

# NVAO-ECA Seminar “Employability and Quality Assurance”

9 December 2014



# Programme Morning

- Welcome addresses by Lucien Bollaert, Board Member NVAO and Rafael van Grieken, Director of ANECA (Spain) and Chair of ECA
- 11.15 Employability and quality assurance: the view of the European Commission by Margaret Waters, Deputy Head of Unit Higher Education and Erasmus, European Commission
- 11.40 Presentation of CHEPS study by Don Westerheijden and Renze Kolster, CHEPS, University of Twente
- 12.25 Introduction to the themes of the afternoon parallel sessions by Lucien Bollaert
- 12.30 – 13.30 Lunch

# Programme Afternoon

- 13.30 Parallel sessions
  1. Professional competences
  2. Involvement of professional field
  3. The position of employability in external quality assurance
- 14.30 Break
- 14.50 Panel discussion
- 15.45 Conclusions
- 16.00 Reception



# Employability and Quality Assurance

Margie Waters, European Commission

NVAO – ECA Seminar

The Hague, 9 December 2014

# Challenges



- Economic crisis
- Expanding student population
- Need to raise quality of learning and teaching
- Aligning learning and teaching to societal and labour market needs
- Skills gaps and mismatches: 2 million job vacancies in Europe, but 1/3 of employers struggle to find staff
- New technologies, digital and online learning, MOOCs
- Flexible learning pathways
- Need for effective HE systems—value for money

# Europe2020



For a "smart, sustainable and inclusive" growth, Europe needs more well-educated graduates with the right types of knowledge and skills.

5 targets for the EU by 2020:

- 1. Employment - 75% of 20-64 year-olds to be employed
- 2. R&D - 3% of the EU's GDP to be invested in R&D
- 3. Climate change / energy
- 4. Education - Reducing school drop-out rates below 10%  
at least 40% of 30-34-year-olds completing third level education
- 5. Poverty / social exclusion

- **Strategic framework** for European cooperation in education and training (adopted in 2009).
- Benchmarks by 2020 among others on:

	Current	Target
<b>Employment rate of recent graduates</b>		
The share of employed people aged 20-34 having successfully completed upper secondary or tertiary education 1 to 3 years before the reference year of the survey and who are no longer in education or training.	75.5%	82%



# Modernisation Agenda for HE



## *Five key priorities:*

- **Quantity**: widening access, reducing drop-out
- **Quality and relevance**: programmes, teaching and teachers
- **International cooperation** and mobility
- Linking education, research and innovation (**knowledge triangle**)
- Ensuring adequate, **efficient funding** and tailoring **governance**





# Quantity & quality



European  
Commission

## Key policy issues for Member States and higher education institutions:

- Develop **clear progression routes** from vocational and other education types into higher education. An effective way to achieve this is through **national qualification frameworks** linked to the European Qualifications Framework and based on learning outcomes, and through clear procedures for recognising learning and experience gained outside formal education and training.
- Encourage **outreach** to school students from underrepresented groups and to 'non-traditional' learners, including adults; provide more transparent information on educational opportunities and outcomes, and tailored guidance to **inform study choices** and reduce drop-out.
- Ensure that **financial support** reaches potential students from lower income backgrounds through a better targeting of resources.
- Design and implement national strategies to train and re-train enough researchers in line with the Union's R&D targets.

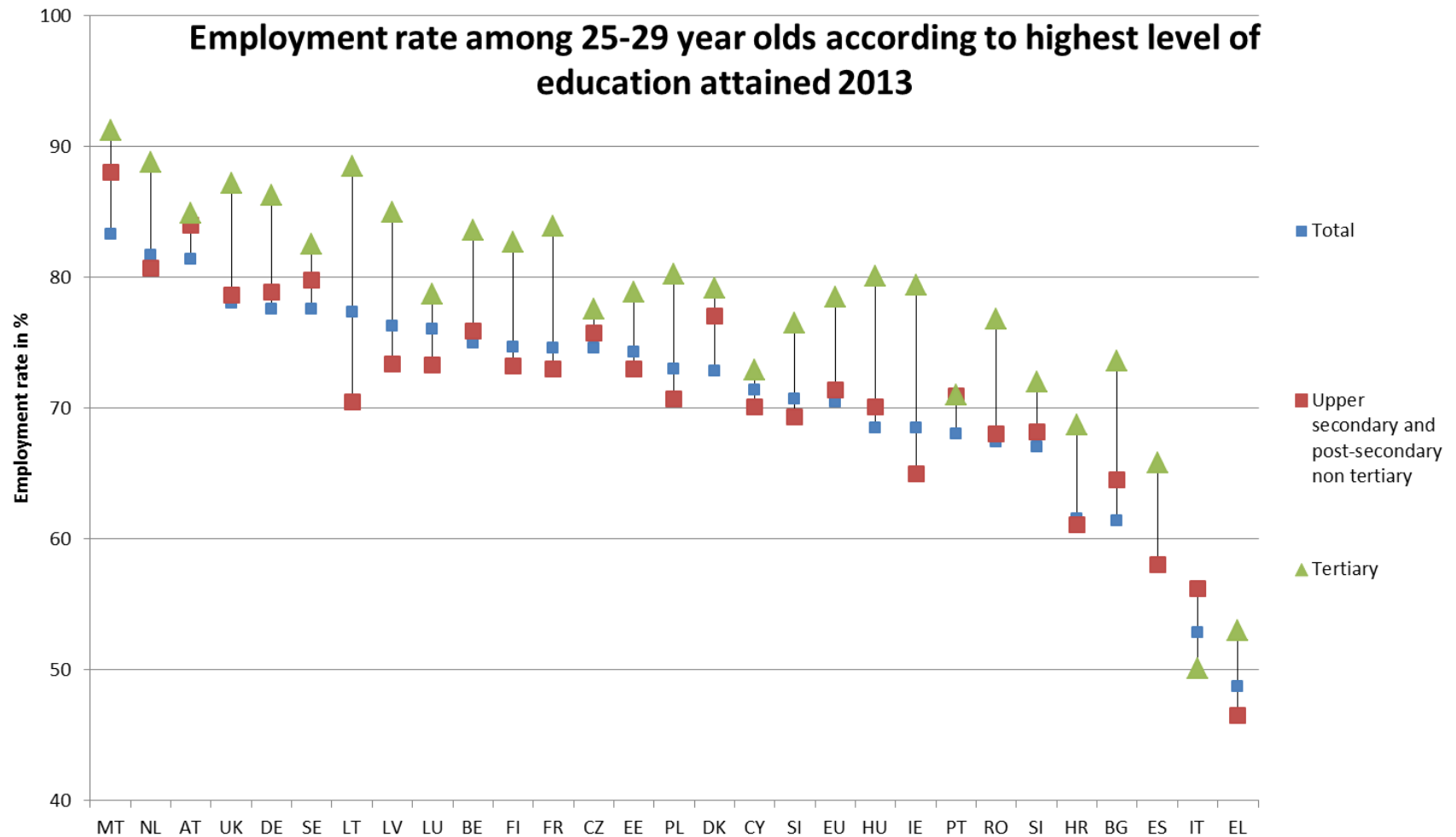
## Key policy issues for Member States and higher education institutions:

- Encourage the use of **skills and growth projections** and **graduate employment data** (including tracking graduate employment outcomes) in course design, delivery and evaluation, adapting **quality assurance** and **funding mechanisms** to reward success in equipping students for the labour market.
- **Encourage a greater variety of study modes** (e.g. part-time, distance and modular learning, continuing education for adult returners and others already in the labour market), by adapting funding mechanisms where necessary.
- **Better exploit the potential of ICTs** to enable more effective and personalised learning experiences, teaching and research methods (eg. eLearning and blended learning) and increase the use of virtual learning platforms.
- Enhance the capacity of labour market institutions (including public employment services) and regulations to match skills and jobs, and develop **active labour market policies** to promote graduate employment and enhance career guidance.
- Introduce **incentives** for higher education institutions to invest in continuous **professional development** for their staff, recruit sufficient staff to develop emerging disciplines and **reward excellence** in teaching.
- Link funding for doctoral programmes to the **Principles for Innovative Doctoral Training**.

# Quality- Challenges



- Economic crisis and its effects
- What does work in HE and what needs to be changed?
- How can we ensure that HE serves the needs of our students and society more widely – now and in the future?
- Increasing attainment, widening access AND improving the quality and relevance of HE programmes
- Dealing with unemployment and underemployment – tackling structural weaknesses of higher education systems
- Development of professionally oriented provision



# How can QA contribute?



QA can encourage and incentivise HEIs to

- Widen access through **more innovative approaches to admission**
- Prevent dropout and **stimulate retention**
- **Involve students** in programme design
- **Evaluate support services** for students
- Apply **QA to programme design**
- **Meaningfully involve employers** - Work-based learning
- Employability of graduates – **Tracking, skills forecasting**
- Support HEIs in **adapting to new modes** of learning and teaching

# Revised ESG



- Programme design: **involvement of stakeholders**
- "Institutions should ensure that they collect, analyse and use relevant information for the effective management of their programmes and other activities." – including **data on students' career paths**
- More emphasis on providing **public information**, including on employability
- Involvement of stakeholders in QA **review panels**, including employers/professional practitioners

# Next steps



- Latvian Presidency, 2015: focus on employability
  - Peer learning workshop
  - Meeting of Directors General for HE: peer review

## Funding possibilities:

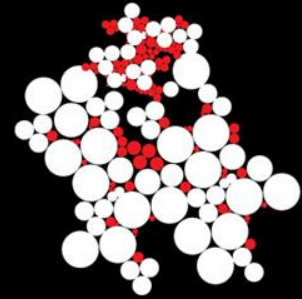
- Erasmus+ programme
  - [Forward-Looking Cooperation Projects](#)
  - [Key Action 2](#)
- European Structural and Investment Funds

# Reference documents



- [Supporting growth and jobs - an agenda for the modernisation of Europe's higher education systems](#)
- [Education and Training Monitor 2014](#)
- [European Commission Report on Progress in QA in HE](#)
- [Council Conclusions on QA supporting Education and Training, May 2014](#)
- [Modernisation of HE in Europe: Access, Retention and Employability, Eurydice, 2014](#)
- [Impact of Erasmus – study](#)
- [The Employability of Higher Education Graduates: The Employers' Perspective](#)





## **Learning for employability**

Integrating employability into professional bachelor programmes and quality assurance in four higher education systems



Renze Kolster  
Don F. Westerheijden  
NVAO-ECA Seminar  
“Employability and Quality Assurance”  
The Hague  
2014-12-09



# Introduction

---

- Introduction to research
  - Research questions
  - Research design
  - Definitions
    - Professional bachelor's programmes
    - Employability
- Outcomes per phase
- Conclusions
- Discussion

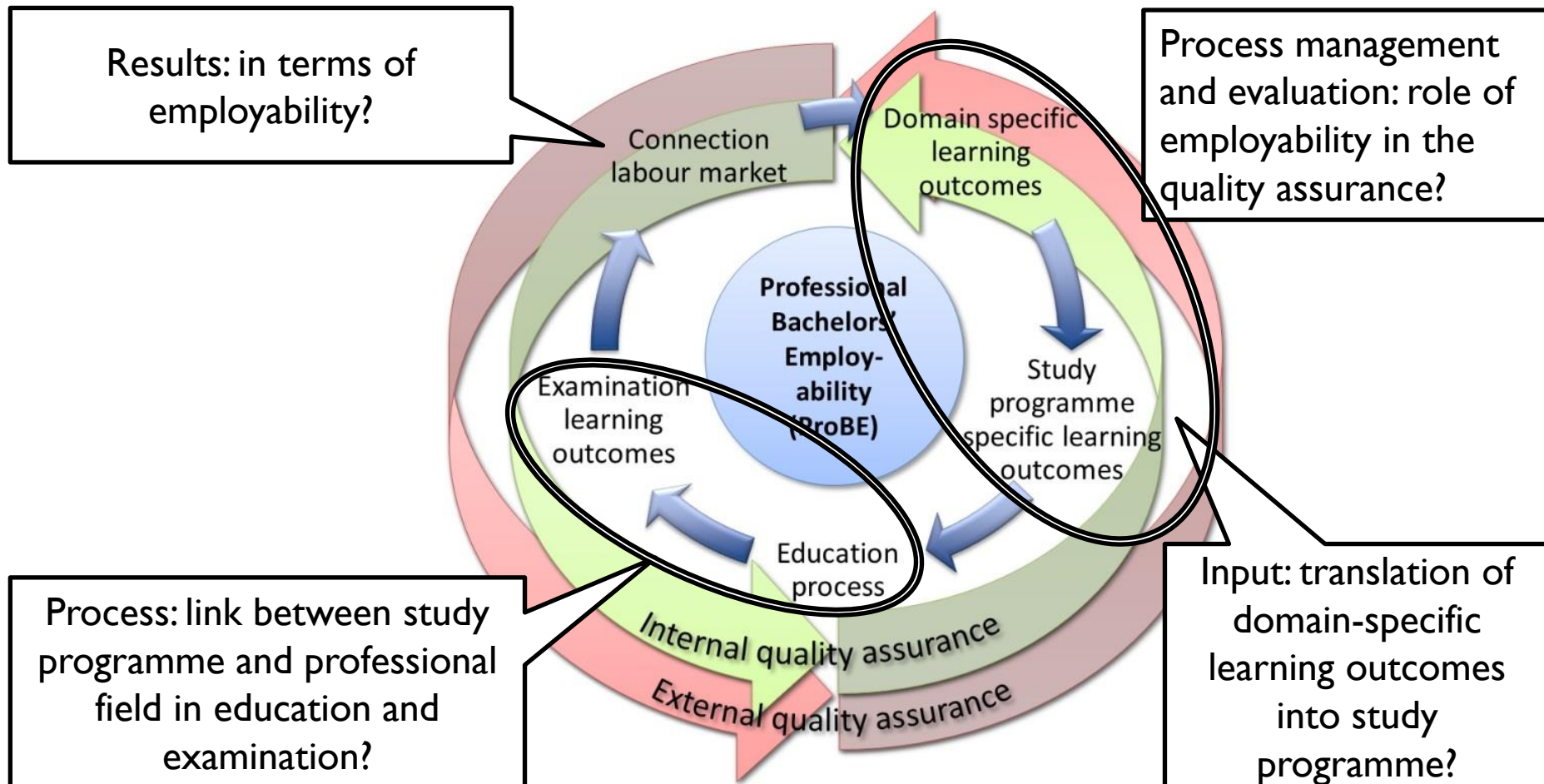
# Employability of professional bachelors from an international perspective

---

- NVAO-commissioned study
- Goals
  - find good practices of assuring employability in professional bachelors' study programmes
  - gain insight into the connection to the labour market of professional bachelors' study programmes

HE Systems / Countries	Domains
Belgium (Flanders) Netherlands Germany (NRW) Ireland	Mechanical/Electro Engineering Social work/care Tourism

# Research design and research questions



# Research design

---

- Find ‘good practices’ → exploratory study
- Literature study
- Interviews: QAAs, professional field representative bodies, study programmes
- Interviews with study programmes thought to improve employability well
  - 2 programmes per country & domain selected based on:
    - NL National Student Survey (NSE) + visitation reports
    - BE(NL) visitation reports
    - DE (NRW) CHE ranking
    - IE input QQI + professional field

# Research design

## Cases and interviews

	Mech/Elektro mech Engineering	Social work/care	Tourism	QA
Netherlands	Windesheim Avans FME-CWM	CHE Hs Zeeland NVMW	NHTV Saxion ANVR	NVAO
Belgium (Flanders)	Th. More- Kempen AP Antwerpen Voka	KH Leuven Hs Gent	Hs W-Vlaanderen Th. More- Mechelen Toerisme Vl.	NVAO
Ireland	IoT Sligo Letterkenny Engineers IE	IoT Tralee Dundalk IoT CORU	Cork IoT Galway-Mayo	QQI
DE NRW	FH Südwestfalen FH Niederrhein	FH Köln FH Münster	IH Bad Honnef ISM Dortmund	AQAS

# Professional higher education in the selected countries

---

- **Belgium (Flanders):**

- 20 university colleges, 180 ECTS study programmes, enrolling almost 5/10 of students (2012).

- **Netherlands:**

- 39 publicly funded universities of applied sciences, 240 ECTS study programmes, enrolling almost 7/10 of students.

- **Germany (North Rhine-Westphalia):**

- Ca. 35 universities of applied sciences, 180–210 ECTS study programmes, enrolling over 3/10 of students.

- **Ireland:**

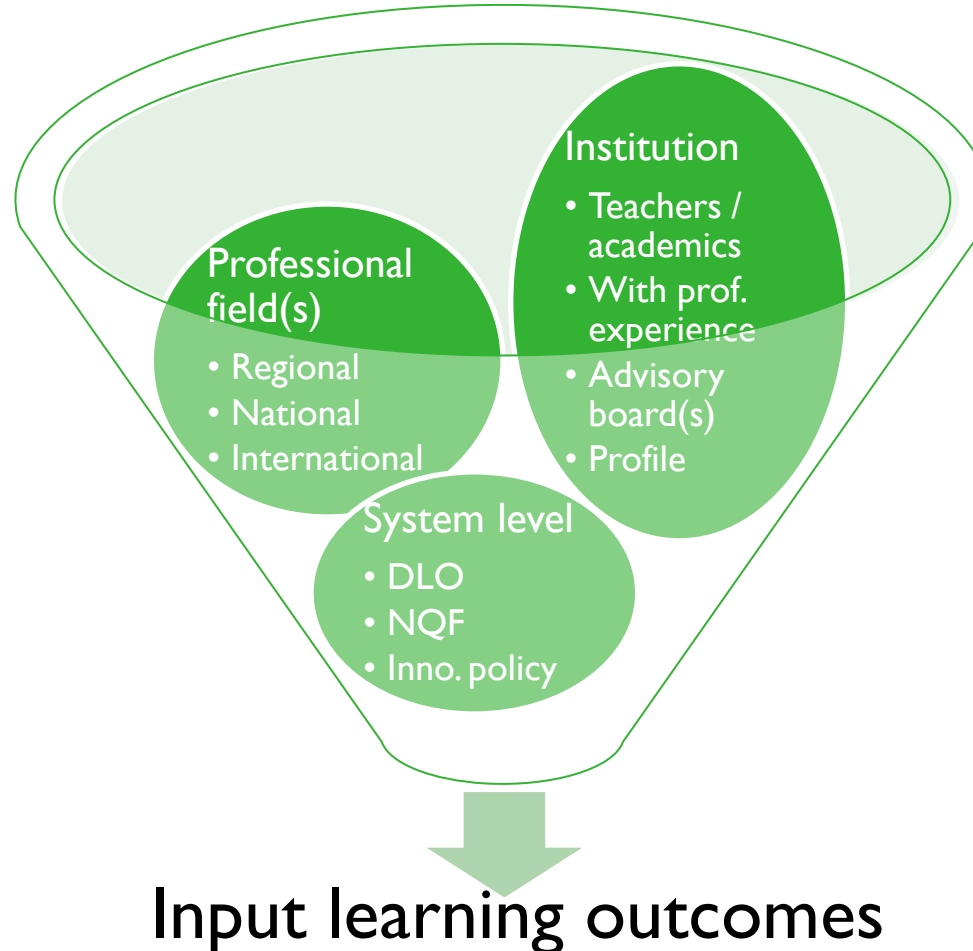
- 14 Institutes of Technology, 180–240 ECTS study programmes, enrolling around 4/10 of students.



# I Input

## Overall findings

---



# I Input

## Nationally defined?

<i>National domain-specific learning outcomes exist</i>	BE (NL)	NL	DE (NRW)	IE	Total
ME/EM		X		X	2
SW/C	X	X			2
TO	X	X			2
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>

# I Input

## Good practices

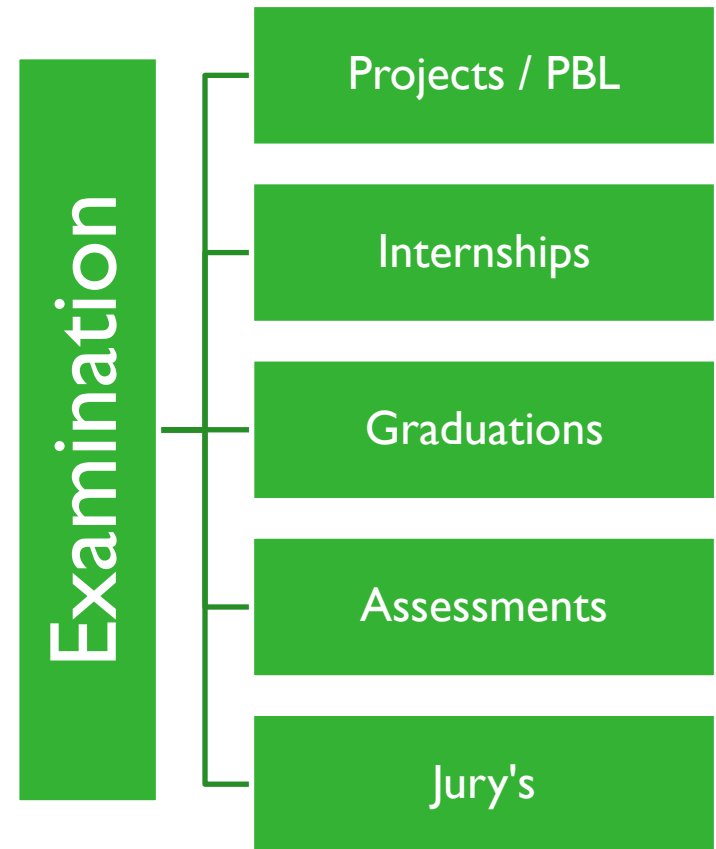
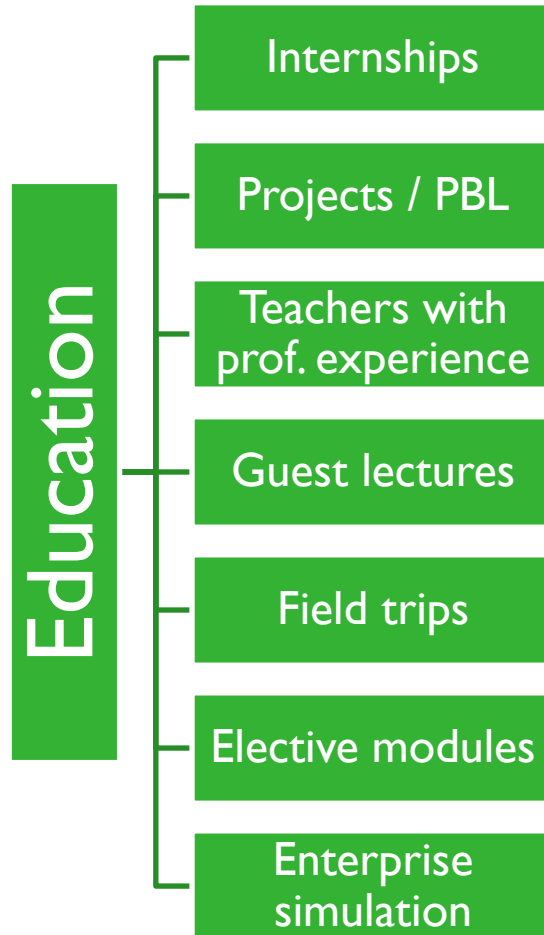
---

- Internal consultations
  - SC IE 2: The institution has a focus on sustainability and entrepreneurship. These two aspects have been incorporated through a module on innovation and entrepreneurship in social care.
- External consultations
  - EM FL 2: Industry days – representatives of large regional employers invited to develop content of the curriculum's modules.
- System level standards and policies
  - Cooperation study programmes and professional field to set common DLOs in NL and BE (NL)

## 2 Process

### Links to professional field

---



## 2 Process

### Good practices

---

- Teachers: mandatory for all teachers to work 40 days every 5 years for a professional organisation (EM FL 2)
- Content: rapid incorporation of trends and developments in curriculum (e.g. new cases in Tourism programmes)
- Internationalisation: to be improved
  - One initiative found to enhance employability of international students
- Focus on transferring employability-relevant skills besides the direct domain-specific ones, e.g. soft skills:
  - Communication, language, job attainment
  - Some HEIs have dedicated centres to facilitate development of job-related skills

# 3 Results

## Employment

---

- Programmes and stakeholders satisfied with employability results
- Employment results influenced by context:
  - Economic situation in domain
  - Country's economic situation
  - Location of institution
  - Governmental policies
  - Graduates' flexibility
    - Employment outside educated field
    - Continuing education
  - Fragmentation of labour market (monitoring)

### 3 Results

## Employability arrangements

---

- Virtuous circle of increasing contacts and satisfaction between programme and field
- To influence the results:
  - Limit inflow
  - Quantitative (demands on labour market) and qualitative (need for specialisation) perspectives
    - Inform **strategic decisions** of study programmes (e.g. to move towards broader or rather towards more specialised programmes).
    - **Who is to collect the quantitative and qualitative insights?**



# 3 Results

## Good practices

---

- Employability monitoring (ME IE 2)
  - On graduation day, all graduates fill out a graduate destination survey: job / further study data
    - Another case (EM FL 2): Alumni fill out a survey three months after graduation when students receive their diploma → 100% response rate.
- Information is used to:
  - Update the institution's list of employers
  - New employers are contacted for giving a presentation to current students about job opportunities
  - Analysis is forwarded to the management of the institution and departments

# 3 Results

## Good practices

---

- Qualitative analysis
  - Study programme occasionally monitors online profiles of graduates on Facebook and LinkedIn (TO FL I).

# 3 Results

## Good practices

---

- Professional field surveys (SW FL I)
  - Annually, the institution undertakes a professional field survey of the 1,500 internship-hosting organisations (2012: 700 respondents).
  - Questions on: satisfaction, shortcomings of graduates, the relevance of their competences, and if actually they recruited graduates
- Use:
  - Developments in the sector are discussed with final-year students
  - and with the professional field advisory board

## 4 Quality Assurance Internal

---

- Employability statistics
  - NL HBO-monitor
  - BE(FL) HEI or SP statistics
  - DE(NRW) public not common, private (TO) by HEI
  - IE HEI
- PDCA-cycles (BE(NL)) for input, process, and results
- Internal QA varies: per institution/country
  - Small: informal
  - Larger: formalized/institutionalized

## 4 Quality assurance

### Internal – good practice

---

- Based on the outcomes of internal and external quality assurance, an institution (NL) identifies ‘excellent study programmes’
  - These study programmes
    - are performing above average in comparison to other study programmes and
    - have the ambition to lead to improved learning outcomes

## 4 Quality assurance

### Internal – good practice

---

- DE institution: ‘academic scorecard’, expressing performance agreements between the institution and each department
  - Performance agreements are monitored annually
- Employability objectives are part of the academic scorecard for SVV
  - Students’ evaluation of modules (practice-relatedness)
  - Surveys among supervisors of internships

## 4 Quality Assurance

### External

---

- All external quality assurance systems include attention to employability
- Study programmes comment
  - External quality assurance should not solely focus on employment outcomes. Also:
    - Academic level
    - What the study programmes have done to create linkages to the professional field
  - Different evaluation for study programmes in dynamic sectors with fluctuating labour market opportunities?
    - Currently one size fits all



# Conclusions

---

- Different strategies and approaches to enhance employability
  - Country-specific context
  - Domain-specific context
  - Institutional characteristics

# Conclusions

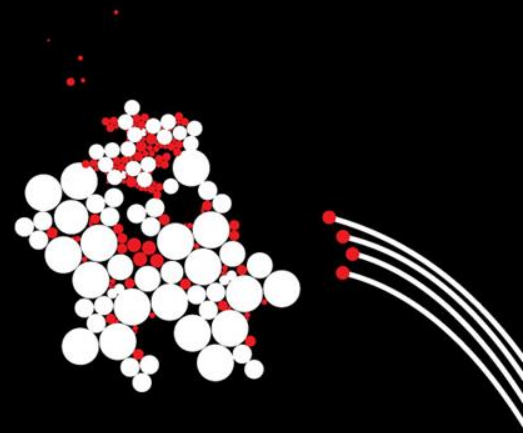
---

- Main strategic options for study programmes:
  - Labour market reorientation
    - Broadening: e.g. inclusion of more general and transferable competences in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes.
    - Specialising: e.g. offering elective specialisation modules.
  - Goal reorientation
    - More academic competences
    - More professional/vocational competences
  - Geographical reorientation
    - From regional to national or international

# Discussion

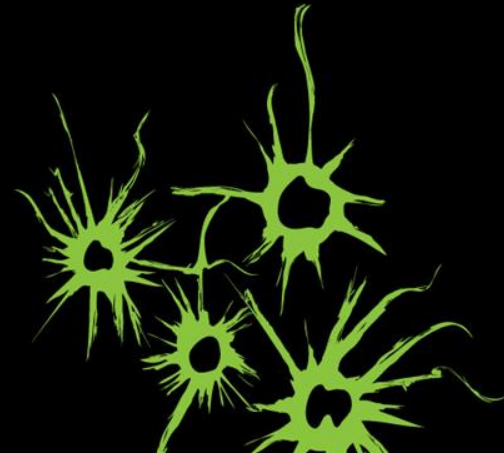
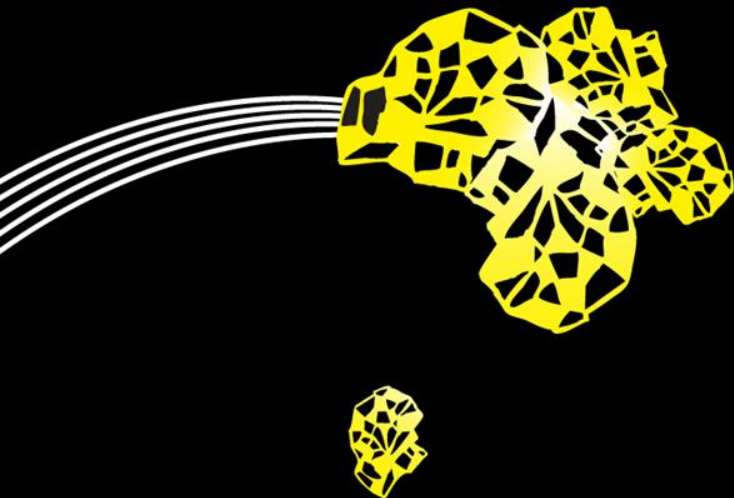
---

And other  
Questions & Comments



## **Learning for employability**

Integrating employability into professional bachelor programmes and quality assurance in four higher education systems



# Parallel sessions 13.30 – 14.30 hour

## **1. Professional competences**

Presentation by Colm O'Doherty, Institute of Technology Tralee (Ireland). Chaired by Ann Demeulemeester.

## **2. Involvement of professional field**

Presentations by Mieke Beckers, Odisee (Belgium) and Alfons Noe, Fachhochschule Südwestfalen - Soest (Germany). Chaired by René-Paul Martin, CTI (France) and Vice Chair of ECA.

## **3. The position of employability in external quality assurance**

Presentations by David Metz and Kirstine Westh Larsen, The Danish Accreditation Institution and Paul van Roon, employers representative, Board Member of NVAO. Chaired by Jürgen Petersen, ZEvA (Germany) and Board Member of ECA.

# Programmes with the Professional Field to Create Competent Practitioners

Putting the pieces together

# Overview of the Presentati on

- This presentation is divided into two parts
  1. An Examination of the Component Parts of a Social Care Programme
  2. How these Parts are Assembled and Attuned to the Professional Field

# Social Care Programmes – Foundations and Design





# Assessment and Standards

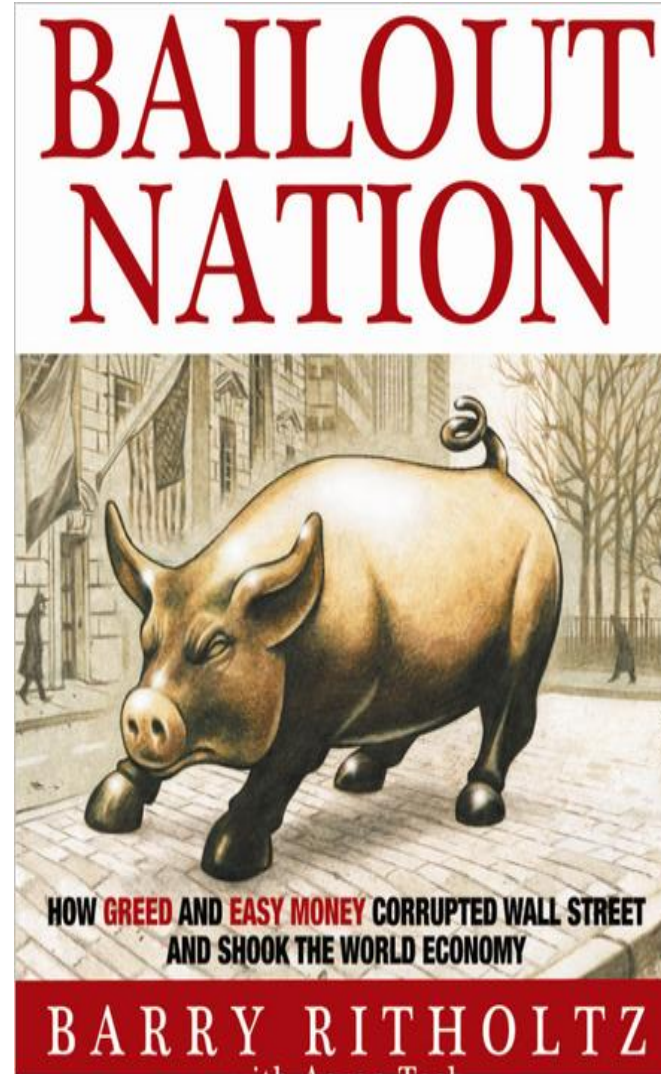
- HETAC (QQI) December 2009 –Assessment and Standards Document
- *Learner Assessment (specifically the assessment of learning ) means inference (e.g judgement or estimation or evaluation ) of a learner's knowledge, skill or competence by comparison with a standard based on appropriate evidence (HETAC/QQI 2009,).*

# Registration /Health and Social Care Professionals Act 2005



Health and Social Care Professionals Council (CORU) will approve education and training programmes if they are satisfied that they are suitable for the education and training of applicants for registration.

# Lessons From Our Recent Past- The Unregulat ed Financial Sector !



# Types and Uses of Knowledge for Competent Practice - Some examples

## Social Science

- Psychology
- Sociology

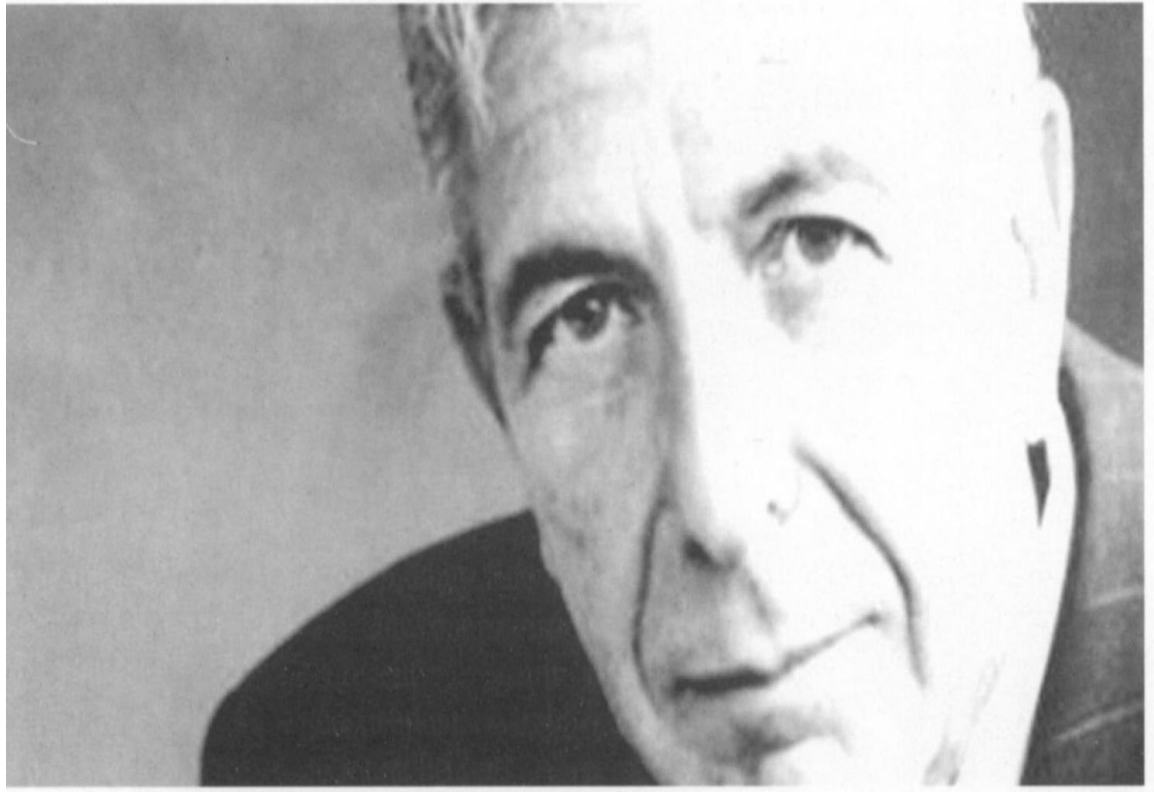
## Personal Development

- Creative Practice
- Communications

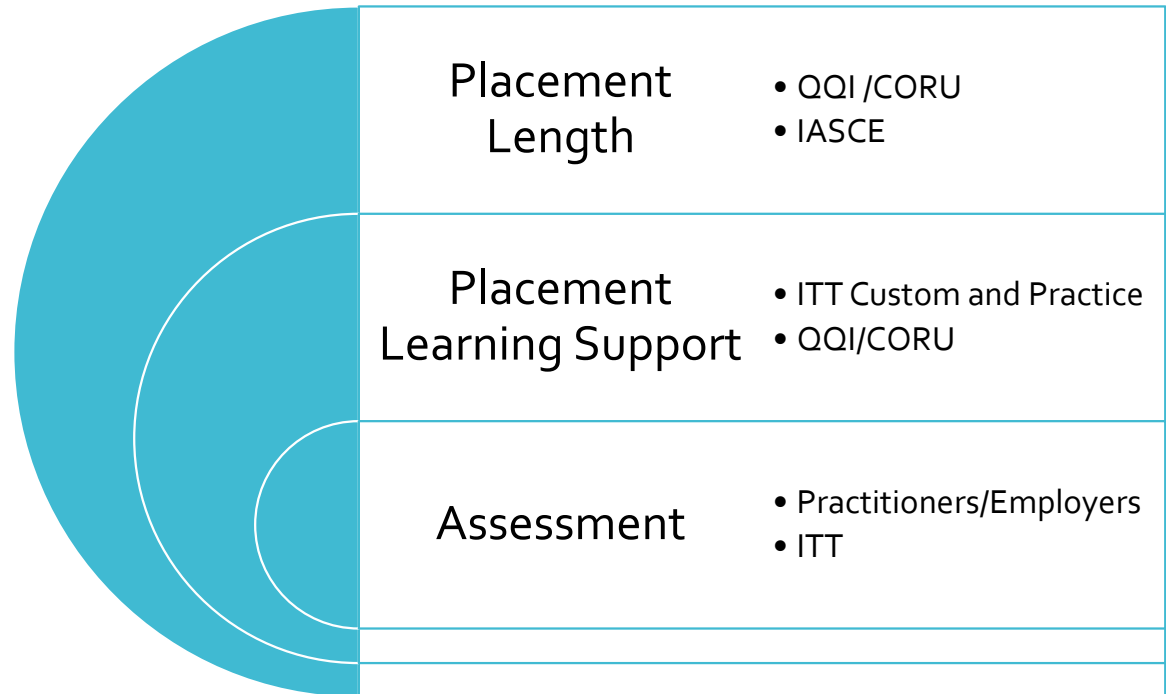
## Applied

- Research
- Professional Practice

Teachers are  
my lessons  
done or  
must I learn  
another  
one? They  
laughed and  
laughed :  
Well Child  
you've only  
just begun.



# Competent Practice



# Aligning the Programm e to the Profession al Field- Three Stakehold ers



# Staff

- It is critically important to employ staff who have relevant professional experiences
- It is critically important to employ staff who draw on both evidence based knowledge (research) and proven knowledge based practice.





# Employers Practitioners



- Guest Lecturer
- Practice Placements
- Programmatic Reviews and Evaluations

# Registration Licensing Regulation

- The New Registration Body (CORU) which will shortly be established for social care in Ireland will have seven representatives of the field (practitioners and/or managers) on its thirteen member committee.

# Aligning Social Care Programme s with the Professional Field Requires a Structured Learning Partnership



## Most Pressing Areas for the ITT QA System

- Engagement with service users /customers
- A Professional Field Advisory Board
- Greater Use of Digital Innovation to assist the alignment process.
- More Accountability

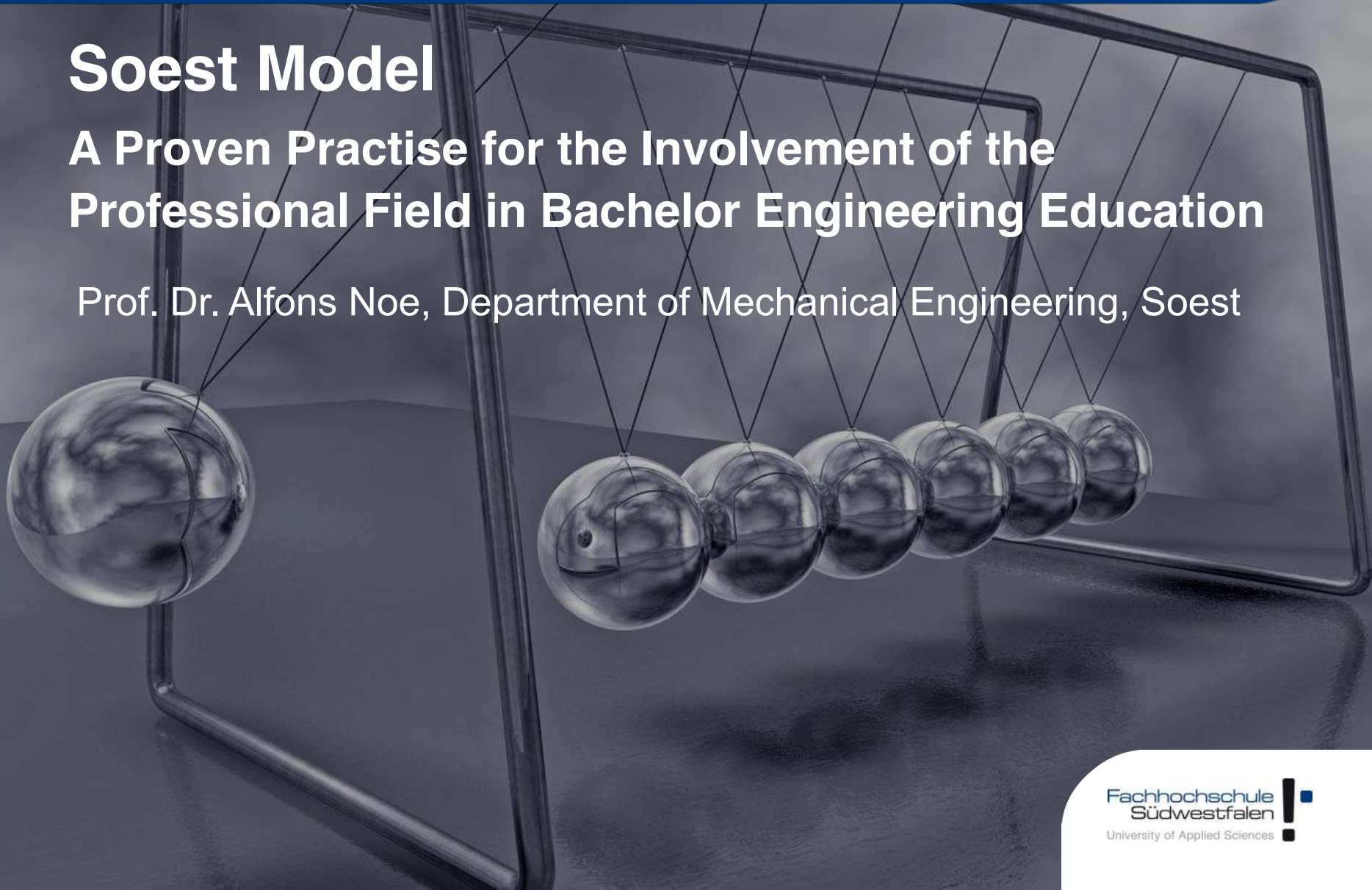
Even  
bankers  
are  
Accountable!



# Soest Model

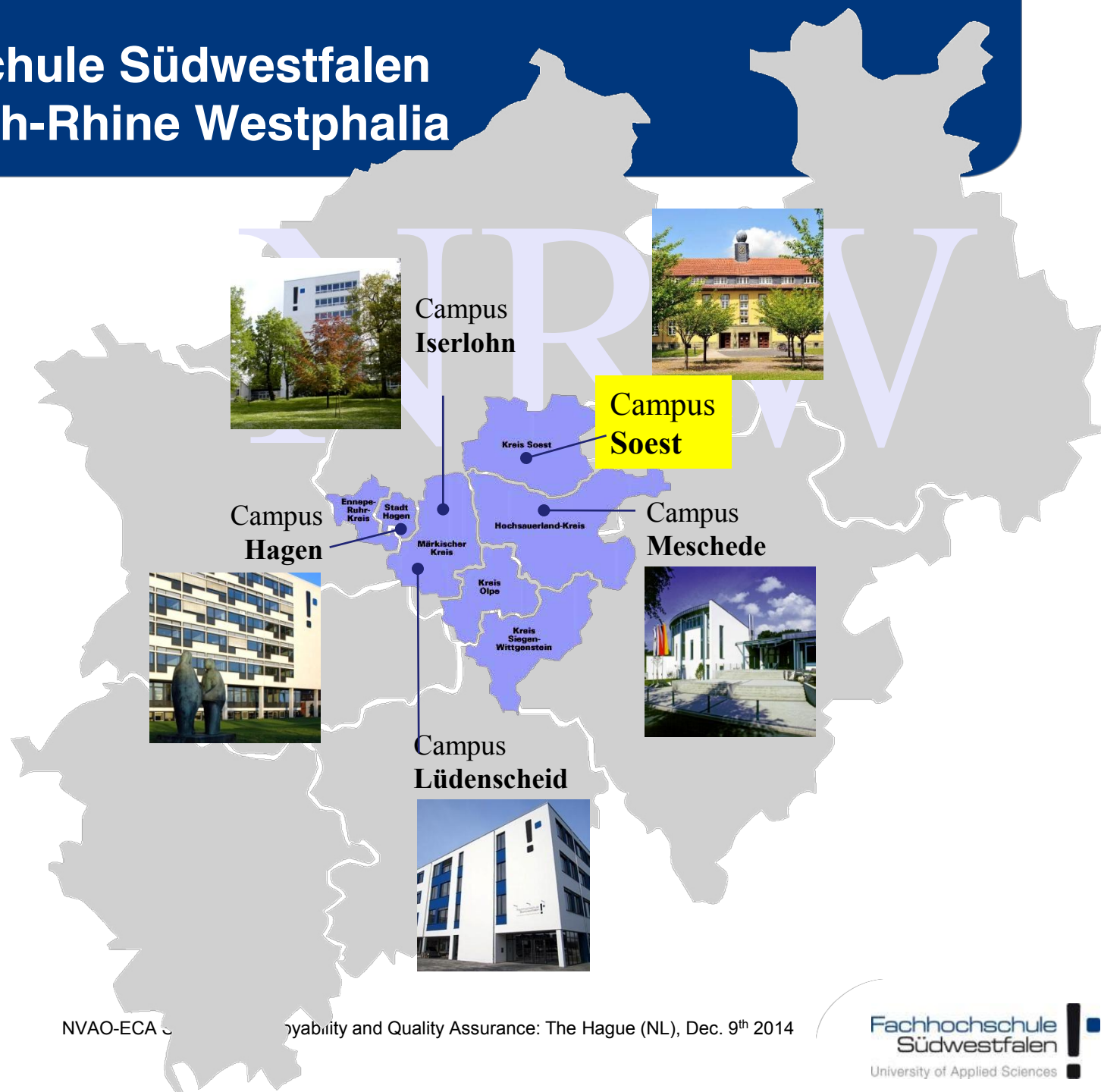
**A Proven Practise for the Involvement of the Professional Field in Bachelor Engineering Education**

Prof. Dr. Alfons Noe, Department of Mechanical Engineering, Soest





# Fachhochschule Südwestfalen in rural North-Rhine Westphalia



# Former barracks became our beautiful campus in Soest





# Departments and Academic Degree Programmes

[www.studieren-in-soest.de](http://www.studieren-in-soest.de)



## ■ Department of Argriculture

Agriculture (Bachelor)

Agriculture (Master)

## ■ Department of Electrical Engineering

**Electrical Engineering (Bachelor), 425 students**

Business Administration with Informatics (Bachelor)

Engineering & Project Management (Bachelor)

System Engineering & Engineering Management | SEEM (Master)

Information Management & Information Systems | IMIS (Master)



## ■ Department of Mechanical Engineering and Automatisaton

**Mechanical Engineering (Bachelor), 560 students**

**Design- and Project Management (Bachelor), 140 students**

Technical Writing/Documentation & Project Management (Bachelor)

Technology and Company Management (Master programme for professionals)



## ■ Research Center for Pre-School Pedagogy

Pre-School Pedagogy (Bachelor programme for professionals)

Pre-School Pedagogy (on-campus Bachelor programme)

# Dual Study Programmes – term with multiple meanings



## No uniform naming convention

- Dual Studies
- Integrated Studies
- **Co-operative Studies -> Soest Model**
- Combined Studies (study&work)
- Combined Studies for professionals
- Parallel Studies

## Options to enhance of Dual Study Programmes

- **strong/enforced link to industrial practice**
- involves two institutions
- Dual Degrees (vocational & engineering)
- Dual Degree (domestic & foreign university)

# Dual Study Programmes in Soest



- **Co-operative Studies = Soest Model**  
*- integrating professional practice*
- **Dual Study = Enhanced Soest Model**  
*- integrating vocational training -*  
Bachelor of Electrical/Mechanical Engineering jointly with degree for apprenticeship in electrical/metal field awarded by IHK (chamber of commerce)
- **Verbundstudium**  
*- combined studies for professionals -*  
Part-time study Bachelor/Master programme parallel to employment in associate profession
- **Bachelor Study with examined REFA degree**
- **International Double Degree**



# Soest Model – Key Facts



The poster for the Soester Modell program features a light blue background with a dark blue header. At the top left is a logo consisting of a vertical bar and a square. To its right is the text 'Fachhochschule Südwestfalen Hochschule für Technik und Wirtschaft University of Applied Sciences'. Below this, the text 'Kooperatives Studium' is centered. Further down, 'Studium + Stipendium im Praxisverbund' is centered. The title 'Soester Modell' is prominently displayed in a large, stylized font. Below the title is a photograph of a student working on a circuit board. At the bottom, a dark blue box contains the text 'in den Studiengängen:' followed by a list of fields: Business Administration with Informatics, Design- und Projektmanagement, Elektrotechnik, Engineering and Project Management, and Maschinenbau. The text 'am Standort Soest' is at the very bottom of this box.

Fachhochschule  
Südwestfalen  
Hochschule für  
Technik und Wirtschaft  
University of Applied Sciences

Kooperatives Studium

Studium + Stipendium  
im Praxisverbund

**Soester Modell**

in den Studiengängen:

- Business Administration with Informatics
- Design- und Projektmanagement
- Elektrotechnik
- Engineering and Project Management
- Maschinenbau

am Standort Soest

- Enrollment for Bachelor of Engineering on Soest campus from 1<sup>st</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> semester in 210 ETCS programme
- Co-operating sponsoring companies offer
  - Stipend of monthly 600 € / 700 € / 850 €
  - Students sign contract only with company
- During lecture-free periods and 7<sup>th</sup> practice semester students work at sponsoring company, students write bachelor thesis for/in cooperation with their company, but practise phases does not contribute to ETCS-points
- Continued application of theoretical knowledge in practical context by integrated practise phases in firms
- Managed by Steering Board composed of professors and company management by principle „at will“ (start in 1995)
- Service by Fachhochschule: promotes model, advises parties (list with companies & applicants, provides master contract form, agreed by Board), but no legal obligations
- Relies on the vital principle „Fachhochschule“

# Soest Model – co-operating companies



*A selection our local parnter companies (radius 40 km):*

- AEG Power Solutions GmbH Warstein
- Magna BDW technologies Soest GmbH Soest
- Becker Automatisierungstechnik GmbH Büren
- **Beumer Maschinenfabrik GmbH & Co. KG Beckum**
- Eickel und Spindeldreher GmbH Arnsberg
- Franz Kaldewei GmbH & Co KG Ahlen
- **Hella KGaA Hueck & Co Lippstadt**
- **Infineon Technologies AG Warstein**
- Kverneland Group Soest GmbH Soest
- Westfalia-Automotive GmbH Rheda-Wiedenbrück

More information at: [www.karrieretag-soest.de](http://www.karrieretag-soest.de)

# Soest Model – Co-operative Study Programme

	Aug.	Sept.	Okt.	Nov.	Dez.	Jan.	Feb.	März	April	Mai	Juni	Juli
												Practice in Company
1. year	Practice in Company	Prep. class Math	Study at University (1. Sem.)				Exam	Practice in Company	Study at University (2. Sem.)			Exam Practice
2. year	Practice in Company		Study at University (3. Sem.)				Exam	Practice in Company	Study at University (4. Sem.)			Exam Practice
3. year	Practice in Company		Study at University (5. Sem.)				Exam	Practice in Company	Study at University (6. Sem.)			Exam Practice
4. year	Practice in Company		Practice Module & Bachelor Thesis (7. Sem.)									

**Schedule distribution:** 24,5 months in university (56%)  
 19,5 months in company (includes 3x2 weeks vacation)

**Standard Bachelor Programme (210 ETCS):** without „green“ phases  
 min. 75% conduct 7<sup>th</sup> in companies

# Soest Model – Co-operative Study Programme

## First Year Foundations

- Study: foundations of engineering
- Introduction to company operations through three practical work periods

## Second and Third Year Specialisation

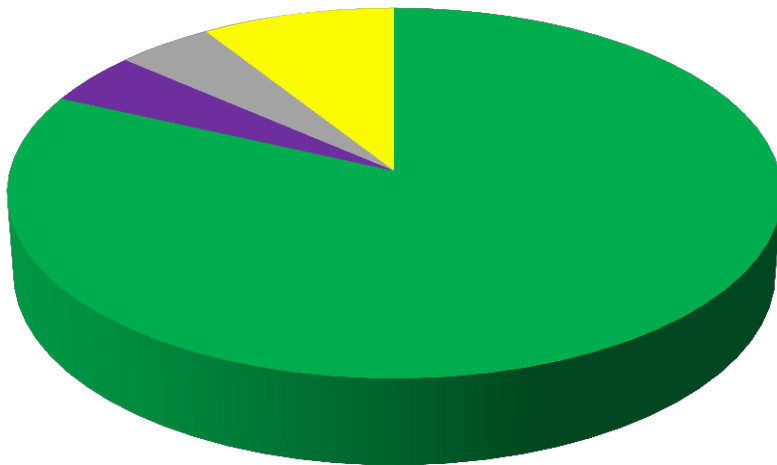
- Study: Focus on chosen specialist subjects
- Practical engineering work in company through three practical placement periods

## Final year/Bachelor Thesis

- Practise module project in sponsoring company
- Bachelor Thesis Project in sponsoring company

# Soest Model – Co-operative Study Programme

## Graduate Career prospects



## Success Indicators:

- **62 %** of all coop students complete within 7 semesters.
- **24 %** complete in 8 semesters.
- **90 %** of graduates are offered a job with sponsoring company at graduation
- Dropout rate of below **5 %**.

12-14% of beginners are in the Soest Model (out total approx. 1100 ME-/EE-bachelor students)



# Soest Model – Benefits for the Campus Soest

- outstanding students enrich departments and student body
- increases number of students, 12-14% of beginners are in the Soest Model
- additional budget because government subsidies for number of students and graduation on schedule
- NO legal responsibility for the departments and Fachhochschule
- NO legal influence of companies on academic programmes, differs from „Berufsakademien“ in Baden-Wuerttemberg (south-east Germany)
- Accreditation for all academic study programmes (repeated) by AQAS
- Promotion and administration requires low effort. Costs are paid from university's budget per student, free of charge for company.
- Soest Model causes shortening of lecturing period by one week for all students
- However: The enhanced Soest Model requires one-day-off for only a few annual students, which is a strain on room and staff capacity.

# Soest Model – Benefits for the Students

- systematic training on industrial processes
- enforced continuous linking of academic learning and practical action
- stimulation of engineering practice in an integrated and interdisciplinary setting
- reduces financial burden of studies
- already on the first step of their career ladder during their studies
- outstanding 12 - 14% students get excellent support in their preferred local region

# Soest Model – Benefits for the Companies

- active investment in quality and loyalty of employees
- careful selection of applicants both by company and university, but student applies to company and decision for contracts remains at these parties
- career plans are worked out/supported by company
- co-operative students solve problems for the company:
  - during in lecture-free periods
  - during practise module in 7<sup>th</sup> semester
  - through their bachelor thesis
- graduates can provide immediate work contribution after graduation, because they know the company and their operating structure
- companies expenses for stipend (approx. 37000€) are partly compensated by qualified students' work on site

# Soest Model – extended access



- Business Administration with Informatics (EE)
- Design- & Project Management (ME)
- **Electrical Engineering (EE)**
- Engineering & Project Management (EE)
- **Mechanical Engineering (ME)**
- Technical Writing/ Documentation & Project Management (ME)
- Master Programmes  
IMIS, SEEM, TUM

# More information on our university and the Soest Model



**[www.fh-swf.de/soester-modell](http://www.fh-swf.de/soester-modell)**

**[www.karrieretag-soest.de](http://www.karrieretag-soest.de)**

**[www.fh-swf.de/soest](http://www.fh-swf.de/soest)**



# Soest Career Fair

Wed 2 April 2014

More than 100 companies represented



**NEXT Soest Career Fair**  
**22 April 2015**

**Thank you very much for your attention**  
**Questions are welcome**



# Curriculum@work!

*SELF-ASSESSMENT OF THE QUALITY OF STRUCTURAL  
INVOLVEMENT OF THE PROFESSIONAL FIELD*

Mieke Beckers



# Outline

- 1. Defining 'involvement of the professional field'**
  - 1.1. Triggers
  - 1.2. A conceptual framework
  - 1.3. Definition
- 2. From a conceptual framework and definition to measuring quality**
- 3. Self-assessment**
  - 3.1. How does it work?
  - 3.2. Key success factors

# Odisee University College = ?



- **29 professional bachelor programmes** (level 6 EQF)
- **6 campuses** on the axis Brussels – Aalst – Ghent – Sint-Niklaas
- **10 000+ students**
- **1 100+ FTE**

# 1. DEFINING 'INTERACTION WITH THE PROFESSIONAL FIELD'

## 1.1. Triggers

### INTERNAL CATALYST

- In search of Odisee's common identity  
→ interaction with the professional field = a common ground and connecting factor

### EXTERNAL CATALYST

- In search of the professional bachelor's identity due to reshaping of the Flemish HE

# 1. DEFINING 'INTERACTION WITH THE PROFESSIONAL FIELD'

## 1.2. A conceptual framework

### PART I

- **Why?**
- Vision

### PART II

- **What?**
- Definition & goals

### PART III

- **How?**
- Strategy

# 1. DEFINING 'INTERACTION WITH THE PROFESSIONAL FIELD'

## 1.3. Definition

### PART II

- What?
- Definition & goals

*A programme is structurally embedded in its professional field when it creates a **CONTINUOUS** and **VERSATILE** interaction in an **OPEN, INNOVATIVE** and **STRUCTURED** manner*

## 2. FROM A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND DEFINITION TO MEASURING QUALITY

### Option 1 STOCKTAKING

- BUT... what about quality?

### Option 2 INDICATORS

- BUT... what about ownership?

### Option 3 SELF- ASSESSMENT

- Ownership
- Indication of quality *and* impact : allows targeted improvement fit to the context
- Team discussion
- Simple and not (too) time-consuming
- Benchmarking
- Follow-up of evolution through time

## 3. SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL

### 3.1. How does it work?

- Each key word of the definition is translated in 5 concrete statements
- The lecturers of a bachelor programme assess how well the programme performs on these statements and commonly define a score, using a response scale
- The result is shown in a diagram
- Based on the results, the whole team defines priorities and improvement measures



# Example: key word 'continuous'

## CONTINUOUS

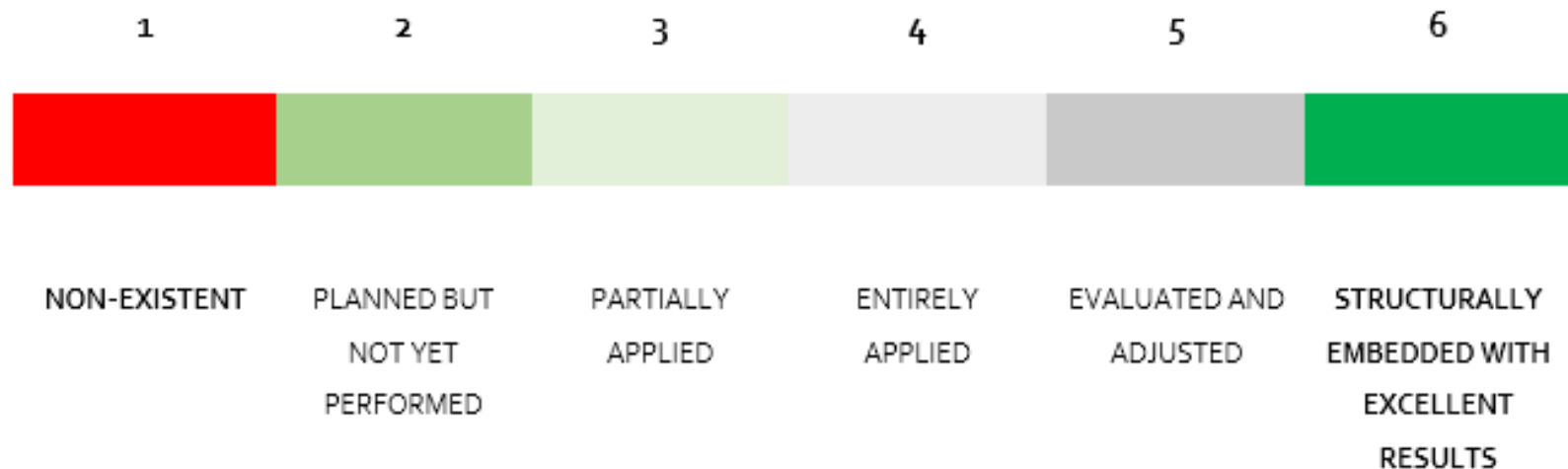
- 1.1 Our students have a direct contact with the professional field in every phase of their programme.
- 1.2 Throughout the programme, direct contact with the professional field builds up to a growing level of intensity and complexity.
- 1.3 In our programme, lecturers have structural opportunities to (re)gain professional experience.
- 1.4 Colleagues with recent experience in the professional field, share their knowledge and know-how with students and colleagues.
- 1.5 The professional field of our programme is continuously involved in the development of our profile and curriculum.





# Response scale

*In our bachelor programme, this practice, process, custom is...*



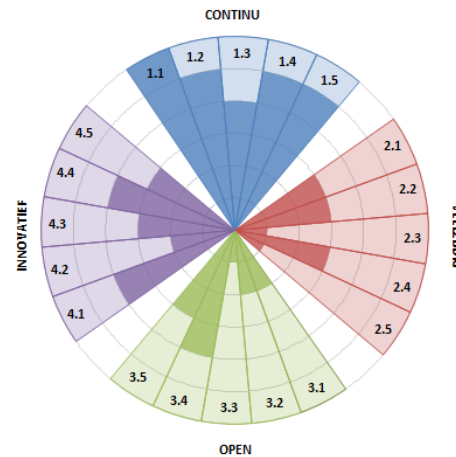
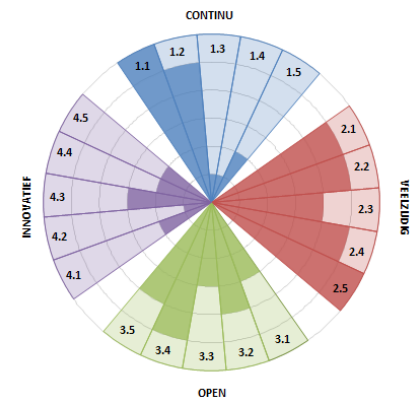
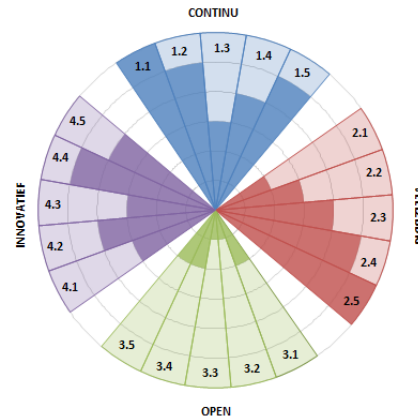
= 5<sup>th</sup> key word '**structured**'



# Result: diagram

## Positioning on the key words:

- Continuous
- Versatile
- Open
- Innovative



## 3. SELF-ASSESSMENT

### 3.2. Key success factors

- Building the self-assessment on a commonly agreed conceptual framework
- Ownership and negotiation of meaning concerning the definition and statements
- Pilot phase for finetuning, e.g. adjustment of the response scale
- Involvement of the professional field in the self-assessment

*Thank you*

*Any questions or  
comments?*


*[mieke.beckers@odisee.be](mailto:mieke.beckers@odisee.be)*

# Employability and QA In Denmark

David Metz and Kirstine Westh Larsen

NVAO-ECA Seminar, December 9 -2014





# Explicit Criteria on Employability

- Institutional accreditation
  - Criterion V: Relevance of the Programmes
  - Criterion II: Quality Management and Organisation (incl. collection, analysis and application of *relevant information*)
- Programmes
  - Exist. Prog. Criterion I: Demand and Relevance (*relevant* employment, dialogue w. employers)
  - New Prog.: Employability handled by the minister (“need not met by existing prog.”)







# How to measure Employability?

## **What are the indicators? – a mix of process and output criteria**

- Institutions' monitoring and analysis of employment rates (key figures)
- Strategies and measures to remedy rising unemployment
- Ongoing dialogue with employers in different fora
- Clear societal need f. graduates
- Balanced use of input from dialogue





# How is Employability being assessed?

- The institution must monitor and react to developments in employment AND in the professional field
- Programme accreditation: Unemployment rate among graduates of a programme is compared to 'similar' programmes
- New and more current national statistical data on unemployment was introduced in 2014
- Content and regularity of dialogue w. employers and use of it.  
The relevance of dialogue partners







# Critical cases

- Institutional accreditation: A university college
- Programme accreditation: A university programme

# Challenges in ensuring, documenting and assessing employability

- Evaluating practice/procedures: Relevance vs. quality – which actions do what?
- Academy Profession and Professional Bachelors are regulated nationally, change must be negotiated (from local idea to national change)
- High employment  $\neq$  a relevant programme.  
Difficult to communicate to outsiders when interest in relevance is high in political discourse: E.g. not necessarily the right “level/knowledge base”
- Data (old and measuring problems)
- Institutions have very limited power to influence



# Comments and questions



Kirstine Westh Larsen, [kwl@akkr.dk](mailto:kwl@akkr.dk)  
David Metz, [davm@akkr.dk](mailto:davm@akkr.dk)



# Panel discussion

- *Johan Cloet*, European Association of Institutions in Higher Education (EURASHE)
- *Margaret Waters*, European Commission
- *Tijana Isoski*, European Students' Union (ESU)
- *Paul van Roon*, employers representative, Board Member of NVAO
- Moderated by Rafael van Grieken

**The European Students' Union**

REPRESENTING STUDENTS SINCE 1982



# Employability through students' eyes

**NVAO conference**

**Hague - Netherlands, 9th December 2014**

**Tijana Isoski** (Executive Committee Member)

# What is ESU?



The **European Students' Union** (ESU) is an umbrella organisation of 47 National Unions of Students from 39 different countries. Through its members, ESU represents over 11 million students in Europe.

The aim of ESU is to represent and promote the educational, social, economic and cultural interests of students at the European level towards all relevant bodies.



[www.esu-online.org](http://www.esu-online.org)

# Employability ?



A broad concept which includes subject-specific, methodological, social and individual competences which enable graduates to successfully take up and pursue a profession / employment and empower their life-long learning. Employability is also about making graduates more likely to gain employment in their chosen field(s), being able to create/start new businesses, and being able to develop and succeed in their occupations.



# SAGE project



- The SAGE project found that students consider soft skills and non-formal education to be very important in the learning process in higher education. However, they think that those features are currently undervalued or unrecognized to a large extent in the higher education system. Many students also believe that employers undervalue education degrees in general and are pessimistic towards finding a meaningful employment following their graduation.

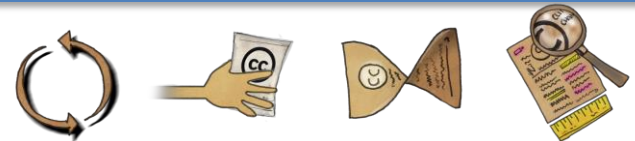
- Employability does not mean matching educational and labour markets
- There should **NOT** exist any attempt to measure educational quality or success in terms of employment or income statistics
- Employers and trade unions can contribute, but internal stakeholders are responsible for all decision-making.
- Entrepreneurship should be seen as additional method to develop students' transversal skills, and not only as a solution to the graduate unemployment.



# Thank you!

ευχαριστώ!

**Tijana Isoski**  
tijana@esu-online.org



reuse, redistribute, remix, and revise



**European Students' Union**



**@ESUtw**



**ESU Brussels**



**esutwt**



**The European Students' Union**

Rue de l'Industrie 10 · 1000 Brussels, Belgium · Tel: +32 2 893 25 45 · [www.esu-online.org](http://www.esu-online.org)

# Employability and Q A

Paul van Roon  
an employers view

# Employability and Q A

- The education system is a value chain. External stakeholders such as employers are part of that chain so treat them as such
- Organise sustainable relations with employers on all three levels of the education system, macro, meso and micro
- Dialogue with external stakeholders should be a two way process, the agenda has to be determined by both parties and the chair should rotate.

# Employability and Q A

- External Q A should also focus on employability, employability of students is a relevant indicator
- Labourmarket data and analysis of that data are relevant indicators
- Track and survey alumni
- Peer review must become peer review 2.0 including external experts

# Employability and Q A

- Motivate employers and employers associations to be more active, it is also their responsibility
- self evaluation reports should also focus on employability, involve employers in the PDCA cycle, make them also responsible
- Research programmes of HEI's connect education and the professional field, the internal Q A process has to cover that area too