



International evidence on career guidance

Lessons for Greenland

Tristram Hooley



International Centre for Guidance Studies

An international research centre based at the University of Derby

<https://www.derby.ac.uk/icegs>

- [Career Guidance Postgraduate Certificate](#)
- [Career Leadership Certificate of CPD](#)
- [Doctor of Education EdD](#)
- [Research degrees \(PhD and other options\)](#)

For more on me see [Adventures in Career Development](#)



Drawing on international evidence

- International evidence is very useful for telling us what can be done.
- We can use this to inform the development of strategy in Greenland.
- But, what works well in Germany or Brazil, won't necessarily transfer to Greenland.
- In this presentation I'm going to mainly be drawing on my work in Europe.
- But, we will build on this through a project looking at career guidance in other Arctic nations. This might offer some further insights from more comparable countries.



Overview

International
examples

Evidence,
efficacy and
ROI

Quality

Questions
and
implications

OECD definition

Career guidance refers to services and activities intended to assist individuals, of any age and at any point throughout their lives, to make educational, training and occupational choices and to manage their careers...

The activities may take place on an individual or group basis, and may be face-to-face **or at a distance (including help lines and web-based services)**.
(OECD, 2004)

Distance guidance can...

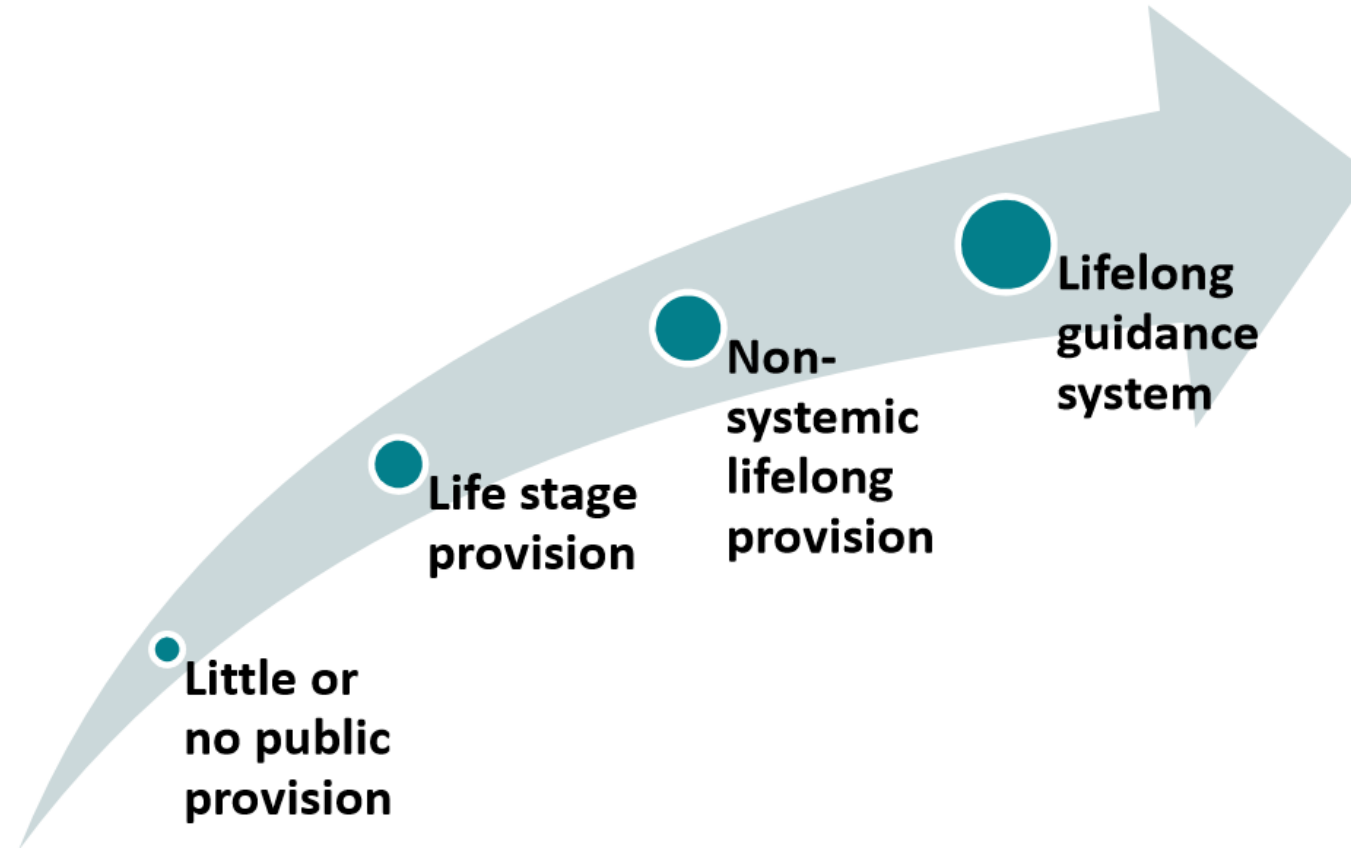
- Transcend geography;
- provide immediacy of access;
- provide confidential and discrete services; *f*
- provide flexible provision with a greater capacity to manage and respond to peaks in demand
- provide ‘specialist’ information or services; and
- potentially provide cost savings by making use of self-access, automation and economies of scale.

Investing in career guidance

“Effective career guidance helps individuals to reach their potential, economies to become more efficient and societies to become fairer... It acts as a lubricant for developing and nurturing human talent to power innovation, creativity and competitiveness... As the working world becomes increasingly complex, career guidance is becoming ever more important to individuals, employers and to society.”



Public policy approaches to career guidance



What is lifelong guidance?

Education

- Schools
- TVET
- Higher education
- Adult education

Employment

- Public employment service
- Services for working people
- Outplacement
- Private sector services
- And others...

Social welfare

- Services for disadvantaged groups
- Justice and rehabilitation services
- Service for migrants

Key challenges

Balancing
access and
quality

Co-ordination
and co-
operation

Career guidance
lives in between
policy areas

Determining
outcomes

Enhancing the
evidence base

Gatsby and good career guidance in schools



Enablers

- Framework enshrined in policy and quality systems
- Long-term investment in resources and the support infrastructure
- Provision of high quality LMI
- Development of school leaders
- Co-ordination and brokerage of relationships with employers

Six features of effective adult guidance services

Vision and
leadership

Collaboration and
cooperation

Professionals

National and
local delivery

Clearly
understood and
accessible
services

Labour market
data

Decisions about mode

- There are lots of different ways that you can organise career guidance at a distance.
- Many of these will be shaped by the technology that you expect your clients to use.



Framework for online careers provision

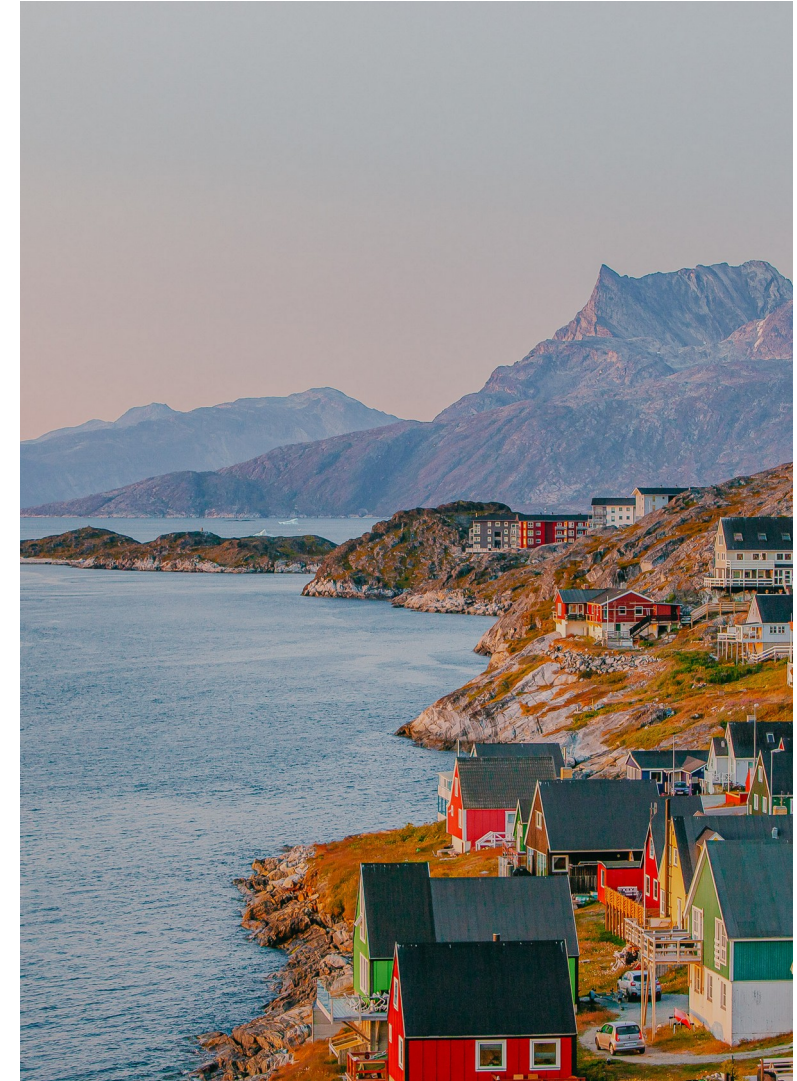
1. Provision of information
2. Providing access to automated interactions
3. Offering communication
 - A. One-to-one
 - B. One-to-many/many-to-one
 - C. Many-to-many

Key decisions when communicating

- Synchronous or asynchronous?
- Text-based or multi-media?
- Video or audio?
- One-to-one or one-to-many?
- Open or closed online spaces?
- How long?
- How often?

Issues for Greenland

- Small state
- Relationship with the Danish system
- Issues of geography, distance and rurality
- Substantial informal economy
- Limited educational and occupational pathways
- What else?



ICCDPP symposium (22nd-24th November 2026 – New Zealand)

- Navigating new horizons
 - Productivity and the inclusive economy
 - Enhancing skills and developing technical and vocational education
 - Ensuring disadvantaged groups can thrive.

Contact John McCarthy, Director, ICCDPP, (jmc@iccdpp.org) cc. to Craig Dyason (cdyason@ashs.school.nz) to discuss attending.



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comparators

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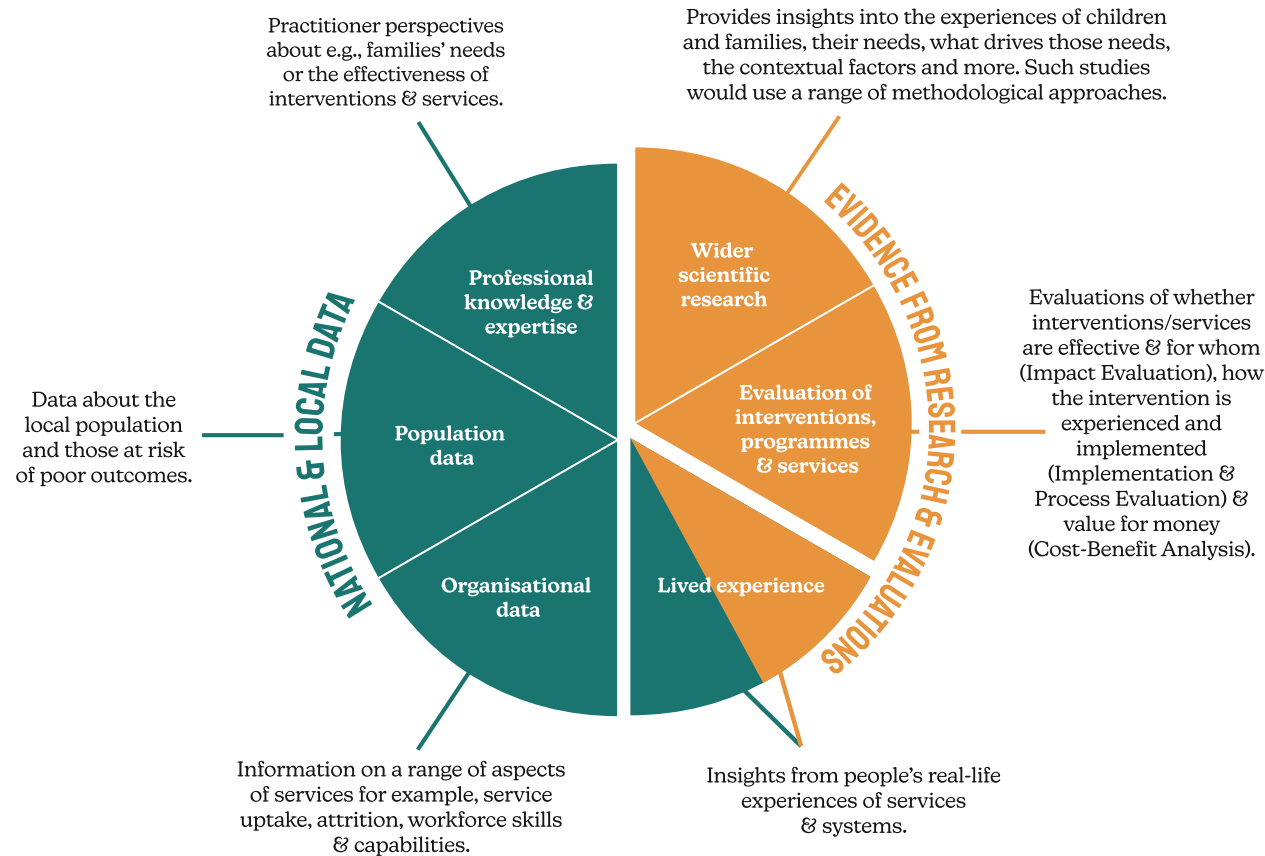
Questions
and
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Evidence

- What counts as evidence?
- How do you make use of evidence?
- Where does it come from?
- How do you use it?
- What evidence do you wish you had?



What counts as evidence (Foundations Evidence Pie)



Functions of evidence

- To help to define the problem that you are trying to solve?
- To stimulate thinking about what to do?
- To clarify what has worked for others (and what hasn't)?
- To allow you to benchmark the outcome that you are getting.
- To support the value/impact that you are claiming for your intervention.
- To help you to get funding or approval from policymakers/management.

About the evidence base

- There is a considerable evidence base on career guidance.
- It demonstrates repeatedly that career guidance has a range of individual and social impacts.
- The evidence is multi-disciplinary, international and based on a wide range of research methods.
- There are also a number of literature reviews, systematic literature reviews and statistical meta-analyses.
- **In summary we know that it works (for some things) and we know quite a lot about how it works.**



What outcomes do you believe that career guidance is associated with?



Impacts for individuals

- Improves engagement with education
- Enhances performance in the education system (increases motivation)
- Support transitions between education and work (and other life stages)
- Develops networks and social capital.
- Improves performance and wages
- Contributes to lifelong wellbeing and success.



Observed impacts from career guidance (examples)

- 30-40% of a standard deviation increase in behavioural and attitudinal measurements
- 10% decline in NEET rates for post-16 leavers at 8 Gatsby Benchmark schools
- 10% increase in the number of disadvantaged students who enroll in a higher education degree
- 2.0-2.7x higher odds of being in education or employment aged 19-24 for individuals reporting two or more school-mediated employer engagement activities
- 4.5% higher average income for those in full-time employment aged 19-24 for each employer encounter
- 8% higher average earnings for those in full-time employment aged 26 for those who had ten careers talks

Economic benefits of career guidance

Individual level

Increased time in employment

Increased wages

Increased network resources (social capital)

Firm level

Increased productivity

Reduced turn over

State-level

Increased labour market participation

Decreased unemployment

Increased tax revenue

Macro-economic benefits

Deficit reduction

Economic growth



Public policy goals



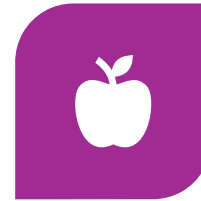
ECONOMIC



EDUCATIONAL



SOCIAL



HEALTH AND
WELL-BEING



ENVIRONMENTAL
SUSTAINABILITY



PEACE AND
JUSTICE

<https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780190069704.013.9>

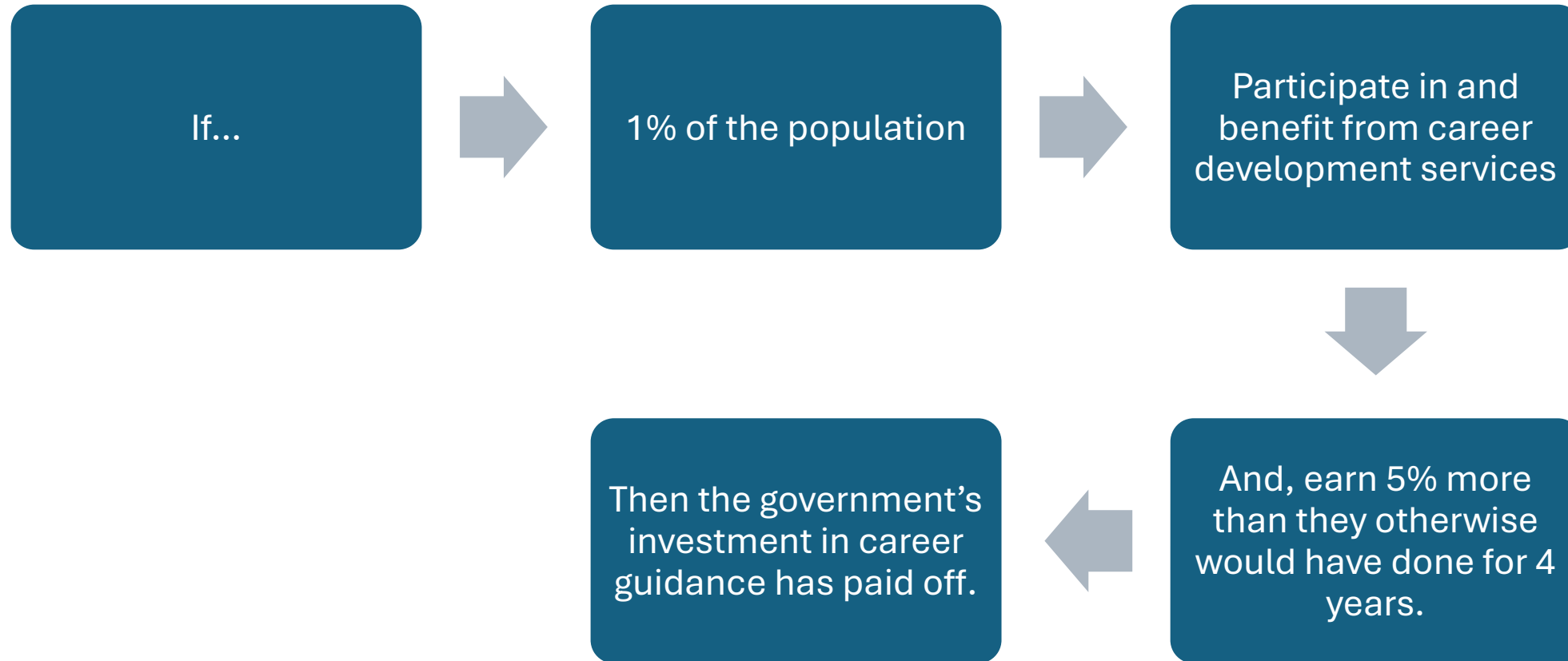
Investing in careers

- We wanted to investigate the costs and benefits of career guidance.
- How would we change things if we increased spending on careers.
- What might England see in terms of benefits from this additional investment?



Breakeven point

Ideally career guidance policy should ensure that everyone receives guidance at school and everyone has access as an adult. So only 1 in a 100 has to actually see a benefit for it to pay for itself



The evidence would suggest that 5% is lower than the typical uplift gained



<https://doi.org/10.1080/03069885.2023.2186372>

Emergent evidence on ROI

Chris Percy and I have published a systematic review of ROI calculations on career guidance. This is an emergent field and there is much work still to be done.

Almost all estimates report that career guidance had a positive ROI.

- For **schools**, the majority of studies estimated a ROI of between £1.20 and £4.10 for every pound spent. **The average was £2.50.**
- For career guidance programmes with **unemployed adults** the majority of studies found between £1.90 and £6.70.
The average was £3.20.

More than money...

Autonomy

Wellbeing

Meaning

Decent work

Transition to net 0

Active citizenship

Greater equality

Increased social mobility

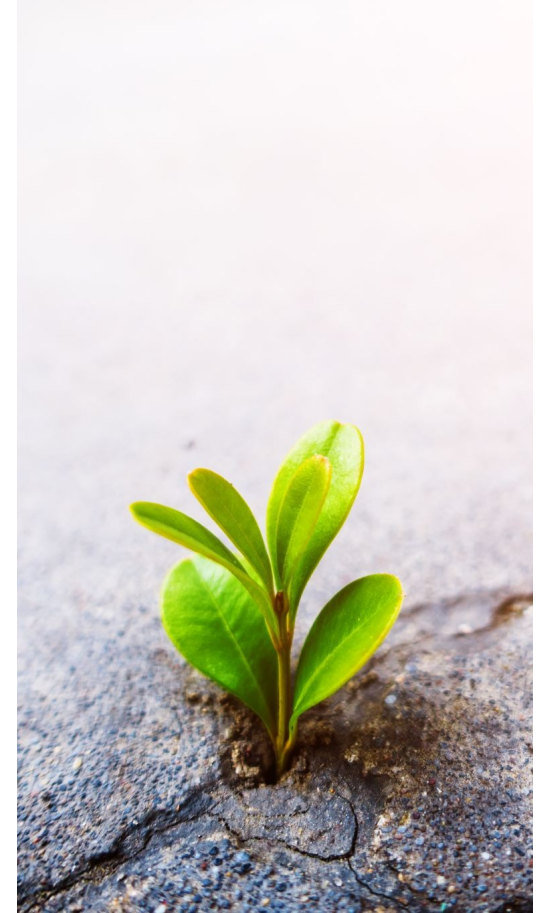
Educated populace

And so on...



What if we didn't just focus on fiscal returns?

- Shouldn't the government be judged on its ability to deliver decent work, and education?
- Shouldn't people expect self-determination and progression throughout life?
- Shouldn't government recognise that our lives move through many stages and government departments?
- Could a promise to deliver **better careers for all** be an election winning slogan?



Overview

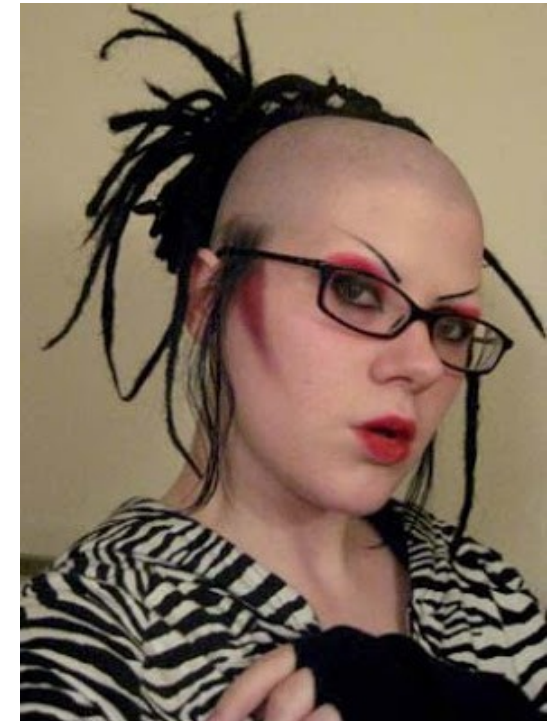
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Let's start with something simpler than career guidance...



... what makes for a quality haircut??

Possible answers

A quality haircut...

- conforms to social norms.
- is created by a really good hairstylist
- happens when you go to a renowned salon
- happens when the stylist is careful and pays attention
- can only be judged by what it looks like
- is what I think it is
- is what other people think it is

‘Quality’ is tricky...

...it can mean a range of different
things

Six domains of quality in career guidance



Policy



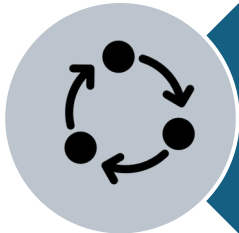
People



Organisation



Output or
outcomes



Process



Users

Ensuring and assuring quality

Change driver

Degree of provider
professional
autonomy and trust

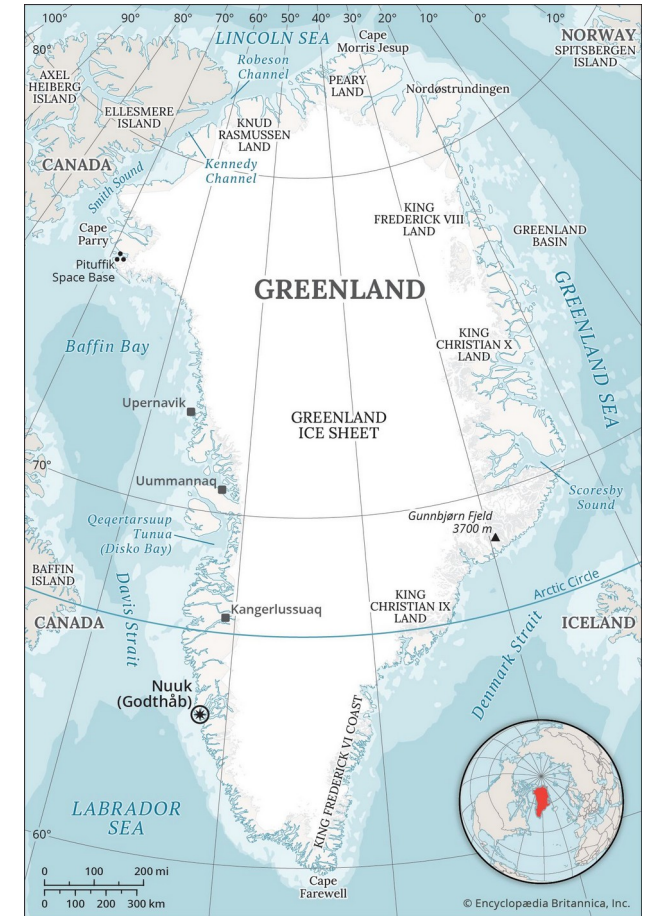
		Change driver	
		Local	Systemic
Degree of provider professional autonomy and trust	Low	Advisory	Regulatory
	High	Organic	Competitive

Key issues in international quality approaches

- Countries don't (and shouldn't) quality assure everything in every way. But they should have some approach to quality.
- Many countries struggle with how far to decentralise responsibility for quality.
- Many countries struggle with how far to create a unique quality system for career guidance as opposed to embedding it in existing system.
- Quality systems tend to evolve over time rather than to be designed.
- The implementation of quality systems is challenging and needs at least as much attention as the design of the system.

Key questions for Greenland

- What kind of quality approach would be useful?
- How will you implement it?
- How will you get guidance counsellors and other actors onside and make use of their expertise?
- How will you know if it has worked or failed?



Reflections

- *What ideas from the international evidence would you like to see come to Greenland?*
- *What should quality in career guidance mean in a Greenlandic context?*
- *What should be common nationally, and what needs to remain adaptable to different local contexts?*
- *What one thing would you like to see included in the new strategy?*

Overview

International
comparators

Evidence,
efficacy and
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Measuring
outcomes

Quality

Questions
and
implications

Any questions



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THANK YOU