They have not been included in the tables in this report but their role in the efficient running of these units must not be forgotten.

Most of the SCUIO activities are performed by educational and vocational guidance specialists, independently of teaching functions, which justifies classifying this activity in level 3. It should however be noted that a very small part of this activity concerns level 1: the staff of this unit are sometimes involved in modules which may or may not be optional, may or may not be integrated in the university course, and which deal with help in defining choices. Reception activities could be classified in level 2. Given the preponderance of activities belonging to level 3, only this level has been indicated in Table 1.

2b.2 Structures other than the SCUIO to be found in the universities

What follows is a brief overview of the units and structures mentioned above, whose activities come within the remit of this report.

(a) *"One-stop shops" for students with disabilities*

Support services for students with disabilities have been introduced into French higher education in very different ways depending on the establishments themselves and their respective policies concerning such questions.

In 1991, the Ministry of Education recommended that each university designate someone whose job would be to provide support for students with disabilities. A directory, which is updated every year, plus a survey carried out by the Ministry, provide detailed and accurate information about what has been implemented to encourage students with disabilities

to enrol in French universities. The results of the survey have been analysed to see all the different structures that have been set up.

Analysis of the various units set up for students with disabilities in the different universities			
Person or structure responsible for the unit		Function and activity	
SCUIO	15	TEACHING	
Senate or relevant board (CEVU)	9	* Organisation of studies	35
A professor	5	*Help with studies	50
Administrators	26	*Technical support	41
Preventive medicine	6	*Tutoring	29
Specialised institute (for deaf people)	1	*Exam facilities	81
Specific unit (Relais)	11	LIBRARY	34
Faculty department (UFR)	7	SPORT	21
Social services	2	*HELP TO FIND WORK	26
Vice chancellor	3	* In addition to activities performed by the SCUIO for all students	
Administrator	1		
		7 universities are involved in all the domains	
Source: "L'accueil des étudiants handicapés dans l'enseignement supérieur", published by the <i>Bureau de la vie étudiante</i> , Ministry of Education			

Given their great diversity, the table shown below offers a more precise analysis of the situation. If we look at the general situation for 86 establishments, it is possible to see that there are three different ways in which the universities have organised these support units:

- 32 universities have set up a structured support unit, 15 of which are part of the SCUIO and 17 of which are not. In 11 universities there is a specialised structure, answerable to the *Président* (Vice-Chancellor), which functions as part of a network that also includes the different faculty departments (*UFR*), the SCUIO, the Preventive Medicine Centre and any other appropriate unit. Two of these structured support units are inter-university.
- Some universities do not have a support unit but instead have a general policy of including and integrating students with disabilities into the mainstream. They have developed a number of activities at the levels of reception, coaching and job placement. Those who are responsible for these activities also work in other departments or units such as the SCUIO, the Registrar's Office (*Service de scolarité*), etc.
- The other universities have simply appointed someone to be responsible for these students.

These support structures have no intention of acting on behalf of the student; what they do is to offer the student with disabilities or who is ill a place where they can find information, guidance and help in organising their studies and looking for a job. The unit is particularly careful to make sure that what they do corresponds to the student's wishes, and they try to provide a holistic approach tailored to the student's plans, which also involves giving information about other local structures that the student may find helpful (SCUIO, faculty department - *UFR*, CROUS, Preventive Medicine Centre, social services). At all times, it is the student who decides. The counsellors who work with students with disabilities

are always specialists, which justifies their being classified level 3 in Table 1. It should be noted however that some of the activities of this support structure are carried out in close and direct collaboration with the faculty departments.

(b) Careers and placement service

Vocational guidance is introduced at the very beginning of university studies, through an introduction to the world of work and the different job opportunities, and continues with help in finding work. The latter occurs sooner and sooner, since many students have to get work experience or even find an apprenticeship 6-12 months after starting at university. In the face of growing demand, independent specialised units have been set up; in addition to their role, they have also contributed to closer ties between the universities and employers. In 32% of the universities such a structure exists, under different names, answerable either to the *Président* (Vice-Chancellor) or to the different faculty departments (*UFR*).

The role and functions of these job placement and employment units are defined by the *Président* (Vice-Chancellor) and therefore vary considerably from one university to another. In roughly 12% of the universities, a unit exists with full responsibility for all activities related to employment. Some universities (14%) think that it is difficult to dissociate initial contacts with employers from the support and guidance offered by the SCUIO and so have not created a separate unit. What they have done is simply to set up an employment unit alongside the SCUIO.

The employment unit deals mainly with graduates looking for work and helps them with their search, trains them in the different application procedures (how to write a CV, letter of application and personal statement, how to prepare an interview), handles work experience and job advertisements, and tries to persuade prospective employers of the value of the degrees awarded by the university.

Most of the time the contractual documents (*conventions de stage*) between the university and the employer are handled by the faculty departments. It is the responsibility of the faculty members to make sure that students who have to get work experience as part of their course keep up with their studies.

The activity of these structures is carried out by specialists working outside of teaching, which justifies them being classified level 3 in Table 1. It should be noted however that some of the staff working for these structures take part in teaching modules which are not usually part of the university course. The aim of these modules is to help the students realise their career plan.

(c) PhD graduates employment service (Association Bernard Gregory/Bourses de l'Emploi - (BE))

The fact that PhD graduates have been out of touch with the world of work means that, despite their being highly qualified researchers with three years experience of top-level research, it is very difficult for them to find a job. The whole question of finding employment

raises different problems from those of their fellow graduates who do not have PhDs or who went to engineering school.

In the universities, *Grandes Ecoles* and research institutes, specialised units called *Bourses de l'Emploi* advise and help PhD students and PhD graduates during their search for work. Today, 73 *Bourses de l'Emploi* exist, located in 37 universities (some of them are part of the SCUIO), 19 *Grandes Ecoles* and 17 laboratories and research institutes. The counsellors are known as correspondents *-(correspondants)-* and their "job" is similar to that of a professional counsellor in a SCUIO.

The Association Bernard Gregory (ABG) coordinates the activities of all the *Bourses de l'Emploi*. Since 1980, in France and abroad, it has been working on trying to get research recognised as a valuable part of training, and to get employers to appreciate its value too. The Association collaborates with all the other structures to provide an interface between researchers and employers, works in partnership with a network of employers for whom technology and innovation go hand in hand with top-level scientists, and helps PhD graduates to find work. The Association collects the CVs of the graduates who have registered with the *Bourses de l'Emploi* and dispatches them to its network of prospective employers. It also sends to the *Bourses de l'Emploi* the job offers it has received from the employers.

The activities of the *Bourses de l'Emploi* are completely distinct from any teaching activity and uniquely focused on employment, which justifies their being classified level 3 in Table 1.

(d) International relations department

In each university, there is a European and/or international relations department, funded by the university, the role of which is to put on a formal footing the relations between the university (faculty departments, research centres, the relevant research boards) and the foreign universities. The department prepares the conventions governing exchanges in the fields of teaching and research and sometimes is responsible for foreign professors and other faculty members who are invited to the university.

In many universities, the international relations department is also responsible for information concerning study abroad, grants and other aspects of welfare. The department may also provide support for foreign students (especially those who are part of a European exchange programme) and will give information about the courses that can be followed in the university. In liaison with the Registrar's Office (*Service de scolarité*), it will also provide information about mutual recognition of diplomas and explain how to go about validating previous studies. This part of the activity of the international relations department requires close links with the SCUIO, as far as the pooling of information is concerned, with the registrar's office (*service de scolarité*) and the teaching department (*UFR*) offices. It is classified level 3 in Table 1.

Sometimes a member of staff working in the SCUIO or another support unit will have special responsibility for helping students with the many formalities that have to be accomplished on arrival in France (application for a residence permit, in particular).

(e) *Continuing education department*

The decree of July 16 1971 [JO 1971] on "Continuing education within the framework of further education" was the formal recognition of a fundamental right, i.e. the right of all adults, be they in employment or not, to further education. At this time, all universities set up departments to provide continuing education for salaried workers in the form of courses, some of which lead to diplomas, others of which do not, in the areas taught at the university where they are located. The public is made up of salaried workers and others, with very different academic backgrounds and levels; they attend classes that can last from a few hours to a whole year or they can enrol to study for a traditional university degree. Salaried students who wish to enrol for a degree course are usually looked after by the continuing education department which will give information on how to fit in their studies and work in terms of attendance and requirements, the possibility of validating their professional or work experience before returning to study [JO 1985, 1992, 1993], and the different sources of financial aid. This department is therefore responsible both for providing information for salaried people in search of further education and also for organising the courses. Given its position as an interface between (higher and further) education and salaried workers, this department has been classified 1/2 in Table 1. However, the SCUIO remains the best place for working people to get information about the different possibilities and professions that will be open to them once they have completed their further education and also to get guidance. The continuing education department and the SCUIO must therefore work closely together in order to satisfy this demand.

(f) *Tutoring*

Over the last few years a system of tutoring, funded by the university, has gradually been set up in about 50% of universities. There are two kinds of tutoring: reception or induction tutoring (*tutorat d'accueil*), which is available during the first few weeks at university and for which the SCUIO is usually responsible, and educational tutoring (*tutorat d'accompagnement*), which is strictly pedagogical. The second kind of tutoring involves sessions where "senior" students provide advice and help with methodology for those first and sometimes second year students who are finding things difficult. This activity is usually the responsibility of the faculty departments (*UFR*), and the tutors themselves are trained by members of faculty. Sometimes the SCUIO is involved in the running of this tutoring. It is strictly pedagogical in nature, is part of the university courses and is carried out by teaching specialists. In some cases, the tutor sends the students to the appropriate units - teaching staff, the SCUIO or any other unit mentioned in Table 1. These units have been classified level 1 in Table 1.

(g) *Preventive Medicine and Health Centre (Médecine Préventive et Promotion de la Santé-MPPS)*

In addition to its task of regular health checks on the student population, this centre often renders great service to students suffering from physical or psychological problems. Consultations with doctors, psychologists and/or social workers help students to detect

problems and find solutions. In this respect, the Preventive Medicine and Health Centre psychologist plays an essential role in questions of health. Since s/he is not solely associated with problems of mental illness, the student in difficulty is more likely to go and consult him/her. The preventive medicine centre usually has its offices on university premises but has very little contact with the teaching departments. It should be noted however that it is the preventive medicine centre which has the authority to sign certificates justifying the need for students with disabilities enrolled at the university to have special facilities and conditions for study and examinations. The preventive medicine centre sometimes has contacts with the SCUIO and all the other support units whose activities fall within the remit of this report. The activities of this centre are all classified level 3. A very small part of their activity concerns questions of guidance covered in this report, but the corresponding professions will not be discussed here.

(h) Regional Centre for University and School Social Welfare (Centre Régional des Oeuvres Universitaires et Scolaires - CROUS)

In each education authority, a special structure exists which is responsible for general student welfare: refectories, halls of residence, and social and cultural activities. One of the preoccupations of those working for this centre is to provide support for those students who are isolated on university campuses: foreign students, students living far from their families and sometimes students in particular difficulty. In the universities, the CROUS social workers hold "surgery hours" for these students. Sometimes the counsellor from the SCUIO, the person in charge of the support unit for students with disabilities, the employment unit and the CROUS will all work together to try and solve the problems of particular students. This activity is totally distinct from teaching and is therefore classified level 3. For the same reasons mentioned above in the section on preventive medicine, the corresponding professions will not be discussed here.

2b.3 Structures outside the universities

These are structures whose role and activities are common to several establishments run by the Fondation Santé des Etudiants de France (FSEF - French Students' Health Foundation) [C. Pradel-Lanson, K. Brutin, S. Gendre-Dusuzeau, 1996]. The Foundation was given state approval in 1925 and since then has developed a number of different structures for students suffering from somatic or psychological illnesses. The following are some of the structures.

(a) University-secondary school student "one-stop shops"

These units, belonging to the French Students' Health Foundation, offer a wide range of support. They are staffed by psychiatrists, psychologists and teachers. They offer a series of interviews, over a limited period of time, to students (especially first and second year students) who have problems at university (choice of course, academic difficulties) related to psychological and/or family problems. The role of the teaching staff, psychologists and psychiatrists involved with these units is eventually to detect the first signs of an illness

requiring more complex treatment, to solve the problems of the young student and to help him or her to make the right choices as to studies or career. These units are totally outside the university structure and have been classified level 3.

(b) Medico-pedagogical university clinics

The special feature of these establishments affiliated to the French Students' Health Foundation is that they allow students suffering from somatic or psychological illnesses to be able to continue treatment and study at the same time. This allows students to study despite illness and therefore continue to have a place in society. The dual aim is to give the students a place at university and find them work afterwards. The fact of being able to continue studying after periods of illness is important for the student to be integrated in society. These establishments are staffed by medical practitioners and teaching staff.

These clinics are not located on university premises but work with a group of universities. The students are either in-patients or out-patients who spend the day at the hospital but sleep at home or, where possible, attend classes in between treatment. At the clinic they have teaching support and coaching in the form of tutorials provided by teachers who are seconded by the Ministry of Education to the clinic. There are regular contacts between the medical and teaching staff of the clinic and the affiliated universities (*Directeur des Etudes* - Director of Studies, *Responsable d'UFR* - Head of faculty, etc.). The student works out a project with the co-operation of the clinic staff and with the collaboration of outside partners, i.e. the SCUIO, the preventive medicine centre and, possibly, the support unit for students with disabilities. Since these clinics provide tutoring they can be classified level 1 ; since the different categories of staff work together they can also be classified level 2 ; so, in fact here they have been classified level 1, 2, 3 in table 1.

(c) Bureau for university psychological support (BAPU)

The role of these units is to see all students who are having difficulties of a psychological, relational or academic (failures, problems of choice of course) nature and who would like psychological help. The staff of these units are psychiatrists, psychologists and social workers. They offer first interviews, second interviews where a diagnosis can be made (psychological, social, academic), and psychoanalytical therapy. There are few links between these units and the SCUIO and even the Preventive Medicine Centres. Most of their activity centres on psychiatric treatment (psychotherapies and psychoanalysis), and the questions of guidance and support described in this report are not their main concern. These units are not discussed in the rest of this report.

2b.4 The present situation and future developments

(a) Counsellor/student ratio in the SCUIO

Taking the global figures given in Table 2, the counsellor/student ratio is approximately one counsellor to 3,400 students. This calculation includes the *conseillers d'orientation*

psychologues (psychological guidance counsellors), professional counsellors and administrators who are usually involved in counselling activities in the SCUIO. A more detailed analysis carried out on the results of the survey, university by university, gives the following results: in about one third of the universities, there is one counsellor for 3,000 students; in another third, the SCUIO work in slightly better conditions; and in the last third, conditions are considerably worse, with one counsellor for up to 6,000 students. These statistics are averages and should be commented on with caution, since the SCUIO do not all perform the same tasks in the same way. In some universities, for example, the employment unit is distinct from the SCUIO, with the result that there are fewer staff in the SCUIO, the others being affected to the other unit. The counsellor/student ratio within the SCUIO goes up accordingly.

(b) Support for foreign students

Whatever the unit responsible for foreign students, it is obvious that specific skills are required [Demora, 1997]. The staff must know about the education systems in France and abroad, must know what formalities must be satisfied, what the living conditions of the students are like etc. In the case of foreign students, both educational and vocational guidance must take into account the individual histories of the students, the national context in which they were educated formerly, the reasons why they have chosen to do part or all of their higher education in France, their material conditions (resources, housing, transport) during their stay in France. With good guidance on their arrival in France, help with the formalities, a sympathetic ear in the case of problems of a material, health or academic nature, some of the cultural or educational differences that risk leading to failing exams can be reduced. Staff must therefore be very attentive to the needs of these foreign students, must know about their systems of education and must sometimes be in contact with the prefectures, police and embassies right from the moment the student arrives. In fact, staff in these units are keen to perform all these tasks with the necessary degree of care and attention. A booklet called *Je vais en France* (French Ministry for Foreign Affairs, 1997) gives foreign students who are hoping to come and study in France all the necessary information about the various formalities, the way universities and other establishments are organised, life in France, etc.

(c) New technologies

Little mention has been made so far of the use of the Internet in the different units described in this report. In fact, the situation varies considerably from one unit to another. Some are on the net and can be consulted at a distance, others use the Internet to collect information and communicate with other units, while many others are still lagging behind. We should be optimistic, however, as a large number of units are currently installing the Internet.

It should be noted that the Association Bernard Gregory has been using the Internet for years to inform and advise PhD graduates doing post-doctorate research abroad (in Europe, the USA, Japan). Information concerning jobs in the sciences, civil service entrance examinations (*concours*) and job offers are communicated regularly.

The use of software to help students define their personal and professional plans, on the other hand, is now very widespread; the counsellors use it every day and a number of programs exist in French (Performance, Choix, Aloes).

(d) Professional guidance and employment

The cornerstone of what the SCUIO does is to inform; without precise and accurate information, guidance will be inefficient and useless. But the two tasks of guidance and employment do not have to be bound together and, as we have already seen, some *Présidents* (Vice-Chancellors) have set up special units to deal exclusively with employment. Very early on, a student must be introduced to the world of work and this creates a link between the two tasks of information/guidance and job-hunting. It is therefore very difficult to distinguish clearly between the activities of the different units, or within the same unit. The important point is that qualified staff should answer students' questions and meet their expectations, whatever the structure.

The SCUIO, through its different tasks, reflects the image of the university, vis a vis the students, university staff and the outside world. It therefore has to take part in outside activities (Student Fair, professional forums, etc.), publish documentation, develop contacts with official bodies (the *Rectorat* - local Education Offices, the ministries, etc.), with employers and, as far as foreign students are concerned, with the embassies, visa issuing authorities, etc.

(e) Future developments

The changing student population, combined with the resulting increasing failure rate, mean that student guidance must be provided as early as possible. Unemployment magnifies the problem, so it is absolutely essential that the students be accompanied and helped right up until they find work, regardless of their status when they leave university.

A SCUIO exists in practically every university; they must be made more efficient, which means increasing resources, particularly human (the number of counsellors is often totally insufficient), using modern technologies as an integral part of their activity, and developing modules to help students become autonomous in their search for work and to use the most appropriate means for their training.

Whether or not it is better to keep the employment units as part of the SCUIO is hard to say. It depends on local conditions and university policy. Only one thing matters and that is that, regardless of the structure, everything be done in the interest of the students.

3. Roles and tasks

3a. Introduction

The above description of the various structures providing information, educational and vocational guidance in French higher education shows that, with the exception of the SCUIO, there is a wide array of different services. But in every case, even if the units go by the same names, the way they are organised is specific to each university and can vary considerably from one university to another. This could lead to confusion as to exactly what support is provided for the students unless, locally, the services offered are clearly defined and offered by skilled staff.

Table 2 shows the functions of those working in the above-mentioned units. In most cases, no one profession corresponds exactly to the activities carried out, which is why the general term "counsellor" has been adopted, since it implies someone whose job is to receive and inform students and to give educational and vocational guidance. It has not always been possible to obtain the exact number of people working in some of these units, because often this guidance is done by people for whom it is not their main activity and so the figures would not always have represented the number of people involved full-time in the tasks that are described. The activities carried out by the staff working for or with these units can be divided into three types:

- Educational (E) : guidance on choices of educational options, and learner support.
- Vocational (V) : guidance on choice on, and placement into, occupations and work roles
- Personal (P) : guidance and counselling on personal and social issues.

The focus or relative importance of each type of guidance in the activity of the staff working for the units described in Table 2 has been analysed on a 7-point scale, based upon a combination of several variables: time spent, and how the focus is perceived by the counsellor, by the client and by the institution.

This classification into 3 types must be added to by identifying the tasks performed by those working in the units described above, regardless of which units or structures are involved, and regardless of the amount of time spent by each professional on the task.

For each of the occupational roles in the structures or units listed in Part 2, the tasks performed will be described in more detail and referred to from A to U, using the classification of A.Watts (1993) and A.Watts & R.Van Esbrœck (1996).

1. *General management.* General administrative management, including service/programme planning and evaluation. Includes managing guidance activities within the institutional setting and general liaison with external bodies (e.g. education institutions, guidance agencies, social services, official bodies and employers). (A)

Table 2. Main Occupational Roles and Focus

Service/System	Occupational role	Number	Focus		
			E	V	P
University information and guidance service	Director (<i>Directeur</i>)	65	4	3	0
	Administrator (<i>Responsable administratif</i>)	(50)	4	3	0
	Counsellor (<i>Conseiller</i>)	(220)	3	3	1
	Statistician (<i>Statisticien</i>)		3	4	0
	Secretary-librarian (<i>Secrétaire documentaliste</i>)	(50)	5	2	0
	Vocational counsellor (<i>Conseiller professionnel</i>)	(60)	2	4	1
	Psychological guidance counsellor (<i>Conseiller d'orientation psychologue</i>)	(1)	2	4	1
	Reception officer (<i>Responsable de l'accueil</i>)	71	2	3	2
'One-stop shop' for students with disabilities (2)	Counsellor (<i>Conseiller</i>)	(40)	2	3	2
	Director (<i>Directeur</i>)	82	5	2	0
	Counsellor (<i>Conseiller</i>)	(70)	5	2	0
International relations department	Director (<i>Directeur</i>)	(30)	1	6	0
	Vocational counsellor (<i>Conseiller d'insertion professionnelle</i>)	(60)	1	6	0
Careers and placement service	Director (<i>Directeur</i>)	82	5	2	0
	Counsellor (<i>Conseiller</i>)	(80)	5	2	0
Continuing education department	Correspondent (<i>Correspondant</i>)	73	0	7	0
PhD graduates employment unit	Professor/tutor (<i>Professeur/tuteur</i>)	(3)	6	1	0
Tutorial system					

(1) half-time posts

(2) Including the 11 'one-stop shop' for students with disabilities

(3) It is impossible to give a number for this category

Table 2 (continued). Main Occupational Roles and Focus

Service/System	Occupational role	Number	E Focus V P			
Medico-pedagogical university clinics	Director (<i>Directeur</i>)	13	0	2		5
	Head of Studies (<i>Directeur des études</i>)		3	3		1
	Professor (<i>Professeur</i>)		4	2		1
	Librarian (<i>Documentaliste</i>)	(5)	4	2		1
	Psychologist/Psychiatrist (<i>Psychologue/Psychiatre</i>)		0	2		5
	Social worker/Nurse (<i>Assistante sociale/Infirmier</i>)	(3)	0	0		7
University-secondary school student 'one-stop shop'	Psychologist/Psychiatrist (<i>Psychologue/Psychiatre</i>)	(5)	0	2		5
	Professor (<i>Professeur</i>)	(10)	4	2		1
Preventive medicine and health centre	Medical staff (<i>Equipe médicale</i>)	(160)	0	0		7
University and school social welfare	Social workers (<i>Assistants sociales</i>)	(120)	0	0		7

(3) It is impossible to give a number for this category of persons

(4) Only a small proportion of the work done by these people falls within the remit of this report ; consequently their work is not analysed in tables 3 and 4.

(5) It has been estimated that in each unit an average of 4 persons are involved with the tasks described in this report

2. *Information management*. This is the collection, production and display of information in relation to education and training opportunities, and/or careers, employment, and the labour market. (B)

3. *Information giving*. Providing objective, concrete information to individuals or groups in relation to education and training opportunities, and/or careers, employment, and the labour market. (C)

4. *Counselling*. Helping clients to explore their own thoughts and feelings about their present situation, about the options open to them, and about the consequences of each option.

- 4.1 Short-term individual. Helping clients on a one-to-one basis in a single or limited number of sessions. (D)
- 4.2 Long-term individual counselling. As 4.1 but representing a planned programme over a longer period and more than one session. (E)
- 4.3 As 4.1 but on a group basis. Tends to be in smaller groups than teaching, to be composed of individuals who share some common characteristics, to focus on their expressed needs rather than on predetermined learning aims, and to be organised to encourage active participation by all the individuals involved. (F)
- 4.4 Long-term group counselling. As 4.3 but representing a planned programme over a longer period and more than one session. (G)
- 4.5 Facilitating self-help group. Encouraging individuals to form themselves into ongoing groups to share experiences and to support each other (H)

5. *Advice*. Making suggestions based on the counsellor's own knowledge and experience and on assessment results. (I)

6. *Assessment*. Making judgements about individuals' suitability for certain options, based on inventories, tests, observations, interviews, etc.

- 6.1 Facilitating self assessment. Supporting individuals in choosing their own assessment devices and drawing conclusions from them. (J)
- 6.2 Diagnostic assessment. Selecting assessment devices, interpreting the results and making appropriate recommendations. (K)

7. *Referral*. Referring individuals to services better equipped to deal with their problem. (L)

8. *Teaching*. A programme of planned experiences designed to develop the skills, knowledge and concepts that will help individuals to manage their educational, vocational and personal development. (M)

9. *Placement*. Placing individuals into educational or training programmes and/or into employment.

- 9.1 Liaison with providers. Liaison with employers and with education and training providers to obtain information about the opportunities they offer. (N)
- 9.2 Coaching. Helping individuals to present themselves effectively when applying for another training course or for a job (help in writing a CV, letter of application, personal statement, preparation for interviews). (O)

- 9.3 Vacancy information. Providing individuals with information about particular vacancies in education, training or employment. (P)
 - 9.4 Pre-selection. Pre-selecting applicants for particular vacancies in education, training or employment. (Q)
10. *Advocacy*. A form of mediation which involves negotiating directly with institutions or agencies on behalf of individuals, especially for those for whom there may be particular barriers to access. (R)
11. *Supporting other guidance sources*. Providing training sessions for and/or disseminating information materials to other institutions. (S)
12. *Feedback*. Collecting information on the unmet needs of particular groups and encouraging providers of opportunities to respond by adapting and extending their provisions. (T)
13. *Follow-up*. Contacting former clients to see what has become of them. Its purposes may include data for use with subsequent clients, evaluating the effectiveness of the guidance given, and offering further support. (U)

For each of the tasks listed, a rating on the importance of the task is given on a 0 to 4 scale, on the basis of the work normally carried out within the role:

4	Major involvement
3	Considerable involvement
2	Some involvement
1	Minor involvement
0	No involvement

The results of this rating are given in Table 3. All the tasks are coded with letters from A to U as explained above.

3b. Commentary

It should be remembered that the SCUIO vary considerably from one university to the next so that it is impossible to talk of a single reality. Consequently, though it is true to say that the SCUIO counsellor is often a "general practitioner" who has to deal with all the problems, when the unit is a big one a certain (but rarely complete) degree of specialisation among the counsellors can be observed. Precisely because the role of a SCUIO is to accompany the student from the moment s/he sets foot in the university for the first time to the moment s/he finds a job, it is very difficult to split the tasks up and therefore to have staff who are highly specialised in specific aspects. On the other hand, where units deal with employment or with specific categories of student (students with disabilities, salaried students, foreign students), the very specificity of the clientèle leads to a certain degree of specialisation. In these cases, people with very different profiles are involved in receiving and

Table 3. Tasks performed in the main occupation roles

(1) Occupation roles	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U
University information and guidance service																					
Director	4	1	2	2	1	1	0	1	2	1	1	2	3	3	2	2	2	0	4	3	2
Administrator	4	1	3	2	2	2	1	1	3	1	1	2	2	3	3	2	2	1	2	2	2
Counsellor	0	3	4	4	3	2	2	1	4	1	1	2	1	2	3	2	0	0	2	0	2
Statistician	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Secretary-librarian	0	4	2	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Vocational counsellor	0	3	4	3	1	3	1	1	4	2	1	2	2	4	4	3	2	1	1	0	2
Psychological guidance counsellor	0	0	3	4	3	2	2	1	4	4	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0
'One-stop shop' for students with disabilities																					
Reception officer	4	2	4	4	4	3	0	0	3	1	0	2	0	3	3	2	3	3	2	3	2
Counsellor	0	3	4	4	4	3	0	0	3	1	1	2	0	2	3	2	3	3	0	2	1
International relations department																					
Director	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	3	0	1	1	1	0	2	0
Counsellor	0	3	4	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	2	2	2	2	2	0	0	0
Careers and placement service																					
Director	4	1	2	2	1	1	1	0	2	2	0	2	2	3	2	3	2	1	4	3	3
Counsellor	0	3	4	3	0	3	1	1	2	2	1	2	2	4	4	3	2	1	1	0	0

(1) The occupation roles are classified in the same order as in Table 2.

Table 3 (Continued). Tasks performed in the main occupation roles

(1) Occupation roles	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U
Continuing education department																					
Director	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	3	2	1	2	3	0	2	0
Counsellor	0	2	3	2	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	2	0	3	2	2	2	3	0	0	0
PhD graduates employment unit																					
Correspondent	2	2	3	4	1	2	0	2	3	4	0	3	2	4	4	4	4	2	1	2	1
Tutorial system																					
Professor/tutor	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Medico-pedagogical university clinics																					
Director	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Head of studies	4	0	3	3	3	0	0	0	1	2	2	2	0	4	2	0	0	4	0	2	1
Professor	0	0	2	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	3	2	2	1	0	0	2	0	1	0
Librarian	0	4	4	2	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	2	2	4	0	0	2	0	1	1
Psychologist/psychiatrist	0	0	2	4	4	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Social worker/nurse	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
University-secondary school student 'one-stop shop'																					
Psychologist/psychiatrist	0	0	2	4	4	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Professor	0	0	2	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	3	2	2	1	0	0	2	0	1	0
Preventive medicine and health centre																					
N.A.																					
University and school social welfare																					
N.A.																					

(1) The occupation roles are classified in the same order as in Table 2.

counselling the students. Lastly, in units focusing on health and social problems, social workers and doctors might well find themselves in the role of counsellors, without however being capable of replacing the counsellors working for the SCUIO.

3b.1 The SCUIO

Thanks to the tasks with which it has been invested on creation, and thanks to the role it plays vis-à-vis the university and the various partners, the SCUIO is in fact the university's show case. It is the SCUIO that is often asked to represent (C) the university outside (at students fairs in France and abroad, at forums, etc.), to organise information sessions (C) on what can be studied at the university, to publish documentation (B) about the different courses and training sessions offered. But the main functions of this SCUIO are those mentioned in the decree setting them up, namely *induction, reception, information, guidance and help in finding employment*.

Without constant reference to the most accurate and the most complete documentation possible, with regular updates, the guidance and other forms of support provided by the SCUIO are doomed to fail. The development and management (B) of a documentary resource centre is therefore an important activity. Although electronic-based documentation is becoming more and more widespread in France, brochures remain one of the principal sources of information and guidance. The SCUIO contribute greatly to the writing of the large number of brochures published by the university, such as the booklet welcoming new students, the student guide to the university, the presentation booklet of the different degree courses, the guide to fifth-year post-graduate courses. In conjunction with the university authorities, the SCUIO participates in this activity (B). In some universities, the SCUIO helps to produce audio-visual documents to present the university (films, videos, etc.).

A lot of people go to the documentation resource centre to get information (C) on the different courses offered at the university or other establishments (university or schools) both in France and abroad, plus information about the different professions and job opportunities and job application procedures. In most SCUIO, part of the documentation can be consulted freely.

Reception and information (C) are among the main tasks of the SCUIO. The majority of those who consult are of course university students, and it is not unusual for tens of thousands of people to consult the SCUIO in any given year. Certain categories of student require particular attention. Students with disabilities need help with enrolment formalities or generally getting around; foreign students need help in the different formalities both inside and outside the university ; salaried students need support too. There is also a growing demand for information on the part of secondary school pupils and their families who, given the problems of unemployment and the high failure rate in higher education, wish to get information at first hand.

The presence of competent staff (counsellors, and sometimes teaching staff and "senior" students) in the documentation resource centre offers personalised reception (C) so that those coming for help often find answers to their questions and - an essential first step in the guidance process - are helped to clarify their needs. Having looked up different documents,

either alone or with help, the student often asks for further help during an interview, usually on a one-to-one basis (D) with the counsellor or the psychological guidance counsellor. This results in advice (I) but, whenever possible, a working group will be set up for a number of students for a single session (F) or, very rarely, for a long-term programme (G).

As part of its information and guidance activities, the role of the SCUIO is particularly important at the beginning of a student's university career. During this period the new students get to know the different structures and the way the university works and receive help in elaborating their personal and professional plans.

After enrolment, during which the SCUIO is often present to give the final details, comes the time for the student to really discover what the university is all about. They get to find their way around the campus, to know what the different services are that they can ask for if necessary, to learn how the teaching is organised. Sometimes this reception period includes talks (M) which are held to help the new students adapt to the university's working methods (introduction to bibliographies, and learning how to take notes, for example). To meet this need, a form of tutoring called "reception or induction tutoring" (*tutorat d'accueil*) has been set up in some universities; the SCUIO are involved in this activity in 50% of cases.

As for the personal and professional plans, the SCUIO offers a number of activities:

- **Group information sessions (C)**. Usually for first and second-year students, these sessions present and explain the different degree courses, further education and training opportunities, how to switch from one course to another. This can be done in lecture theatres or in small groups of five to ten students, over several sessions. These group activities sometimes go beyond the merely informative level (C) and correspond to short-term group counselling sessions (F).
- Participation in **modules to help define personal plans (M)**. These modules are sometimes integrated in the course work (usually during the first two years), and sometimes are offered by the SCUIO independently of the study programme. These modules include discussion about what a career involves and the reality and demands of working life, which is essential if a reasoned choice is to be made. One example of this kind of activity is an experiment, supported by the Ministry, and based on the "careers education " model [D. Gilles, J. Saulnier-Cazals, M.J. Villermet-Cortot, *Socrate, le retour*]. According to this method, students (who do not always have a very clear idea of what they want to do later) are invited to do original research, which involves collecting as much documentation as possible and meeting professionals in the areas where they think they would like to work. This is integrated in their studies and helps them to clarify or even modify their choice of career before it is too late and while they can still change direction.
- **Using computer-aided guidance (J)**. These software programs have been designed to help the user define a personal plan. The user is helped by a counsellor to make a personal assessment and then see what types of career correspond. 65% of the units use these software programs. A large number exist, the most commonly used being *Performance*, *Aloès*, and *C'hoix*.

All the SCUIO organise activities to help students to find work. As we have already seen, the situation varies from one university to another, depending on whether the unit is wholly responsible for this task or whether a distinct unit has been set up to deal with such matters. Whatever the situation, the SCUIO is always very attentive, and even when a distinct specialised unit exists, it is the SCUIO counsellor who is often consulted by students in need of advice.

An employment area can be found in most documentation resource centres, where information (B) on companies (*Kompass*, for example), specialised publications and magazines (*L'expansion*, *L'usine nouvelle*, *Courrier cadre*) and books on how to find employment and how to plan one's career are usually available on free access to all.

As for employment, the SCUIO organise workshops to provide concrete help for graduates looking for their first job. The Executive Employment Agency (*Association Pour l'Emploi des Cadres*, APEC) has developed a Young Graduate's Guide (*Pilote Jeune Diplômé*) that the SCUIO use. It targets young graduates at different levels who are about to look for their first job. During several group sessions (G) which last about a day, the students assess themselves and their motivation (J) before starting to look for work and apply for jobs (which involves writing a CV, letter of application and personal statement, and preparing for interviews). Members of faculty sometimes run these sessions with the SCUIO staff. Sometimes the SCUIO will organise "Recruitment Days", where human resource managers provide practice interviews for those students who want to take part.

Meetings with professionals (N) are organised either by the SCUIO or with their participation and take different forms: "*Université-Entreprise*" open days or weeks, talks, fairs. During these different activities the student meets people from the world of work and gets to know them better, which helps in the choice of career.

The SCUIO is sometimes asked to display information about vacancies for short-term placements or employment (P). In the case of short-term placements (work experience), the contractual documents (*conventions de stage*) signed by the employer and the university are sometimes handled by the SCUIO. This is purely administrative and is only a minor activity.

The pre-work modules (M) are offered in many universities (38%), often at the initiative of the SCUIO, and are intended for students about to graduate at different levels. They can be organised in different ways, the most common being an introduction to the world of work, job-seeking techniques, and an introduction to teaching careers.

Finally, let us consider a few tasks usually carried out by the SCUIO, but of minor importance for them.

In 68% of cases, the SCUIO is responsible for all or part of the statistical surveys concerning examination pass rates, the profile of new undergraduates, and the number of graduates in employment, all of which are extremely useful for the guidance of young students, and either are gathered by the university authorities or are collected during other surveys. The results are published by the university for internal use and are often consulted by students wishing to enrol at university.

Finally, secondary education advisors (career guidance counsellors and teachers) contribute greatly to the provision of information during the last year of school by telling the pupils of the different possibilities open to them. It is therefore essential that they know the structures of the university and the objectives of the different courses. It is very important for the secondary school guidance services to be well informed (S) and meetings to this end are often organised.

The staff of the SCUIO

Table 2 lists a number of different functions:

(a) **The director** who, in addition to teaching in a faculty department, is in charge of all questions related to studies in the SCUIO. In some units there is no administrator, so the director is also responsible for administrative management. For most of the time the role of the director centres around educational and career guidance, which means that he or she is involved in all of the activities of the SCUIO.

In addition to education management (A), the director sets up teaching modules related to the unit's activity, where they exist (M), and sets up supports (S) for secondary school career advisors and head teachers. The director is the person who makes contact with employers (N) in order to introduce students to the world of work and negotiate jobs for the students. In many universities, the director is also involved in activities concerning information (C) and/or employment (O). The director is appointed by the *Président* (Vice-Chancellor) and the *Conseil d'Administration* (Senate), and has to contact the different departments in the university so that the SCUIO can fulfill its mission. This means making the members of faculty aware of the functions of the SCUIO in the areas of guidance and graduate employment so that they will provide a link between the students and the SCUIO (T).

(b) **The administrator** is responsible for all administrative matters. If the director is absent, it is the administrator who deals with educational questions. Like the director, the administrator has to be very versatile and able to intervene whatever the problem. The work of the administrator is very similar to that of the director and s/he is responsible for the administrative and financial management of the unit (A). Very often the administrator is one of the unit's permanent counsellors.

(c) **The "counsellor"** is the cornerstone of the unit. It should be understood that the term "counsellor" or "adviser" is rarely used by the SCUIO. In fact, no one word covers all the activities of these professionals and often the term "librarian" (*documentaliste*) or "research assistant" (*chargé d'études*) is used, although these terms do not correspond to the activities of this category of staff.

Above all, the counsellor is a general practitioner who is able to carry out the tasks required of the SCUIO. This means participating in all aspects of guidance activities, from helping the undergraduate during the first days at university to helping the graduate in the search for work. The counsellor must therefore have the necessary skills in educational guidance. When there are more than one such counsellor, they sometimes have the

opportunity to specialise, especially in the area of vocational guidance and employment. But basically they are all-rounders who must be able to perform all the tasks of the unit.

The activity of the counsellor is therefore twofold: information (C), individual counselling (D) and information management (B) on the one hand; and preparation of the students for the transition to the labour market (N) and coaching for the job search process (O) on the other. The counsellor must be able to identify new needs and develop new activities to meet these needs, and also encourage useful links with the faculty departments. The other tasks play a minor part in the activity of a counsellor. A detailed job description is given in Part 3c.

(d) The "vocational counsellor" (*conseiller professionnel*) is responsible for most of the activities concerning graduate employment. This involves developing contacts with employers, introducing students to the world of work, helping them to find short-term placements and permanent employment and training them in the techniques necessary to find a job. All this is done in conjunction with the other counsellors but is specifically focused on employment. This has been taken into account in the classification in the relevant tables.

First and foremost, the job of this professional is information management (B), in particular related to employment (in the "employment area" of the documentation resource centre) (C). The vocational counsellor also organises group sessions on different aspects of employment (F) and may take part in modules on the same theme (M). A large part of the work involves making contacts with employers (N), handling and displaying job vacancies (P) and helping the student to prepare a curriculum vitae, cover letters and job interviews (O). Occasionally, the counsellor will introduce applicants to the employers (Q) and, more rarely still, will pre-select applicants (R). The activity of this professional is given in the second detailed profile in Part 3c.

(e) The librarian (*documentaliste*), whose job is to collect information and documentation (B) produced by the other structures and establishments and to prepare documents to describe the courses available in their own university. If the university does not have a distinct employment unit, the librarian also has to collect information about the different careers and jobs which are indispensable for the "employment area" of the documentation resource centre. In most universities, the librarian also sees students (C) and, after special training, takes part in all the activities of the unit, in particular the workshops and group sessions.

(f) The psychological guidance counsellor (*conseiller d'orientation psychologue, COP*). At the request of the *Président* (Vice-Chancellor), the Ministry seconded psychological guidance counsellors (*COP*) to the university for fifty per cent of their statutory working hours, the other half being done in the secondary school sector. It is for this reason that in Table 2 the figure 150 (number of *COP* working with the SCUIO) is preceded by the comment "expressed in terms of half-time posts". Given the fact that 6 to 8 universities have no *COP*, there are on average two part-time (0.5) counsellors per university. This figure varies between 1 and 3 depending on how long the SCUIO has been in existence and on how many students are enrolled at the university. Some universities have managed to get a *COP* seconded to them full-time. Because there are very few *COP*, many counsellors do a lot of guidance work. Often through lack of time, the *COP* work exclusively with the SCUIO counsellors during individual consultations with the students. In some cases they are better integrated in the

structures of the SCUIO and take part in the other activities of the unit concerning advice and guidance.

Although the job of the *COP* is more vocational guidance oriented, they are sometimes involved in problems of educational guidance when they advise the student on the different courses of study, and in personal questions which arise during consultations with the student. Therefore, the primary tasks of the *COP* are to hold one-to-one interviews (D), organise group sessions on specific themes (F or G) and assess the needs of the students who ask for guidance (J, K, I).

(g) The statistician. Some universities have provided the SCUIO with a statistician whose help is critical in the collating of information which follows the students throughout their university career and afterwards on the job market (U). The presence of a statistician makes the task of the counsellor easier as he or she no longer has to study statistics in order to help the students better. In these universities this aspect of the unit's activities can be developed considerably. It should be noted that the statistician usually takes part in the other activities of the unit. Since the number of people who spend the whole of their time doing surveys is low, this category of person has been included in the total number of counsellors.

3b. 2 The other structures covered by this report

There are a number of structures both within and external to the universities which are involved to a greater or lesser extent in questions of guidance, help in finding jobs or psychological support. In these structures ("One-stop shops for students with disabilities - (*Relais handicap*); PhD graduates employment units (*Bourses de l'Emploi*); or Medico-pedagogical clinic (*cliniques médico-pédagogiques*), people are partially or totally involved in activities covered by this report. In the case of international relations or continuing education departments, only some of the activities are related to information and vocational guidance. These structures are described below with respect to the tasks of general and vocational guidance. Lastly, the tasks of educational, vocational and personal guidance are so rare in some of these structures that they cannot be considered as part of the unit's normal activity. This is the case for units which are responsible for organising tutoring and for structures responsible for medical and social activities (social workers working for the *Centre Régional des Oeuvres Universitaires et Scolaires (CROUS)* and the medical staff of the preventive medicine and health centre (MPPS)).

(a) "One-stop shop" for students with disabilities

Given the great variety of situations in the different universities, it is difficult to describe the activities of these units in the same terms. In some cases just one person (responsible for other tasks in the university) is appointed to provide this support, in other cases the support is provided but there is no official structure, and in yet other cases a unit has been set up and works in conjunction with the faculties, the SCUIO, the preventive medicine and health centre (MPPS) and other relevant bodies. It is this last kind of unit that is described below.

The activities surrounding the reception and support for students with disabilities are many and varied and cover all aspects of the life of the students. Virtually every university provides support in some form for this particular student population (C). It would be impossible to carry out all the tasks without building a minimum amount of specialised documentation (B). The individualised reception of students includes counselling interviews (D) and advice (I). It should be noted that in those universities which have entrusted this task either to a specific unit or to the SCUIO, help in finding work (O) is always the responsibility of the person in charge, who also makes contact with prospective employers (N) and recommends students for specific job offers (R).

(b) Careers and placement service

The role and functions of these units may vary widely from one university to another, but broadly speaking their activities are of two kinds:

- A student's initial contact with the job market is usually the responsibility of the SCUIO. Whether this be done by the SCUIO or another unit, the tasks are the same and have been described in the first part of this report.
- When there is an "employment unit" (*service emploi*) or a "short-term placement and employment unit" (*service stage-emploi*), the emphasis lies on the search for work and the necessary preparation. In these units, the vocational counsellor collects information about the job market (B) and transmits this information about potential employment and job application techniques to the graduates and undergraduates (C). He or she helps the students individually in the whole job application process (O), develops contacts with employers (N) with the aim of helping the students find work, and also updates the job vacancies board regularly (P). Sometimes the counsellor will answer adverts for jobs and recommend applicants whose profile corresponds to the job (Q). With the expansion of university courses in mind, the counsellor also informs the university authorities of those courses which the employers do not find suitable (T) and at the same time informs the employers on the profile of the graduates of the establishment (N). Lastly, the follow-up of graduates entering the labour market (U) is also part of the counsellor's functions.

The "employment unit" is usually run by a member of faculty who makes contact with employers (N) in order to introduce students to the world of work and to negotiate job placements and positions for them. In many universities, this director also takes part in employment and job-seeking activities (O). The director is assisted by a "vocational counsellor" (*conseiller professionnel*) who is responsible for all the activities described in this paragraph. Like the SCUIO, there is no official title for the people doing this job and the term "vocational counsellor" seems to be the most appropriate. The tasks s/he carries out are first of all documentation management (B) concerning employment and labour market entry, then reception and information on all this (C). The vocational counsellor organises group sessions on themes concerning the world of work (F) and may take part in teaching modules on the same theme (M). A large amount of time is spent making contact with prospective employers (N), handling job vacancies (P) and helping the student to prepare job applications (O). The director and the vocational counsellor sometimes present applicants to employers (Q) and, occasionally, preselect applicants for jobs (R).

(c) PhD graduates employment unit (Bourses de l'Emploi)/ Association Bernard Gregory

In a large number of universities, the *Bourse de l'Emploi* is responsible for finding work for PhD graduates. This activity is either integrated in the activity of the SCUIO or carried out independently in a separate unit. Its very objectives mean that it is an "employment unit", with all the functions described in paragraph 3b.2(b), but with two differences:

- The *Bourses de l'Emploi* prepare sessions to introduce post-graduates to the world of work (M) and do this in conjunction with the "doctorate schools" (*écoles doctorales*). These sessions, called "Doctorial® sessions", are funded by the Ministry and concern first and second year PhD students. The aim is to prepare them for the job market.
- Just like the university employment units, the ABG correspondent makes contact with employers (N), distributes information on vacancies (P) and prepares the students for job applications (O). In addition, on a national level, the ABG groups together requests from PhD graduates who have contacted the *Bourses de l'Emploi* in their search for work. Three times a year, the Association Bernard Gregory publishes a document containing the CVs of all the applicants they wish to introduce to prospective employers. If the employers are interested, they contact the Association who will introduce the candidate (R).
- The Association also puts job offers (P) and applicant profiles on the Internet (R).

In each *Bourse de l'Emploi* a correspondent, who acts as a co-ordinator (researcher, member of faculty, research assistant or administrator), is responsible for and carries out all the activities of this structure.

(d) The international relations department

Two internationally oriented activities coming within the remit of this report play an important role: providing support for foreign students who enrol in the university either as part of a European exchange programme or individually, and providing information for young French students wishing to study abroad. Sometimes this dual role is the responsibility of the department of international and/or European relations; they organise the induction activities for these students, mainly via information giving (C), collect documentation about studies abroad (B) and sometimes answer the enormous number of letters from foreigners wishing to study in France. The international relations department works closely with the SCUIO, the faculty departments (*UFR*), the registrar's office (*service de scolarité*) and individual members of faculty. It helps students plan their studies abroad and do all the necessary formalities (O) to get a place at university. It sometimes acts as a mediator (R) and presents the applications of certain students to the appropriate authorities. In some universities students are given individual help with the administrative formalities both inside and outside the university.

The international relations department is run by a member of faculty or an administrator who co-ordinates all the different activities. Often someone from the department works part-

time or full-time on the activities described above. In some universities, this work is done by the SCUIO.

(e) The continuing education department

Only a very small part of the activity of this department comes within the remit of this report. Of the many people who use this department, there are the salaried students who wish to enrol at university to acquire additional qualifications. They either want to take a further degree or follow a course in order to acquire certain professional skills. The department runs its own courses and also helps working people to enrol in traditional university courses. It is not concerned with finding these students work since most of them either go back to their old job once their studies are over or get a better qualified job with the same employer. The department collects documentation and information (B) and informs the prospective students (C) of training and education opportunities that are open to them during the period when they wish to study. It also helps the students find financial aid so they can continue their studies with enough to live on. The department may have to pre-select applicants for a course of study (Q) and negotiate places on courses for salaried students (R). Lastly, students are referred to other university offices better equipped to deal with their problem (L)

The head of this department is a member of faculty whose job is to coordinate the activities of the department (A) and organise courses within the domain of the university's teaching. The director is seconded by a counsellor - a member of faculty or an administrator - appointed to the continuing education department whose job it is to implement the activities described here (B, C, Q, R, L).

(f) Tutorial system

As we have seen above, the main function of tutoring is educational; members of faculty train "senior" students who help first-year students to acquire a method for organising their work. The essential point is organisation of work rather than to provide information and guidance. If a tutor realises that a student is in difficulty, however, then it is necessary to refer the student to a source of help. The tutor thus has a special relation with the student and must send him or her to the most appropriate structure (L), i.e. the SCUIO, social services or even medical units. The tutor trainer must inform the tutor of all the different facilities and units that exist and explain the importance of referral whenever necessary. The two tasks have not been distinguished in Table 3.

(g) Structures affiliated to the French Student's Health Foundation (FSEF)

The institutions which are affiliated to the French Student's Health Foundation (*Fondation Santé des Etudiants de France*) offer students suffering from psychological or somatic illnesses the possibility to continue their studies while undergoing whatever treatment they need. Two structures exist, with slightly different aims :

- The University-Secondary School Student "One-Stop Shops" (*Relais Etudiants Lycéens*, REL). offers a small number of short-term individual counselling sessions (D) during which the student is given information (C) and counselling. If necessary, the student is referred to other structures or professionals who are in a better position to help, such as the SCUIO, social workers, the preventive medicine and health centre (MPPS), the support unit for students with disabilities, etc. (L).
- In the medico-pedagogical university clinics, teaching and medical staff work together to help the students overcome the problems of integration. Among the many problems that need to be solved are problems of educational and vocational guidance. It is therefore useful for these students to have experts in these areas on the spot. Depending on the clinic, different people will provide this service. It may be one or more members of the teaching staff, a member of the medical staff or someone specialised in these questions. It was not therefore possible to give the number of people involved in this kind of activity in Table 2. Only the focuses E, V or P have been indicated for each of them. Whatever the type of structure, the following tasks have to be performed: collecting documentation and information (B); informing students who come for consultations (C); setting up a methodological structure to help the student define his or her own future (through interviews on an individual basis over a short period (D), or over the long-term (E)). These interviews can be followed up methodologically, either orally or in writing, thus enabling the student to see what progress has been made. Often the student is advised to consult other structures (L) (SCUIO, employment unit, *Service de scolarité* - Registrar's Office, etc.). The students are also helped to search for a job or to apply for another course (CV, letter of application, personal statement or preparation for job interviews) (O). In the case of these students, it is often necessary for the counsellor or staff to mediate between the student and the educational institution (R). As for matters of employment, these clinics are rarely involved. They rarely develop contacts with employers, do not manage job vacancies and do not play the role of a mediator to find work for the students. Some of these clinics provide information or documentation concerning employment.

(h) *The special cases of preventive medicine health centre (MPPS) and the CROUS*

During interviews that the CROUS social workers and medical staff of the Preventive Medicine and Health Centre hold with the students, certain needs may be detected. The student may need advice and guidance and either this will be given immediately during the interview or the student will be referred to the appropriate structure (L). Given the limited role played by these staff in matters covered by this report (the majority of students are referred to appropriate structures), the training of these staff has not been included in this report.

3c. Detailed profiles

Below are three job descriptions which between them cover the greater part of the needs in terms of guidance and employment. The first is the general practitioner kind of counsellor who works within the SCUIO on all the tasks described in the previous section. Second, there is the vocational counsellor (either within the SCUIO or, more frequently within one of the

"employment" or "job placement" units), who is responsible for all questions related to graduate employment. Third, there is the counsellor who works with students with disabilities; this counsellor is a professional who deals with all the problems of educational and vocational guidance for this particular category of students.

3c. 1 Counsellor in a university information and guidance service

The counsellor in a university guidance service is above all a *generalist* who intervenes in various ways regarding all aspects of guidance from entry to the university until the transition to working life.

The service in which this professional is involved is a documentary resource centre on everything that is available in the fields of studies and careers and it is also a place for discussion and advice. The university counsellor is the key person in this service. He/she works under the direction of a director who is a university teacher responsible for directing the educational work of the service and/or under the direction of an administrator. He/she is assisted by a psychological guidance specialist who shares with him/her the work of the service and who gives individual interviews when requested by students. Usually a secretary and/or a librarian completes the team. Some services will have several counsellors of this type. In other cases, the team could include a careers counsellor who will work in collaboration with one or more generalists.

The major activity of this generalist will focus on tasks related to information and help with guidance. Nevertheless, while advising the student, the two aspects of information on studies and information on careers cannot be separated and the user of the service must find information on both subjects. If there is no service in the establishment responsible for placement, the counsellor must consequently develop wider skills than those defined by the two terms 'information' and 'guidance'.

Information. The counsellor will be responsible for the documentation centre. He/she will have to manage documentation (B) provided by partners (universities, schools, national and foreign institutes), and maintain up-to-date information on careers as well as on the appropriate types of studies needed to enter them. It will also be the counsellor's task to produce documents concerning courses given in the establishment and to disseminate them to his/her partners.

Help for guidance. To run a documentation centre implies a personalised service (C). During their visits to the service, students ask for guidance not only in their research in the documentation but also with the definition of their personal and career plan. Thus, the counsellor will be led to give individual advice (D, I), to organise working groups (F), and sometimes to use software which helps lead to informed choices (J). In addition to an excellent knowledge of the files, this activity presupposes skills in psychology, in group dynamics and in running meetings. He/she may participate to workshops or modules helping students to manage (M) their vocational or educational development.

Preparation for entry to working life. In a world where the problems of employment are particularly difficult, entry to working life requires from graduates

especially careful preparation. Long before leaving university, awareness of the world of companies and help in the definition of a career plan will be provided by the counsellor through the activities of the guidance service. Later, effective preparation for the recruitment process, unavoidable if the candidate wishes to succeed, will include help in writing the curriculum vitae and the letter of application, and preparation for the recruitment interview (O). If no special service exists in the university, the counsellor will have to undertake this latter task, to gather documentation about firms and jobs (B), and sometimes to collect informations about job vacancies (P).

Follow-up surveys of graduates. Knowing what has happened to the students at the end of their degree course, the continuation of their studies and/or their entry to work, is a very useful tool for helping to advise students. It is therefore essential to provide students with quantitative and/or qualitative data regarding the continuing studies or entry to work of former students. Consequently, if the university does not have any service providing statistics concerning the careers of its graduates, the counsellor may have to conduct surveys (U) in order to give better information to the users of the service.

The counsellor's **fields of abilities** in a university service are thus extremely wide. It should be noted that, despite everything, he/she has to remain a generalist who, if need be, will ask for help from a specialist in his establishment, or, if that is not possible, in another establishment. In conclusion, let us sum up briefly these abilities :

- to know how to gather and organise documentation
- to be acquainted with types of studies and occupations
- to know how to receive, listen and advise people
- to know how to use new technologies both in documentation and guidance
- to be acquainted with problems related to entry to work
- to know how to help write a curriculum vitae and application letter
- to know how to devise, conduct and analyse surveys and questionnaires

As stated previously, depending on the structure of the service or services, the counsellor may need to give priority to certain areas of ability. Thus, when many generalist counsellors are involved in one service, as is often the case in France, they will be able to divide the tasks and thus acquire a small measure of specialisation, for instance in documentation or advising on placement. When the service (or the establishment) has a careers counsellor, collaboration on help with placement will take place between him/her and the generalist.

3c. 2 The vocational counsellor

The vocational counsellor deals with all questions related to graduate employment. His or her activities are in addition to and complete the guidance role of the SCUIO. Some vocational counsellors work within the SCUIO ; others in a *service stage-emploi* (short-term placement and employment unit), *Bourse de l'Emploi* (PhD graduates employment service), etc. Within the SCUIO, the vocational counsellor works in a broad context in which the student is considered from a holistic point of view, without separating training, education and

employment. In a specific "employment unit", the vocational counsellor is not usually involved in initial contacts between the student and the job market, as proposed by the SCUIO. This leaves more time for activities such as looking for employment opportunities and job offers, and contacts with employers.

The job description will be as broad as possible, since not all counsellors carry out all of the tasks mentioned here. All counselling activities may involve help in finding employment: individual counselling (D, E) and group counselling (F, G).

Information. The employment unit and/or the SCUIO provide an "employment area" where information and documentation about careers, professions and prospective employers, and job application techniques, can be found. It is the vocational counsellor's task to collect all this information (B) and regularly update information about the state of the job market and employment opportunities in the various different sectors. Information about careers and job opportunities in the public sector is also collated. Modern means of communication are used more and more often in this task, with noticeable results. The vocational counsellor also sees the students (C) and, during individual counselling (D), helps them to see what the job market has to offer them by helping them to define more precisely the area in which they would like to work, the position they are looking for, and what positions actually exist. This activity goes beyond the four walls of the documentation resource centre since the vocational counsellor takes part in activities outside the university, in particular the careers forums organised by the universities and schools and to which the employers are invited, and also meetings organised by the various national employment agencies and job centres (*ANPE* for non-executive positions and *APEC* for executives).

Preparing for career entry. Long before graduating, if students have some contact with the world of work they will see their studies in a new light. From being passive recipients of their education, a throwback to secondary school days, the students will become active participants. To help them in this transition, the vocational counsellor organises meetings with professionals and recruiters (N), and sessions during which students learn how to define their career plan, whether or not integrated in the educational programme (M). It should be noted that some of these modules go beyond a simple discovery of business and work and put this into a broader economic context.

During all of this, the vocational counsellor may use software programs which enable the students to compare their personal aspirations, the courses they have studied (or intend to study) and the jobs that are available. These tools help the counsellor assess the relevance of the students' choices and thus give the appropriate advice (I, J).

Preparing to make job applications. Students should learn how to apply for a job some time before graduation and this involves several stages.

The student has to acquire a method so as to organise and manage the search for jobs. *APEC* (Executive Employment Agency) offers students about to graduate and look for a job a method to handle this. During a number of one-day sessions (G), the students assess themselves and prepare to look for work. Once the student has thought about things carefully, writing a CV, letter of application and preparing for the job interview (O) should no longer pose any problems.

Acting as a link between employers, the university and the students. The counsellor plays an essential role in helping students to find jobs :

- The counsellor provides the employers with the profiles of students graduating from the university, and in return collects and asks for short-term placements and job offers (P). Sometimes the employers ask the counsellor to recommend an applicant whose profile corresponds to what the employer is looking for (Q).
- The counsellor informs the university authorities of what the employers are looking for, with a view to adapting university courses to the job profiles offered by the employers (T).
- The counsellor posts up job vacancies received by the unit for the benefit of the students (P). He or she may sometimes recommend suitable applicants to the employers (Q). The counsellor may also use the Internet to advertise job vacancies and the profiles of the students looking for work. In addition, the counsellor informs the students of civil service and other public sector entrance examinations and works within the university to try and get courses set up to train students for these examinations (M, O).

Preparing statistics on graduate employment. If the university does not have a statistics department which can do surveys on graduate employment, the vocational counsellor may have to do these surveys instead, so as to be able to give current students more precise information about what kinds of positions their elders occupy (U).

The **skills** of the vocational counsellor are as varied as those of the general counsellor. The vocational counsellor has to:

- know what different jobs and professions exist and which studies give access to them
- know how to collect and manage information and documentation
- understand the problems of finding a job
- know how to help students write a CV, letter of application
- know how to listen and advise
- know how to use new technologies both for documentation and for the management of job offers
- know how to devise and conduct a questionnaire and analyse the results

The vocational counsellor has to be practical and approachable, to have skills and knowledge going beyond the walls of the university. He or she has to keep abreast of developments in the job market, has to persuade the employers of the quality of the graduates and has to help introduce changes to university courses, where necessary, so that they correspond to the needs of the job market.

3c. 3 The counsellor for disabled student

Whenever it is necessary, the counsellor for disabled students must be able to respond to requests from a disabled student for support in every aspect of his/her student life.

In order to respond as well as possible to all the different needs of disabled students, both educational and administrative, a reception service has to be an interaction between these students, the administrative services, the educational services, and the teaching staff. To fulfil this task properly, it must be the interface between all the local organisations and also must use all the available links and skills, in particular within the establishment (guidance services, social services, preventative medicine...), but also outside the establishment (specialist organisations, associations...).

The service in which this counsellor is (or would be) involved is at the same time a centre for documentary resources (B), for informative discussion (C), and for advice (I) (especially for subjects related to disability), very similar to a university guidance service but with an added dimension of educational support (O). This service's tasks are diverse and its actions correspond to a global approach but personalised for the student in his/her university education as well as in his/her social life.

Reception. The counsellor acts as an intermediary and/or as an interface (R) between each student and the university services for everything to do with studying and social life on the campus. To fulfil this task, he or she has to have an excellent knowledge of the establishment and how it works. The role of the counsellor for disabled students is to improve all aspects of the disabled student's life on the university campus. Through a personalised service, the disabled student should receive:

- *Help with information (C)* which must be provided as soon as possible in collaboration with the guidance services of the universities and the high schools. To do this, the counsellor for disabled students will have to add to the documentation provided by all partners specific documentation regarding disability.
- *Support during registration (R)* to obtain all the necessary information about living conditions at the university so as to allow him/her to study for a degree course in the best possible conditions.

Information. The adviser has a double role in terms of information (C). On the one hand, he/she has to keep the disabled students informed about current regulations but he/she also has to make the university population aware, by all the means which he/she thinks useful, of the problems of the disabled.

Support. The counsellor, always in a tripartite collaboration with the student and the teaching staff, must :

- establish a training programme that takes into account both the student's study plans and also the constraints related to his/her handicap (C, D, I).
- define (J) the most appropriate form of support possible.
- analyse any difficulties encountered and look for solutions to problems that arise.
- ensure the follow-up of the student, always in collaboration with the educational authorities, by providing any necessary technical or human aid according to the student's handicap, working methods, or subjects studied.
- organise note taking whenever it is necessary, arrange and co-ordinate tutorial and educational support for these students.

- facilitate access to documents in every format: written, electronic, Braille, audio etc.
- help the students in their study plans and in re-orientating them if that proves necessary ; in this, the adviser has to work closely with the different organisations or specialist associations, particularly in the field of placement (I, J).
- help disabled students to define their career plan in relation to their study plans, their handicap and the working world.

This activity requires abilities related to those of a social worker, a careers adviser, an educational tutor and a technical counsellor.

Help with entry to working life. The counsellor must inform and work with companies, local communities and associations (T, N). A good knowledge of the current legislation in this area is necessary. Through individual support for disabled students (O, Q, R) - during and after their studies at university and until their entry to working life - the counsellor has to provide disabled students with the tools that will allow them to have access to employment. Furthermore, the adviser has to work so as to allow disabled students to have, like their fellow students, work experience in companies throughout their university course in order to get a better knowledge of the working world. The counsellor also has to help them to write their curriculum vitae and their letters of application to companies.

The presence of disabled students in higher education is still a new field, but it requires very varied skills which may be grouped under the following areas of competence:

- to know how to receive, listen, and advise people
- to know how to work in a network
- to be familiar with types of studies and occupations
- to know one's establishment perfectly
- to know the education system
- to know the problems and legislation related to the disabled
- to know the problems related to professional placement
- to know how to collect and manage documentation
- to know how to manage administrative, financial, educational, social and psychological problems.

To sum up, the counsellor for disabled students is both a generalist and a specialist. He/she is a generalist for all the tasks related to reception and guidance, and a specialist in tasks related to support. However, he/she always has to work in a network with the different authorities of his/her establishment. Given the specific nature of this field, he/she must always be willing to work with the disabled.

4. Training and qualifications

4a. Introduction

The work of all the different people involved in the structures and units described in this report is very similar. With the exception of a few specific tasks such as administrative management or secretarial work, the activities of the different counsellors can be summed up in a few words: induction, reception, information, listening to and dialoguing with the students, guidance, leadership, and collection of documentation. Some are involved in educational guidance, others in vocational guidance, but the approach is the same. When they are appointed to a SCUIO (or any other unit described in this report) very few of them have the necessary skills. Very few have a certificate in psychology or have followed a course in librarianship. In the current state of affairs, the skills required of these staff have rarely been acquired during their initial studies or training, so they have to follow lectures, read up about the subject and go on special training courses in order to learn how to solve the problems students bring to them. Sometimes their earlier experience in other parts of the university, in a guidance unit of the *Rectorat* (Education Offices) or in a firm will help them.

Table 4 summarises the training level required for the different activities described in this report. The column headed "Minimum Educational Qualification" gives the minimum basic qualifications necessary in order to be allowed to take the different *concours* (civil service or public sector examinations) in France. This minimum qualification varies depending on the level at which the person graduated and also the subjects studied. The column headed "Further Education" lists required further training in order to exercise in the domain. It is a legal requirement : for example, in France a doctor must have defended a thesis known as a "practical thesis" in order to qualify, while a psychological guidance counsellor must have followed a two-year course of vocational training, though in fact this qualifies them to work in secondary schools rather than higher education.

4b. Commentary

Given the great similarities between those involved in reception work in the different structures and units described in this report (SCUIO, employment units, support units for students with disabilities, international relations and continuing education departments), the training of all these persons will be considered together.

4b.1 Initial training

All civil service and public sector jobs are based on entrance examinations (*concours*).

The director is a member of the university teaching staff who is specialised in a particular discipline but rarely qualified in psychology. It takes 8 years of study after the

baccalaureate to get a PhD. Through his or her teaching experience the director has learned to deal with problems of guidance. When time allows, the director follows the courses described at the end of this section in order to acquire additional skills. Like all academics, the director was recruited through an entrance examination (*concours*) in his or her special field. S/he was appointed as director by the *Président* (Vice-Chancellor) after approval by the *Conseil d'Administration* (Senate), in the light of projects submitted by the applicants to the post.

The level of educational qualifications for each category of *staff* holding down the positions of administrator, counsellor and secretary-librarian respectively has been described in Part 2a. It is the same for all the other university structures and departments.

When a university wants to recruit staff for the structures and units described above, it has to choose the sector (*branche d'activité professionnelle*, BAP) that the Ministry is asked to create a position for. Usually, the positions correspond to the following specialities: "back-up in the humanities and social sciences" (*Métiers d'appui des sciences humaines et sociales*), "information and communications", or "general management". The minimum requirement for each level is always specified (see table on page 10) but of course the examination (*concours*) is open to better qualified candidates. It is not unusual to find staff working in the lower echelons but whose skills and quality of work correspond to a higher position.

When no entrance examination (*concours*) is planned, staff on temporary or fixed-term contracts are often taken on. Two-thirds of these people have a higher degree (5 years of university education after the baccalaureate, Bac + 5). The level at which they are recruited is the same as that described above and they are recruited after a job interview. Such contracts are always limited in time, which means that these staff have to take an examination (*concours*) as soon as possible if they want to get a permanent position. The various continuing education departments organise special courses for them to train for these *concours*.

The administrator. This position is for 15% occupied by "ingénieurs" and for 80% by administrative officers (*Attachés d'administration*). Both categories need to have at least four years of university education (*maîtrise* or equivalent) to be able to sit for the examination (*concours*). Most of them do not just do administrative work and managerial tasks; they are often involved in educational and vocational guidance.

General counsellors, vocational counsellors and counsellors working with students with disabilities. Usually there is no relationship between the responsibilities of the counsellors and their rank in the university hierarchy. Consequently the counsellors who work for all the structures and units mentioned in this report have very different backgrounds. They can be *ingénieurs*, administrators or technicians, and they have degrees in a wide range of subjects (humanities, sciences, law, etc.) since all subjects taught at university give candidates the right to sit for civil service and public sector examinations (*concours*). The table on page 10 shows the minimum level of university education necessary to sit for various recruitment examinations corresponding to the categories of staff currently working for the SCUIO and other units.

Table 4. Training and qualifications

Service/System	Occupational role	(1) Minimum Educational Qualification	(2) Initial Training in Guidance	Continuing Education
University information and guidance service	Director	5 years university education+PhD (<i>Doctorat</i>)	none	Seminars
	Administrator	(Bac+3, 4 or 5) +examination Variable level Bac - Bac+3 (often Bac+4 or 5) +	none	Seminars
	Counsellor		none	Seminars
	Statistician		none	Seminars
	Secretary-librarian		none	Seminars
	Vocational counsellor	Examination	none	Seminars
'One-stop shop' for students with disabilities	Psychological guidance counsellor	Bachelor's in Psychology (Bac+3) (<i>Licence de psychologie</i>)+examination	Vocational training 2 years (VT)	Seminars
	Reception officer	Same as Administrator in a SCUJO	none	Seminars
	Counsellor	Same as Counsellor in a SCUJO	none	Seminars
	Director			
International relations department	Counsellor	Same as Counsellor in a SCUJO	none	Seminars
	Director			
Continuing education department	Counsellor	Same as Counsellor in a SCUJO	none	Seminars
PhD graduates employment unit	Correspondent	Often 5 years university education and PhD or same as Administrator in a SCUJO	none	Seminars
Tutorial system	Professor/Tutor	5 years university education + PhD	none	None

(1) In this table (Bac+3), (Bac+4), (Bac+5) means 3, 4 or 5 years university education after the baccalauréate

(2) None means that in France no specific complementary training is required to enter the corresponding grade.

Table 4 (Continued). Training and qualifications

Service/System	Occupational role	(1) Minimum Educational Qualification	(2) Initial Training in Guidance	Continuing Education
Medico-pedagogical university clinics	Director	Doctor: 8 years at university	Specialisation in psychiatry	Seminars
	Head of studies	5 years at university+ examination	none	Seminars
	Professor	5 years at university+ examination	none	Seminars
	Librarian	Same as secretary-librarian in the SCUJO	none	Seminars
	Psychologist	5 years university education in psychology	none	Seminars
	Psychiatrist	Doctor: 8 years at university	Specialisation in psychiatry	Seminars
	Social worker/nurse	2 years vocational training	none	Seminars
	Psychologist	5 years university education in psychology	none	Seminars
	Psychiatrist	Doctor: 8 years at university	Specialisation in psychiatry	Seminars
University-secondary school student 'one stop shop'	Professor	5 years at university + examination	none	Seminars
Preventive medicine and health centre				
University and school social welfare				

(1) In this table (Bac+3), (Bac+4), (Bac+5) means 3, 4 or 5 years university education after the baccalauréate

(2) None means that in France no specific complementary training is required to enter the corresponding grade.

Librarian. In some structures and units, there are people whose work is that of a secretary and/or librarian. Usually these members of staff do not have any contact with the people using the facilities. There are about 50 working in the SCUIO, according to the survey, and most of them have junior management positions (*adjoints, agents administratifs*). Some of them have followed a two year course in librarianship at an *Institut Universitaire de Technologie* or a *Section de Techniciens Supérieurs* immediately after the baccalaureate ; others have followed continuing education courses.

As we can see, the staff working in the different units - counsellors in post or about to become so (after taking different examinations - *concours* - or after moving from other university departments) - have a wide variety of backgrounds and guidance skills.

In France, only one specific category of staff, the psychological guidance counsellors (*conseillers d'orientation psychologues*), must have a degree in psychology and follow specialised vocational training once they have been recruited by entrance exam (*concours*) (cf Part 4b.3 on "special cases", below).

Continuing education is therefore necessary; it already exists to a certain extent but must be expanded and improved, by focussing on applied psychology in the fields of advice and guidance, for example.

4b. 2 Continuing education for these staff

The additional skills that these staff acquire from attending courses, conferences and meetings play an important role, as we have seen, in their success. Many courses lasting a day, a week or more are set up especially for them, the list below being just a sample:

- courses set up by the university
- courses set up by the Ministry (courses or seminars around a particular theme)
- courses organised by the local *Rectorat* (Education Office - Management and Administration Training Centres, Education Personnel Training Centres)
- courses set up by the Executive Employment Agency (*APEC*)
- the *Sciences Po formation* (Political Science Foundation Department of Further Education) courses or seminars
- courses run by software houses for users of their programs and computer assisted vocational guidance packages
- courses chosen by the employee and funded by the employer

Staff are completely free to attend a course or not. They must have the permission of their unit director before signing up for a course. Some counsellors take advantage of the training opportunities open to them and follow at least one course per year, while others are more reluctant and do not benefit from the courses. Moreover, certain directors do not always grant permission to attend.

A rapid and incomplete overview of the themes covered by the above courses shows not only that they are very varied but also that they correspond well to the needs and aspirations

of the trainees in the fields of educational and vocational guidance. Below is a list of some of the courses currently available:

- *Management training*: Courses on management, administration and finance. Preparation for the different civil service and public sector examinations (*concours*) mentioned above.
- *How to use new technologies*: Courses on computer skills, Internet, Multimedia, software programs designed for educational and vocational guidance, etc.
- *Psychology*: How to use tests.
- *How to run a meeting, and other leadership skills*.
- *Getting to know the world of work*.
- *The job market and employment*.
- *Education in Europe*.
- *How to prepare graduate employment statistics*.

4b. 3 Special cases

Some of the *psychological guidance counsellors (conseiller d'orientation psychologue - COP)*, few in number (150 out of the several thousand COP work half-time in the universities), are seconded to the SCUIO. They are psychology graduates (Bac+3) [F. Adréani, F. Boyé, 1995]. Once they have passed the entrance examination (*concours*) they spend two years training for their future profession at a specialised institute. In addition to theory and methodology classes about guidance in secondary education, they also have to get work experience. If successful, at the end of the two years [CIDJ, 1997] they become state registered psychological guidance counsellors (*conseillers d'orientation psychologues - COP*) and the majority of them are appointed to secondary schools. They are allowed to attend some of the courses described above; in order to sign up they have to obtain permission from the director of the education, information and guidance department (*Service Académique d'Information et d'Orientation*) of the *Rectorat* (local education office) to which they are attached. With the top year form teachers of the secondary schools, these COP provide a relay between the schools and the SCUIO who propose university information sessions.

As already mentioned above, in the establishments affiliated to the *French students' health foundation* the medical staff, tutors, librarian and director of studies provide counselling and vocational guidance. These staff are qualified in their respective fields (medicine and psychiatry, recruitment examinations for secondary school teachers, or public sector examinations described above) and have followed further training, either in-house or outside.

4c. Detailed profiles

The work of a counsellor has been described in detail above. All the additional training courses listed above are useful, especially those concerning group dynamics (how to run a meeting, leadership skills, team management) and choice strategy. Courses proposed by software houses specialised in computer aided personal plan development are also useful.

The vocational counsellor will also be interested in presentations of the different companies, information about the job market and employment opportunities. Group dynamics can also be useful.

Special training is also available for *counsellors* working with *students with disabilities*. It is part of a post-graduate degree in ergonomics offered by the National Conservatory of Arts and Crafts (*Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers*). Three lecture courses seem particularly appropriate: "Disability and Social Integration", "Analysing Disability", "Major Issues of Integration".

5. Conclusion

In France, the tasks of educational and vocational guidance in higher education are mainly the responsibility of the SCUIO. These units form a large network and can be found in the vast majority of universities. Some universities have other units and structures too, either to deal with certain aspects of the work of the SCUIO (especially job placements and employment) or to provide support for a particular category of student (students with disabilities, foreign students), but it is the SCUIO which always provides the documentary resources.

Because each university is autonomous, the way these structures are organised varies considerably from one establishment to another. It is the *Conseil d'Administration* (University Senate) which decides how to organise their own guidance and employment units. Some activities might come under the aegis of the SCUIO, others might be the responsibility of distinct structures. Each university informs its students of the various facilities that are available to them to try and help solve their problems.

One only has to look at the numbers of people who go to the documentation resource centre, who ask for private interviews or who attend workshops and group sessions to see just how great a need there is for this kind of structure. Since the SCUIO were first set up twenty years ago the numbers have increased constantly. The specialised employment units in many universities provide considerable support for students looking for a job through the workshops they organise to help students write CVs, the meetings they set up with the employers, and all the other activities they run. More and more support units for students with disabilities have been set up in the last few years, but there are still too few such units specialised in the support needed by this particular group. Support for foreign students has also improved in the international relations departments, and the same is true for students returning to school, salaried students, the young unemployed in particular who can find in the continuing education departments, special courses tailored to their needs and also help when looking for the necessary financial aid.

In many universities, teaching staff are showing increasing interest in all these activities, especially the SCUIO. Members of faculty can often be seen working side by side with the SCUIO staff to present their university at education forums, and SCUIO staff sometimes contribute to modules which are included in the degree course to introduce the students to the world of work. Teaching staff are sometimes involved in reception work, too.

As for the staff working in these structures, it should be pointed out that there is not necessarily any correlation between the formal qualifications and position in the unit and the work actually done, and that very often permanent staff and those on temporary contracts do exactly the same job. This relative absence of hierarchy is due to the rapid expansion and growth of these units, combined with employment policy in the French system of higher education. In the face of growing demand and in the absence of sufficient permanent positions, people have been employed on temporary contracts. These people are often highly

qualified, have worked in the system for many years and some of them have now been given permanent positions but sometimes in the lower echelons.

Unlike the case of psychological guidance counsellors, there is no specific training for these staff before they are taken on. Once appointed, however, they choose to follow all kinds of courses and other forms of training in order to acquire the necessary skills or improve them.

If special training for the jobs and tasks described in this report were introduced it would be extremely useful and highly appreciated. But it would also have to be made available for those who are already working in this area.

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