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Four-level Model of Qualifications for the Practitioners involved in the Primary Prevention of Risk Behaviour in the School System



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Introduction

- The aim is to present a proposal of a new **model of qualifications in primary prevention** and the related training system.
- It responds to the **need for a higher number of trained primary prevention practitioners** and the opportunities for their **professional growth**.
- In addition to highlighting the **coordination activities**, attention is also paid to **reinforcing the skills necessary for the actual work** with the target groups.
- The model was created on the basis of **analysing** the content of the **documents** dedicated to prevention training (laws, decrees, training programme syllabi and guidelines, their creation, etc.) and on the basis of four **focus and working groups** consisting of the foremost experts in primary prevention in the Czech Republic.



Prevention professionals in the Czech Republic

- Prevention of risk behaviours in the Czech Republic is legislatively directly associated with the following **positions**:
 - counselling and prevention worker, school prevention worker, school psychologist, special education professional, teacher, leisure education professional, educator, and head-teacher.
- The basic job description of these positions includes activities associated with the primary prevention of risk behaviour such as the preparation of prevention programmes, prevention activities aimed at general personality development, drug prevention coordination in the facility in question, prevention of behavioural disorders, etc.
- However, there is **not a unified training system** for the primary prevention of risk behaviour in place for these positions.
- Knowledge in this area is provided to education staff within the **framework of continued lifelong education**, which is coordinated by the school prevention worker.



Who comes to school?

- The design of the model is **build** on the need for a **coordinated training system** for not only the education staff but also of other professions present in schools and education facilities as part of prevention activities, including, in addition to those mentioned in the previous slide, e.g.:
- addiction specialists,
- social workers,
- police officers,
- health care professionals as well as voluntary workers...
- These professions possess various professional competences, which, however, need to be **continuously developed and cultivated**.



The role of prevention professionals

- **Effective prevention programmes include** those which are based on
 - long-term and continued work with children,
 - use smaller groups,
 - actively involve the target group,
 - **show a high degree of prevention provider preparedness,**
 - respond to the current needs of the target group, etc.
- However, these **requirements fail to be fulfilled in practice** despite the availability of many instruments.
- A **major part** in this is played by the **lack of professionals with adequate training** which would reflect the current demanding requirements of school-based prevention.



Who are the responsible ones for prevention at Czech schools?

- The **school prevention worker (coordinator/deliverer)** is present at each school in the Czech Republic. His/her role is mainly to coordinate prevention in his/her school.
- The school prevention worker is often **the only professional at the school** with an idea about what primary prevention efforts should look like in the target group.
- The experience of educators in the area of primary prevention indicates that **teachers are often unable to work with the target groups** in a manner suggesting their ability to lead an efficient primary prevention programme.
- Most school prevention workers do not even have any space in their **workload** dedicated to direct prevention activities with the target group; this work is usually not even included in their job description.



The 4-level Qualification Model

- The proposed model is centered on the four hierarchically arranged levels of a prevention practitioner:
 - the first – “**prevention basics**”
 - the second – “**intermediate**”
 - the third – “**advanced**”, and
 - the fourth – “**expert**” levels.
- In the qualification standards the individual levels are arranged according to the degree of complexity of the prevention activities performed, and a higher level always requires the prior fulfillment of the lower level.



Basic level (primary prevention basics)

- This qualification level is the requirement for **delivering** primary prevention **at the lowest complexity level**.
- It governs the **minimum requirements** applicable to all individuals pursuing prevention activities with groups of children and young people in the school settings.
- In terms of the type of activities, this may include, for example, *educational and awareness-building activities, work with the community circle and atmosphere in the class, and other common means of universal primary prevention*.
- **Not suitable for selective and indicated prevention programmes or universal prevention programmes requiring a higher degree of competences**



Basic level (primary prevention basics)

Examples of typical positions:

- **Teachers** who include prevention activities in the subject they teach (e.g. education concerning ethnic minorities during normal Geography classes, etc.);
- **A rescue system professional** who gives a prevention awareness-building lecture at school or organizes a primary prevention programme for a class at his/her workplace;
- **A voluntary worker** conducting a prevention programme of an NGO at a school under the supervision of an on-staff school prevention worker.



Basic level (primary prevention basics)

Qualification and evaluation standard

- The practitioner must have completed **higher secondary education**.
- The practitioner must have completed a basic primary prevention course of 40 hours involving at least 8 hours of self-experience.
- The practitioner must have **at least started to pursue higher/further education** (college, university, other specialisation courses) **in a field working with people**.



Intermediate level (intermediate prevention practitioner)

- The main scope of this level is to work with the target group of pupils and students.
- It concerns **more complex prevention efforts** such as universal primary prevention or some selective prevention programmes. In terms of the type of activities, it includes managing programmes with an interactive component (e.g. the training and acquisition of life skills²).
- The important factors include the *use of feedback, the ability to motivate the group to undertake more complex interactions, and specific knowledge of the individual types of risk behaviour.*
- The practitioner at this level **is able to manage crises and handle adverse phenomena** which the group or individual may display within the framework of the prevention activities.



Intermediate level (intermediate prevention practitioner)

Examples of typical positions:

- A trained primary prevention practitioner who is a **teacher implementing an interactive universal primary prevention programme** based on developing life skills;
- A trainer invited from an **external NGO** implementing a long-term and comprehensive universal primary prevention programme at the school;
- A **staff member of a low-threshold facility** for children or young people or an **educational facility** for providing institutional and **court-ordered compulsory education** who carries out a selective primary prevention programme with a specific focus on drug use and other addictions.



Intermediate level (intermediate prevention practitioner)

Qualification and evaluation standard

- The practitioner must hold a **bachelor's degree** in a field focused on working with people (see above).
- The 2nd level practitioner must also meet all the requirements of the **1st qualification level**.
- The practitioner must have completed an intermediate primary prevention **course** of 40 hours involving at least 16 hours of self-experience.³



Advanced level (advanced prevention practitioner)

The advanced prevention practitioner can perform two lines of work.

- Firstly, it is the **organisational line**, where it includes the creation of basic preventive programmes: guidance provided to other staff participating in the prevention efforts within the institution; communication and cooperation with other primary prevention stakeholders and relevant institutions in the region, etc.
- Secondly, it is the **direct work with the target groups**. An advanced prevention practitioner is able to work with all types of primary prevention programmes, including the indicated prevention.
- The programmes concerned are **more complex** and also apply **methods** close to the therapeutic ones (typically, simple cognitive-behavioural techniques).



Advanced level (advanced prevention practitioner)

Examples of typical positions:

- **A special educator or psychologist** carrying out an indicated primary prevention programme based on the screening of the risk personality factors;
- **A teacher or special educator in the role of the school prevention worker** carrying out a basic preventive programme in a school, in an educational facility for providing institutional and court-ordered compulsory education or in an educational care centre;
- An **NGO manager/prevention specialist** responsible for the form and quality of primary prevention activities under a certified programme.



Advanced level (advanced prevention practitioner)

Qualification and evaluation standard

- The practitioner must hold a **master's degree** in a field focused on working with people.
- The advanced prevention practitioner must also meet all the requirements of the **basic and intermediate qualification levels**.
- The practitioner must have completed an advanced primary prevention course of 120 hours involving at least 40 hours of self-experience.⁸
- **At least 2 years of experience** with primary prevention activities undertaken at the 1st and 2nd levels are required.



Expert level (primary prevention expert)

- Mainly performs *coordination, guidance, counselling, training and supervisory tasks*. Their jurisdiction includes the provision of **guidance** to other prevention practitioners with a lower qualification level.
- They **coordinate** the primary prevention system and the **cooperation** among the stakeholders within larger units such as municipalities, areas or regions.
- They organize the system of prevention practitioner **training** and act as trainers or sponsors in the system.
- They are able to perform a **crisis intervention** or **other more complex interventions** which schools cannot handle on their own.
- They **deliver expert papers** at **training** events, **conferences** or publish them in professional journals, and they focus on developing the primary prevention of risk behaviour.



Expert level (primary prevention expert)

Examples of typical positions:

- A regional prevention worker in **pedagogical-psychological counselling centres**;
- A prevention worker or prevention coordinator in **larger municipal, regional or other offices**;
- A **trainer** in a course concerning the primary prevention of risk behaviour or in a specialisation course within the system for the further training of education professionals;
- A primary prevention trainer with long-standing self-experience training to hold intervisory or **supervisory** meetings for his/her colleagues.



Expert level (primary prevention expert)

Qualification and evaluation standard

- The practitioner must hold a **master's degree** in a field associated with the primary prevention of risk behaviour (e.g. education, special education, psychology, addictology, etc.).
- The expert-level practitioner must also meet all the requirements of the **1st, 2nd and 3rd qualification levels**.
- The practitioner must have completed advanced primary prevention course of 96 hours involving at least 32 hours of self-experience.
- **A total of 5 years of experience** in primary prevention in a school setting or in organising primary prevention activities involving the target groups of children or young people or in training adults in the area of the primary prevention of risk behaviour is required.



Qualification exams and transitional period for recognising qualifications

- The fulfillment of the **qualification requirements** for the individual primary prevention practitioners will be formally evaluated through qualification exams with a different degree of complexity for each level.
- A more detailed description of the qualification exams is described in the Draft of the **Examination Manual for the Verification of Knowledge, Skills and Competences**, which has been prepared as a follow-up document.
- Fulfillment of the National Qualifications Framework
- Procedure of the Creation of Training Modules for Partial Qualifications



Qualification exams and transitional period for recognising qualifications

Kvalifikacijski standardi pro 1. zakaoniku o zaštiti djece (primarne prevencije) minimumi

KNOWLEDGE	Possible verification method	SKILLS	Possible verification method	COMPETENCES	Possible verification method
Differentiates between efficient and inefficient types of primary prevention interventions.	ORLEX TEST ONLINE	Uses an awareness-building and educational form of risk behaviour primary prevention.	DEMO	Can prepare a universal primary prevention programme in the area they specialise in, according to recommended procedures.	PAPER PROJ
Is familiar with the fundamentals of developmental psychology and the functioning of the human mind during childhood and adolescence.	ORLEX TEST ONLINE	Can interactively work a medium-sized group of children or young people.	DEMO MODEL	Can lead a universal primary prevention programme and adjust it to the relevant needs and target group.	MODEL EXPEVAL
Is familiar with the main forms and signs of risk behaviours in children and young people.	ORLEX TEST ONLINE	Notices events in a group and striking aspects of the behaviour of individuals.	DEMO EXPEVAL	Can recognise a vulnerable individual in the group they work with and refer the individual for follow-up care.	MODEL PRACTICE
Possesses partial professional knowledge in the specific area of risk behaviour prevention they specialise in.	ORLEX TEST ONLINE	Develops and properly uses communication and presentation skills.	DEMO EXPEVAL	Can transmit information about the risk behaviour they focus on in an acceptable and balanced manner.	DEMO EXPEVAL
Knows the basic ethical, legal and professional standards for working with children and young people.	ORLEX TEST ONLINE	Can recognise and professionally respond to behaviour exceeding the social standards.	MODEL	Respects the boundaries of a professional relationship, informs the competent persons about any non-standard situations and does not exceed his/her competences.	MODEL EXPEVAL

Key: AUD = examiner's audition of the candidate's prevention work, CASE = case study, DEMO = practical demonstration, EXPEVAL = expert evaluation by the ex-



Qualification exams and transitional period for recognising qualifications

KNOWLEDGE	Verification method	SKILLS	Verification method	COMPETENCES	Verification method
Knows the effective evidence-based types of preventive interventions and understands their principle. Knows the basics of secondary and tertiary prevention and the network of institutions providing such services.	ORLEX TEST	Applies primary prevention principles based on life skills development and on working with normative beliefs.	DEMO	Is able to prepare a programme of universal or selective primary prevention with clearly present functional features, according to recommended procedures.	PAPER PROJ
Understands the functioning of the mind and the differences in the perception, experiencing, acting, and behaviour during childhood and adolescence, including group processes.	ORLEX TEST	Uses psychological and pedagogical principles to lead a small and medium-sized group.	DEMO EXPEVAL	Can lead a universal or selective prevention programme and adjust it to the current conditions and needs of the target group.	DEMO EXPEVAL AUD
Distinguishes between the specific forms and signs of risk behaviour of individuals and groups and knows their typical needs.	ORLEX TEST	Can recognise the existing norms and rules of a group or community, is sensitive to differences in the life style and to the cultural or other unique needs of a group or community. Addresses the occurrence of risk behaviours or other emergencies according to the recommended emergency plans and procedures.	MODEL EXPEVAL	Can establish an equal working relationship with the target group and create and maintain an atmosphere of trust and safety, can recognise potentially risky situations in the specific group and respond to them adequately.	VIDEO AUD CASE
Has mastered and extends a pool of group work techniques, including recommendations and	ORLEX PAPER	Uses focused observation and active empathetic listening to identify the current situation in the group.	DEMO EXPEVAL	Has mastered the handling of emergencies and can recognise what they	PRACTICE CASE EXPEVAL



Qualification exams and transitional period for recognising qualifications

KNOWLEDGE	Verification method	SKILLS	Verification method	COMPETENCES	Verification method
Knows the current evidence-based trends, models and strategies in primary prevention, is familiar with the current supply of programmes and methodologies.	ORLEX TEST PAPER	Can efficiently keep documents on the activities and events concerning the primary prevention of risk behaviour in the facility in question.	PRACTICE	Is competent to create and regularly update a basic prevention programme for a specific school or facility where he/she works.	PAPER
Knows the legislation concerning the primary prevention of risk behaviour and the related areas (e.g. the social and legal protection of children).	ORLEX TEST ONTEST	Knows how to create and keep an updated network of active contacts with institutions operating in the primary prevention of risk behaviour in their area.	PRACTICE PAPER	Can implement and maintain an efficient system of the primary prevention of risk behaviour in their school or organisation.	PRACTICE EXPEVAL
Knows very well all the risk behaviours described in the available literature as well as the methods for their detection.	ORLEX TEST	Has mastered the basic methods of evaluating and assessing the situation regarding risk behaviour in the facility in question.	PAPER EXPEVAL	Regularly uses evaluation and monitoring instruments to assess the initial situation regarding risk behaviour. Can identify the needs of the target groups and implement adequate interventions.	PAPER PRACTICE EXPEVAL
Knows the fundamentals of counselling and school psychology, special education and psychopathology.	ORLEX TEST PAPER	Can effectively communicate with adults and motivate them to cooperate, in particular when working with the parents, legal guardians and colleagues (as well as	DEMO MODEL EXPEVAL	Can provide his/her colleagues professional advice, can professionally fulfil his/her advisory role.	CASE AHD PRACTICE



Forms and Contents of Exams

	Theoretical part – knowledge	Practical part – skills	Additional requirements for the candidate
1. Basic level (The exam is conducted by a single expert practitioner)	50% written test, oral examination	50% practical demonstration, model situations	secondary education certificate
2. Intermediate level (The exam is conducted by a single expert practitioner)	30% written test, oral examination	70% practical demonstration, model situations	university (bachelor's) degree, level 1 certificate, min. 24 hours of self-experience
3. Advanced level (examining board of two authorised persons – experts)	50% oral examination	50% practical demonstration, paper, video recording	university (master's) degree, level 2 certificate, proof of 2 years of experience, min. 64 hours of self-experience
4. Expert level (examining board of two authorised persons – experts)	50% oral examination	50% practical demonstration, video recording	university (master's) degree, level 3 certificate, proof of 5 years of experience, min. 96 hours of self-experience



The Extent of Training

Qualification level	Number of hours recommended for individual training components							
	Theoretical knowledge		Practical skills		Self-experience		Level total	Aggregate
1. Basic level	16	40%	16	40%	8	20%	40	40
2. Intermediate level	8	20%	16	40%	16	40%	40	80
3. Advanced level	40	33%	40	33%	40	33%	120	200
4. Expert level	32	33%	32	33%	32	33%	96	296
Column aggregate:	96	—	104	—	96	—	—	—



To conclude

- Lack of knowledge, ignorance and inexperience are dangerous both for school children and young people and for prevention practitioners. We should make a combined effort to create conditions which will reduce the occurrence of such adverse phenomena in primary prevention practice in the school system to the minimum.



Thank you for your attention

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