

Universities and external stakeholders: Developing a partnership in creating flexible learning routes

Two Beflex Plus case studies presented.

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Content

- Introduction Hogeschool van Amsterdam
- Beflex Plus case study 1: working and learning to a bachelor degree in IT
- Beflex Plus case study 2: working and learning in a management development programme
- Models of flexible learning pathways
- Key factors in developing a partnership

1. Hogeschool van Amsterdam

- University of Applied Sciences
 - Bachelor degree and master degree programmes in a professional field
- Business Administration - Engineering - Built Environment - Social Work - Education - Communication - Law - Health - ICT
- All degree courses are competence based
 - All bachelor degree courses: 240 credits = 4-year
 - Almost 38.000 students (of which 6.000 are working adults studying for a degree on a parttime base)

HvA policy



- more focus on adult learners: professional workers who need a bachelor or master degree
- more co-operation with organizations in upgrading their employees (work based learning programmes)
- This requires:
 - RPL: recognition of prior learning (nonformal and informal learning)
 - Flexible, tailor made degree programmes
 - A new organization: a central RPL unit



The HvA RPL Centre

1. Portal for organizations/candidates
2. Developing RPL tools and procedures i.c.w. educational departments and, if needed, with ext. stakeholders
3. Planning and organization of RPL assessments
4. Quality assurance and training and accreditation of assessors
5. Development of expertise and support LLL



2. Beflex Plus case study 1: Working and learning towards a bachelor degree in IT

Stakeholders:

1. HvA: University of applied sciences Amsterdam
 1. Department of Business Administration
 2. Department of Information Engineering
 3. Centre for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)
2. Yacht:
 1. Yacht Academy / HR Department
 2. Employees and their managers
3. Exin: private training company in IT-courses

Objectives of Yacht

1. All employees should have a bachelor degree in IT:
 - To show their customers that they only work with highly qualified employees
 - To stimulate the further development of their employees and strenghten the commitment with the company
2. Goal: To create a learning route leading to a bachelor degree IT

Requirements of the learning route

- accessible for all employees of Yacht in NL, no matter where they live
- RPL is an important part of the route
- preparing employees also for their next career step (8 focus positions)
- it will take relevant (and highly valued) IT-certificates, offered by Exin, into account.
- efficiency: employees only enrol for the university programme once they cannot develop the required competences at work or at Exin anymore
- quality standard of the accredited HvA IT program

Project activities to develop the learning route

1. Making the required competences transparent
(Yacht: organizational competencies focus positions;
HvA: bachelor qualifications in learning outcomes;
Exin: qualifications IT modules)
2. Developing an IT-careerscan as a first step to an RPL-procedure (HvA)
3. Developing new forms of work based learning (HvA)
4. Developing a related HR policy (Yacht)

The learning route for Yacht participants

1. IT-careerscan, resulting in an advice for working and learning at Yacht
2. Working and learning at Yacht: including job rotation, Exin modules and assembling proof of the learning that took place (portfolio). With a supervisor from Yacht.
3. RPL-procedure at the university: assessment of portfolio and criterion based interview
4. Enrolling as a student for a tailor made bachelor programme at the HvA (for at least a specialization and final thesis, but it can be more)

Key factors

- Yacht employees can work and learn in their own pace and predominantly at their own workplace
- They are working at relevant competences for their degree and for their next career step
- Intermediate certification is possible with the Exin modules
- A bachelor degree as a final result

Results so far

- 250 IT-careerscans
- 50-60 employees working and learning at the workplace, with a supervisor
- 2 candidates finished RPL-assessment (with expected results)
- No one has his degree yet.

But also:

- A lot of discussions within the HvA en between HvA and Yacht: how to do things, who is doing what, costs and benefits, etc.
- Developing, step-by-step, a real partnership.

3. Beflex Plus case study 2: working and learning for managers

- Stakeholders:

1. Municipal Government of Zwolle (MGZ):

- HR Department
- all managers of MGZ

2. Windesheim University:

- RPL Centre
- Department of Business Administration

Objective:

Create and execute a Management Development programme for all managers of the MGZ



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Learning route MD programme

1. RPL procedure at Windesheim University:
 1. Intake
 2. portfolio: evidence of learning that already took place (evidence of professional performances), feedback and reflection
 3. Careertests (optional)
 4. Assessment: criterion based interview
2. Personal development plan
3. Enrolling in a tailor made MD programme
4. Optional (after finishing MD): enrolling in short tailor made Bachelor degree programme.

Models of flexible learning pathways

Demand steered learning routes

**INDEPENDENT
(workbased)
PATHWAYS**

IN COMPANY

Organized
for the
individual

Organized
for
groups

**FLEXIBLE
PROGRAMMING
of existing modules**

**MASS
CUSTOMIZATION**

Supply steered learning routes

Key factors in partnerships (1)

- Explore organizational educational needs and the needs and goals of individual employees
- Make organizational competences and formal bachelor/master qualifications transparent: speak each others language
- a learning route is more than a bachelor/master programme/specific courses a university has to offer: think in full learning pathways

Key factors in partnerships (2)

- The individual learner is the central focus:
how can the university and the employer support the individual learner?
- A learning attitude of all stakeholders involved
- A long term perspective and commitment



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