Work-based learning in higher education: approaches and challenges

Dovile Sandaraite
EURASHE Communications and European Affairs Manager
TO BEGIN WITH

Live statistics from the audience

Will the future job market demand employees with academic knowledge as well as practical skills?
TO BEGIN WITH

Live statistics from the audience

The major challenge for work based learning?
• Introduction of EURASHE and professional higher education
• External challenges and developments
• Future Universities-Future Skills-Future Students
• Work based learning and project examples
VISION

EURASHE strives to support the development and transformation of European society through professional higher education.

MISSION

EURASHE’s mission is to strengthen the impact of innovative, high quality professional higher education and related user-oriented research in Europe by representing professional higher education institutions and facilitating their multi-stakeholder cooperation and dialogue.
MEMBERSHIP

• EURASHE represents universities of applied sciences and other institutions of PHE (colleges, universities with professionally oriented programmes/faculties)
  – 50 full members: 14 national associations, 36 individual institutions
  – 1 associate member
  – 9 affiliate members: 5 individual institutions outside the EHEA, 3 individual institutions within the EHEA
    1 bona fide organisation
EURASHE ACTIVITIES

- membership representation, notably towards European institutions, authorities and stakeholders;
- production of policy papers, studies and other documents;
- organisation of networking activities, learning events, conferences and seminars for the members and partners;
- communication of activities and opportunities;
- partnership with stakeholder organisations in higher education;
- involvement in projects.
PHE IN THE TIMES OF TRANSFORMATION
CONTEXT

• Societal changes: knowledge society, role of expertise, education, information
• Economy & Labour market changes: globalisation, migration, changing economic structure, qualifications characters and requirements
• Technological changes – digitalisation, mobility, access
• Cultural changes – priorities, Green society, mobility, flexibility,
Supporting Professional Higher Education in Europe

Autonomous learning competence

- Personal agility
- Self-efficacy
- Self-management
- Self-initiative
- Autonomy
- Tolerance for ambiguity
- Need/motivation for achievement
- Ability to reflect

Communication competence

Cooperation competence

Future mindset

Sense-making

Agility

Creativity

Digital literacy

World

Individual organization-related skills

Object

Individual development-related skills

Subject

International Report on Future Skills Vice-President of EURASHE Prof. Ulf Daniel Ehlers, 2019
How does a future university look like?
How would you describe it in one word?
FUTURE STUDENT PROFILES

• Creative, Critical and Innovative Thinker
• Independent and Autonomous Learner
• Team member and Collaborator
• Learning to Learn & Life Long Learner
• Specialist and Multi Skill
• Computing and Technology Oriented
THE STUDENT OF THE FUTURE WILL BE EVERYONE
WORK-BASED LEARNING AND EURASHE PROJECTS
WORK-BASED LEARNING PROJECTS

• Concept of PHE (HAPHE)
• Policy (Procsee)
• Quality (ApprenticeQ, SAPS)
• Promotion at SME – guidelines & criteria (SAPS)
• Institutional level and organisation (ApprenticeTrack, MentorTrain)
IS THIS PHE?

Machine Learning Class
Today: are you ready for IoT?
HAPHE project on Harmonising Approaches to Professional Higher Education in Europe.

- 11 partners from 10 different countries;
- Goal: find characteristics and propose a definition of PHE

HOW? desk research and an empirical Europe-wide survey.
Differences between PHEI & AHEI

What institutions think of themselves

- Clear focus on academic-related knowledge and fundamental research
- Education focuses on knowledge and its development
- Focus on groundbreaking research (fundamental research)
- Profession-oriented education and training
- Education focuses primarily on employability in a wider meaning (ability of employment over a lifetime)
- Clear focus on academic and profession-related knowledge and research
- Focus on practice relevant knowledge and applied research mainly
- Programme delivery includes cooperation with employers

HAPHE Research 2014 - 16 European Countries
PROFESSIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION DEFINITION

Professional higher education is a form of higher education that offers a particularly intense integration with the world of work in all its aspects, including teaching, learning, research and governance, and at all levels of the overarching qualifications framework of the EHEA.
Over the next years, industry demand for employees with qualifications combining practical skills and academic higher education will increase.
PROCSEE project on Strengthening Professional Higher Education and VET in Central & South Eastern Europe.

- 7 partners from 7 different countries (with a specific focus on Central and South Eastern Europe);

- **Goal:** to bring leading actors in the field from across Europe, educational institutions and companies from SEE and European and Regional policy actors, and provide specific policy inputs on how to address these priorities in each participating country as well as across the region.
PROCSEE project on Strengthening Professional Higher Education and VET in Central & South Eastern Europe.

Policy-recommendations and best-practice sharing, focused on four specific areas:

• Alignment of VET with regional/local economic development strategies
• Promotion of VET, especially to respond to identified skill shortages
• Organising and monitoring student placements in the world of work
• Personal Learning Environments and Further Education
**PROCSEE project on Strengthening Professional Higher Education and VET in Central & South Eastern Europe.**

**RESULTS:**

- Fully working centers have been created where stakeholders—organizations, businesses, government can meet.
- Slovenia prepared the National HE strategy based on the outcomes of the project.
- Romania didn't have a national PHE association: created one after the project.
- European Commission’s encouragement to create Procsee2 project.
SAPS project on Supporting Apprenticeships between Professional Higher Education & Small and Medium Enterprises.

**SAPS background**

SMEs might not have the structures in place to take on apprentices

The value proposition is not always clear for the SMEs

PHE Institutions are not always well-prepared to work with SMEs

**SAPS objectives**

Improve the perception of SMEs of the benefits of engaging apprentices from PHEIs

Lower the barriers to cooperation between PHEIs and SMEs

Establish more regular and structured cooperation between the umbrella organisations for PHE and organisations of SMEs
Apprenticeship Quality Toolkit:

- Apprenticeship Quality Checklist for PHEs
- Apprenticeship Quality Checklist for SMEs
SMEs Processes:

1. Create
2. Negotiate
3. Manage
2. Negotiating the Agreement

PROCESS

PROCESS SCOPE

Assuring the SME can adequately participate in the establishment of apprenticeship agreements which are mutually beneficial to all involved parties.

CRITERIA

REQUIREMENTS

EVIDENCE [no.]

EVALUATION GRID

SUGGESTED ACTIONS [no.]

2.2

Matching Students with Placements

2.2.1 Has the SME established a documented procedure for describing the placement and its conditions to students and PHEIs?

2.2.2 Has the SME established a procedure for personally presenting the placement to nominated students?

2.2.3 Does the SME have a procedure for selecting apprentices?
EASY APPRENTICESHIPS FOR SMALL BUSINESS

Four Guides on how to Boost your Business with Apprenticeships

1. Getting Started
   Setting up and Launching an Apprenticeship Scheme

2. Maximising the Business Case for Participation
   Designing Profitable Apprenticeship Programmes

3. Effective Introductions to your Business
   Onboarding Apprentices

4. Assisting Apprentices in Learning to Work
   Effective Mentoring

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“Apprenticeships are too demanding”

There is a misconception that apprenticeships are too demanding as they require a lot of time investment at the beginning and usually the apprentices do not stay enough time to return the investment in work and knowledge transfer.

However, with a well thought out apprenticeship programme and business plan, apprenticeships should be profitable for all parties involved. It may take some time to create procedures and rules for recruiting and developing people in the future, but by investing in apprentices, companies secure their talent flow, establish a long-term competitive advantage in human capital and boost the motivation of their own employees.

“SMEs are too small to offer apprenticeships”

Employers often think that they are too specialised to offer a comprehensive apprenticeship programme. However, apprentices will only choose to work in companies within their own speciality, and their main requirement is a mentor who will be willing to guide an apprentice on a day to day basis. Thus, even one-person companies can successfully offer apprenticeships.

“We don’t have an office where to train apprentices”

Many SMEs work from home, or work in the field. All successful apprenticeships involve practice at the actual place of work - whether that be at the premises of clients, in a vehicle or remotely from home – as long as apprentices work in the same place/context as their mentor an apprenticeship can be successful.

Contact your Nearest Educational Provider and get more information!
Easy Apprenticeships for Small Business

Maximising the Business Case for Participation
Designing Profitable Apprenticeship Programmes

"Apprenticeships only serve to train workers for my competition"

Many SMEs argue that their investment in training apprentices only serves to train employees which are then snapped by larger companies, or by their direct competitors.

A different way to look at apprenticeships is as a way to screen, train and select your own future workforce. Thus for example, the RISE Sheffield City Region programme in the UK, has been operating for 5 years and 78% of the students are retained in the business after the initial placement – demonstrating that SMEs can retain talent longer term.

Employers refusing to train apprentices due to competition concerns, ignores the benefits of creating an ecosystem of highly skilled potential employees, jointly trained and available to all employers.

Additionally, simple instruments such as non-compete and non-disclosure agreements, can assure that proprietary information is not shared at the end of apprenticeships.

"Apprentices make great low-skill temporary workers"

All too often, companies deploy apprentices to take over low-skill temporary jobs, which their full-time staff would prefer not to deal with. While this approach may reduce the effort needed to train an apprentice, it totally voids many of the benefits of apprenticeships, in particular improved recruitment, knowledge transfer and potential value created by apprentices for the company.
“Apprentices only need the apprenticeships for formal purposes and should not be given proper tasks”

The issue of ‘irrelevant’ apprenticeships where students are asked to ‘copy and scan documents’ is exactly what should be avoided. These miss out on key benefits of apprenticeships, in particular knowledge transfer and potential value created by apprentices for the company as well as improved recruitment among others.

“Apprentices are unexperienced to perform serious tasks”

Students shouldn’t be considered as young and inexperienced but rather as motivated and eager to learn, which pushes them to learn and perform well in their apprenticeship. Although self-evident it is often overlooked fact that the better we prepare and train the apprentices, better they will perform in their tasks which are of course a part of company’s daily work.
Assisting Apprentices in Learning to Work
Effective Mentoring

“Mentoring requires a fully dedicated staff member”

While it is good practice to assign a mentor to each apprentice, that doesn’t mean a mentor should spend all his/her time with the apprentice. According to some studies up to 30% of mentors’ time can be spent on giving instructions, working with the apprentice and monitoring their work. Depending on the style of mentoring and experience of mentor it can be as little as 10%, which leaves enough time for mentor to work on his/her primary tasks.

Nevertheless, some of the mentor’s regular work does need to be reallocated to other employees, to allow for proper mentoring of the apprentice. The cost of an employee’s time spent on mentorship needs to be evaluated in the business plan and offset by gains of having an additional person doing apprenticeship in the company.

“Apprenticeship has no benefit for the mentor”

Good apprenticeships benefit not only the company and apprentice but also the mentor. Mentors transfer valuable skills, knowledge and insights to apprentices to help them develop in their career and personally. In return, mentorship gives mentors an opportunity to evaluate and optimise the efficacy of established procedures in the company. It also brings a fresh pair of eyes to entrenched procedures from persons with solid theoretical background. In this way apprentices can bring a valuable contribution to any SMEs team.

“Mentors should be experienced in human resources”

In companies that have an HR department, training and apprenticeship-management often fall to the HR department. However, the job of a mentor is not to manage the skills-strategy of the company – it is their job to impart their personal skills and ways of doing things to an apprentice. Thus, with a bit of basic training in mentoring skills, anyone can be a mentor.
SAPS project on **Supporting Apprenticeships between Professional Higher Education & Small and Medium Enterprises.**

**Results:**

- Multifunctional information website in 10 languages
- European wide awareness raising campaign
- **More concrete:** in Slovenia the number of placements offered by SMEs **tripled.**
ApprenticeshipQ (Mainstreaming Procedures for Quality Apprenticeships in Educational Organisations and Enterprises)

Goal:

• Provide a clear framework for quality management of apprenticeships at the system, provider and company levels ensuring systematic feedback

• Foster mutual trust and respect through regular cooperation and better quality management between the apprenticeship partners
## ApprenticeshipQ (Mainstreaming Procedures for Quality Apprenticeships in Educational Organisations and Enterprises)

### HEIs
- Involvement of Stakeholders in Designing Learning Objectives
- Definition of SMART Learning Objectives
- Transparency
- Definition of Standards for Placements
- Identification (finding) of Placement Positions
- Capacity building for SMEs
- System for Management of Placement-Supply
- Security

### Businesses
- Preparation for the Apprenticeship
- Identifying Mentors
- Drafting the Agreement
- Matching Students with Placements
- Management
- Introduction
- Mentoring
- Work experience
- Evaluation
- Quality Assurance Procedures
Apprenticetrack (Smart Electronic System for Tracking Apprenticeships)

Goal:
• To create a multifunctional tracking system for apprenticeships
Goal:
• Create training materials for prospective and early-stage mentors in higher VET/PHE
• Improve the competencies of experienced mentors
WRAP UP
Challenges

- terminological confusion
- statutory borders between HE and VET
- cultural dimension – perception of learning outside of school
- comprehension of potential benefits
- collaboration, balanced engagement and mutual understanding among stakeholders
- capacity and recognition of WBL and related activities
- change of academic staff and students’ roles
- individualised approach & assessment, supervision & guidance
- external assessment
- administration and bureaucracy, flexibility
- financial aspects, incentives
Meet the NASA intern who discovered a new planet on his third day
any questions?

Dovile Sandaraite
EURASHE Communications and European Affairs Manager
dovile.sandaraite@eurashe.eu

www.eurashe.eu
WEXHE PROJECT

Integrating Entrepreneurship And Work Experience In Higher Education

Key Principles for Work-Based Learning in Higher Education
1. Partnerships.
2. Course Design.
3. Pedagogical Approaches.
4. Assessment.
5. Quality Assured.
6. Institutional policy.
8. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).
11. Employer In-House Training.
12. Quality provision with partners.