

Ways of linking programmes with the labour market

This list has been compiled from participants and speakers at the WUS-Austria Seminars in Montenegro (September 2009) and Serbia (February 2009). Implementation of ideas in this list are not necessarily the sole responsibility of higher education teachers. Some are at policy level and some are the responsibility of those in the work place. The ideas will apply differently in different disciplines.

1. Use Master's degrees as a professional development qualification so that most are filled with people who are already working and want to update, develop etc.
2. Organise work experience / internships for students.
3. Arrange that dissertations are sponsored by industry – ie encouraging students to research areas that are real workplace issues.
4. Send university teachers into the work place for work experience / internships.
5. Recruit people from the workplace to teach some parts of the programme
6. Ask those from the work place to act as mentors for students
7. Ask people from work place to be involved in the development of the programme
8. Develop some of the modules / courses as short courses for people at work as professional training or development. These could be accredited / credit rated and could be accumulated towards qualifications or awards (eg a Master's programme).
9. Make assessments relevant to real work activities. For examples if reports are written in the work place, writing reports might be a form of assignment. This may need to be incorporated in the language of the learning outcomes.
10. Make sure that the relevant specific and generic skills are included in the programmes. They may be directly relevant to the discipline or you may add them as work place skills (for example, the ability to give good presentations; teamwork skills are very important to most employers etc).
11. Develop occupational standards.
12. Set up the opportunity for work places on the campus. These small work places may or may not have direct relationships to the programmes. This arrangement might be called a 'Science Park' development.
13. Allow for market-driven initiatives and innovations – and see new developments as having the potential for new programme / module development.

14. Ensure that students have developed entrepreneurial capacities so that they can develop their own businesses. This might require courses in Entrepreneurship or complementary studies courses. Teachers may need to train to run such courses.
- 15 Encourage applied research.
- 16 Develop liaison units in universities to link between companies and the programmes. Or this might be the work of an individual 'liaison officer'.
- 17 Develop professional or employer bodies to oversee professional education and employment in different sectors or jobs.
- 18 Give students business skills courses.
- 19 Have awareness of where employment needs are, bearing in mind that it is as bad to overproduce graduates as to under-produce them – ie match supply and demand. Statistics may be available from various places and related to the whole country or to localities.
- 20 Develop alumni associations so that students in the work place come back and talk about their work to students on the current programme.
- 21 Include career guidance on the programme – have 'job fests' etc.
- 22 Develop more general research links between companies, businesses and the universities – for both students and the teaching staff.
- 23 Use real life case studies relating to the relevant labour market in part of the educational work with students (eg problem solving groups).
- 24 Hold a conversation about how you can stay up to date with the innovations that are occurring in your field.
- 25 Influence policy makers so that there is support and drive from the top for labour market – HE links.
- 26 Hold events/seminars/talks at the university on work related material. Invite students, faculty, graduates and those from workplace.
- 27 Organise company visits.
- 28 Ensure that students are able to function as sophisticated critical thinkers.
- 29 Use occasional master-classes to develop specific work-related skill areas. These may not be a part of the programme.
- 30 Ensure that students are competent in languages and IT skills that are relevant and appropriate to work that they may undertake.
- 31 Recognise the needs of students who will go into workplaces other than the obvious!