



Glossary of Terms

The terminology used by the career development community to describe their work is varied and diverse, both within Canada and across other jurisdictions. In addition, there is variation in the language used to describe services and systems in Canada that fall under the broad umbrella of career/employment/labour market services. This document provides consistent definitions for the terms that are applied across all of the research papers for the RCP initiative. We draw on definitions provided by prominent bodies in Canada and internationally with additional specificity/adaptations to reflect the scope and goals of our initiative.

I Definitions

- **Career counsellors** are increasingly recognized, as noted by CERIC¹, as having a specific scope of practice that includes specialized counselling competencies. We use “career counsellors” only in cases where the title is attached to specific training requirements and scope of practice, most notably in Quebec.
- **Career development** is defined by CERIC as “the lifelong process of managing learning, work, leisure and transitions in order to move toward a personally determined and evolving preferred future.” This is the definition we have adopted throughout the papers.
- **Career development practitioners** (CDPs) or career practitioners are defined by CERIC as those who facilitate the ability of clients to take charge of their own career development by assisting them in the process of identifying and accessing resources, planning and managing for their career-life development. Following CERIC’s guidance, we use this as an umbrella term to refer to any direct service provider in the career development field including career educators, career information specialists, employment support workers and job developers. When using the term “career practitioners” we also seek to be specific in outlining the service contexts we are discussing, for example, if we are discussing career practitioners working in the employment services system, we specify this scope rather than using just the general “career practitioners” terminology.
- **Career guidance** is defined by CERIC as “services that help people successfully manage their career development. It is an inclusive term that has been used to describe a range of interventions including career education and counselling, that help people to move from a general understanding of life and work to a specific understanding of the realistic life, learning and work options that are open to them. Career guidance is often thought to incorporate career information, career education and career counselling.” We use the term as CERIC defines it to encompass all services that support people with their career development including services that are variously referred to as career information, career advising, career education, career counselling, and career exploration and planning.
- **Career guidance services** is a broad umbrella term that encompasses career guidance offered through employment services as well as through other service delivery channels such as K-12 or post-secondary education.

¹ [CERIC](#) is a charitable organization dedicated to advancing career development in Canada through education and research in career counselling and career development.

- **Career management** is defined by CERIC as “a lifelong, self-monitored process of career planning that focuses on choosing and setting personal goals and formulating strategies for achieving them.” Associated with this are career management skills, understood as “a range of competences which provide structured ways for individuals (and groups) to gather, analyse, synthesise and organise self, educational and occupational information, as well as the skills to make and implement decisions and transitions.”²
- **Career pathing** is an approach to career development that supports employees to map multiple career paths, review their skills and competencies, and plan for their career development.
- **Career pathways** refers to a general concept to describe the learning and employment journey of individuals over their lifetime. Our use of the term “career pathways” is distinct from the Career Pathways program model that focuses on stackable post-secondary credentials and has been widely adopted and tested in the US.
- **Employment services** refers to the publicly-funded services offered in Canadian provinces and territories that are funded primarily through the Labour Market Transfer Agreements (LMTAs), such as Employment Ontario. Employment services tend to specialize around the transition(s) from unemployment into employment. Career guidance may be offered through these employment services systems; however employment services can also encompass other types of services. (Note that **Career services** and **employment services** are sometimes discussed as one set of services (e.g. “career and employment services” or “career/employment services”).
- **Client or end user** are both terms we use to describe recipients of employment and career guidance services.
- **Labour Market Information:** Used to monitor and forecast economic trends, such as occupation projections, occupational profiles and characteristics, wage characteristics, demographics or recruitment methods. The goal of LMI is to offer decision makers, from business owners to individual workers to government planners, the ability to analyze or access analysis to increase their understanding of the conditions they face.
- **Micro-credential** refers to a certification of assessed learning associated with a specific and relevant skill or competency. Micro-credentials enable rapid retraining and augment traditional education through pathways into regular postsecondary programming.
- **Wraparound supports** refers to supports and services individuals need before, during or after participating in employment or career guidance services that help them participate and benefit to their full potential.

² [ELGPN](#) is a European organization that assists member-countries and the European Commission to cooperate on lifelong guidance in both the education and the employment sectors.