

CONCLUSIONS of Workshops – INPUT TO PANEL DISCUSSION

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Seminar 1 News Skills for New Jobs – How to identify/Define the Skills?

- Is the title appropriate – skills or competences or attributes
- The debate is not a new one – we could have been discussing the very same issue in the 1970s
- Role of higher education in serving society?
- Balance of Responsibility in terms of producing employable people – general consensus – role of HEIs to develop generic skills – responsibility of Industry to do on-the-job training
- Producing innovators – important to tailor T&L practices – traditional lecturing mode least useful to students – problem based learning preferable
- There are conceptual and cultural barriers between academia and industry: we speak different languages. Issue of academic freedom
- Models – BMW; FHI (state mediated); Graduate Employment Website (Almalaurea) – Italian experience allows feedback from students
- One solution does not fit all requirements

Seminar 2 Ensuring Graduates have the skills they need – making it a reality

Shared Seminar 1 view re what skills are

Risk-taking – is a required skill and graduates are not being adequately being prepared

Attributes are not new – they go back to pre-industrial times

How to encourage acquisition of new competencies

1. Learning by doing – lecture handing down knowledge is outdated
 - Coeur project a very good example – 7 partners – students engaging in real life problems; multidisciplinary – team working problem solving
 - Delivered by workshop – developed into a module that was delivered to universities
 - Strength of European diversity
- 2 How do you scale these projects up? – not by institutional means – academics are more likely to buy in if the idea convinces – Heads of Institutions important as champions

2 Other projects presented -

- Design a future office working space
- Future restaurant

3 Recognition in academic credits needed if students are to be attracted

- Responsibility of integrating real-life examples into curriculum – business should be encouraged to bring these to HEIs
- Presentation from research institute DERI – phoney debate between teaching and research. Learning/research distinction exaggerated – research findings should feed into teaching more actively
- Multi-Actor learning – students, staff, business – Finnish ability to bring all actors together.

Graduates need a year or two before they begin to show a return for employers -
Industry wants a readymade person – balance of responsibility

Advanced analytics solution – four masters students given real world problems to solve

Are HEIs allowed to foster entrepreneurship? – beg forgiveness or ask for permission

Integrated approaches were shown in some of the examples – better to incorporate issues like innovation into the course rather than adding a separate module. Ideas for entrepreneurship emanated from unlikely faculties – benefits of multidisciplinary approach

Benefits of work placement

Benefits to learning experience of being a student – informal aspects of learning e.g. participation in clubs and societies; voluntary work

Seminar 3 New Skills for New Jobs – Regional Development

Flagged need for HEIs to have conversations with industry/enterprises

Placements stressed for graduates and in-course students – valued enormously by students

HEIs do not make enough use of the opportunity to negotiate further contacts with enterprises when doing placements

Masonite/IT Sligo – a great example of a working relationship: saved them and moved them up to Masonite ladder

Changes in the world of learning– online learning, bespoke courses – blended learning now understood by employers – a more affordable option

Adult learning/CPD - make more use of that community

Accreditation of prior learning, including accreditation of in-company training and experiential learning

Examined Danish realignment of local/regional government which was accompanied by a realignment of universities; Single point of contact working for FE sector - Growth Board – this is not a QUANGO!

REAP project (Cork IT) – Roadmap for Employment-Academic Partnerships

18 different types of engagement identified

Relationships are difficult – different cultures

Institutions have to value the work - good buy-in by middle management

Timeframes are important – align with the pressing needs of industry

Some general points

Accreditation of prior learning should be facilitated

In-company training – expensive; opportunities for both academia and industry

National qualifications framework has been important

The value of business champions

Difficulty of getting SMEs to buy in – large corporations have no difficulty

Maybe use placements to break the ice for SMEs

