

Chapter 8

Roadmap to Ensure the Consistency of WIL with the Projects of Companies and Learners: A Legitimate and Sustainable Training Offer

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ABSTRACT

The challenge for Higher Education providers is first to guarantee flow and satisfaction of stakeholders; thus funding. Therefore, any training device has to ensure consistency with learners' projects; i.e. adaptability to individuals and companies if one considers lifelong learning. Second, training should satisfy a set of quality criteria and be cost efficient. The key factors are the joint design of the training (required skills), adapted monitoring of the realization (control, follow-up, corrective action, support) with continuous adjustment and joint assessment. But, the keystone is the training of the parties (among whom the tutors and mentors) to develop innovative pedagogical devices. The expected roadmap is presented to create sustainable training projects that meaningfully integrate past and current work experience to develop learning abilities. These prospects put questions to pedagogical teams and executive boards about the lifetime of specific trainings and potential transferability of the core business (skilled workforce, leading model).

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INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to clarify the key levers that allow consistency and reliability of training offers in Higher Education (HE) whose core is: repository of skill and curriculum (Bosman et al., 2000), decided operational pedagogical means (Norton et al., 2010), pedagogical teams and HE organization for support with resource prioritization. The challenge for HE is to be a major actor of society that respects a high level of excellence to give the citizens the chance to face the complexity (Morin, 2006) of a world of accelerating changes. Depending on the level of evolution of the HE organization, the training offer is more or less well developed and implemented considering standards but also specificities of the context. Nevertheless, it should always be a reply to the parties' needs: society represented by State, learners and employees coming back to the University; the companies that hire them, participate in growth and finance trainings; the Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in charge of learning with trainers, teacher-researchers and skilled workers. Based on several experiments of Work Integrated Learning (WIL) by the authors at the University of Lille, and especially the two-decade history of Continuous Vocational Training (CVT) and apprenticeship leading to Chartered Engineers presented by Nuninger and Châtelet (2014), a common project development process leading to an efficient training offer can be brought out. The integration of the company's needs at the very beginning of the training design will drive a sequence of decisions that comply with the EQFM Excellence model (2013). The expected level of achievement depends on the specific history of the HEI and the strategic decision of the Head Committee. As the training can be sub-contracted to Training Centers (TCs), it is important to supervise the entire decision chain to guarantee the training requirements specification and to drive the change in organization with respect to values and factual approach based on quality criteria. In the

scope of Lifelong Learning (LLL), this bias puts the focus on the benefit to learn for and through the workplace however, it seems an additional difficulty at first view. WIL might be not deemed necessary due to complexity for parties (Yang et al., 2015) as putting learners into real situations to experiment in a controlled context enhances learning ability. Today, HEIs are confronted with a new reality (Parmentier, 2006): bigger groups of learners, a greater heterogeneity of their prior experience and diminution of dedicated time and financial resources while expectations increase with respect to transverse skills, globalization and competition. It is therefore obvious that guidance for quality improvement should be based on a robust development process explained to higher level head committees and parties, with identified area of autonomy in order to guide towards a thoughtful and purposeful innovation process for training (consistency, flexible, evolutionary, collective and collaborative, efficient, strategic, supported and guided...); the challenges being first and foremost society ones.

In the following, the background focuses on HEIs, WIL and EQFM Excellence model, then the chapter is divided into three main parts: first, the motivation of parties in the training leading to co-creation and mutual enrichment; second, the roadmap for training offer development in the scope of HEIs targeting consistency and everlasting solutions in the context; and third, the main key levers are pointed out for training realization urging commitment, collective intelligence and changes at all levels to achieve innovative pedagogical solutions on the ground. Before the conclusion, as the HEIs like companies are looking for human potential, a focus is made on the lasting quality of training and the consequences of a strategic policy on the skilled workforce when the offer is initiated, developed, improved or stopped. It should be a skillful leading alchemy to limit deviation without global imbalances, overcome risks and events, preparing the change for new perspectives.

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