

Enhancing work-integrated learning (WIL) through strategic stakeholder collaboration at University West

Hanne Smidt Södergård, Senior Advisor, University West

Johan Linder, Head of Education, NU Hospital Group

Workshop EUA Learning and Teaching Forum

Bilbao 3 February 2023



Collaboration

through strategic partnership

HV



VÄSTRA
GÖTALANDSREGIONEN
NU-SJUKVÅRDEN

NU-sjukvården



HÖGSKOLAN VÄST



University West

- **Young university with a profile on work-integrated learning (WIL)**
Approx. 13 200 students (5 500 on campus)
- **Focus on inclusion, widening access and participation**
- **High level of employment after graduation**
- **High level of external funding for research**
- **Doctoral students primarily in work-integrated learning and production technology**



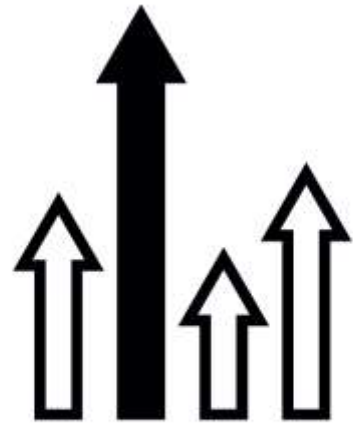
OUR VISION

For a sustainable world
University West is a driving
force within society, working
together with a wide range of
external partners in order to
make knowledge accessible
to more people.

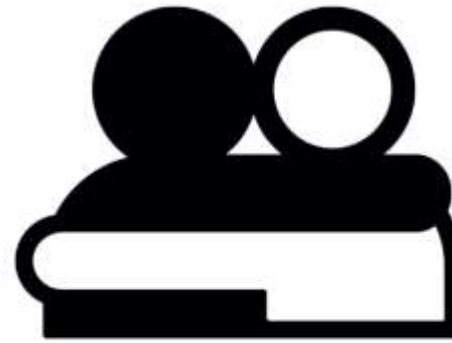
Our core values



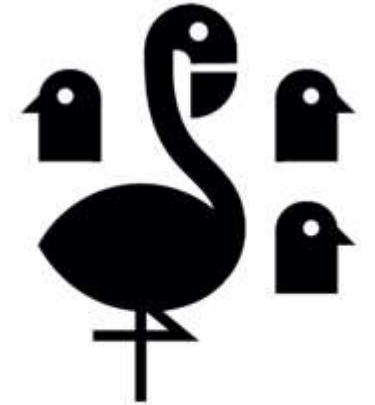
GENEROUS



PRO-ACTIVE



INCLUSIVE

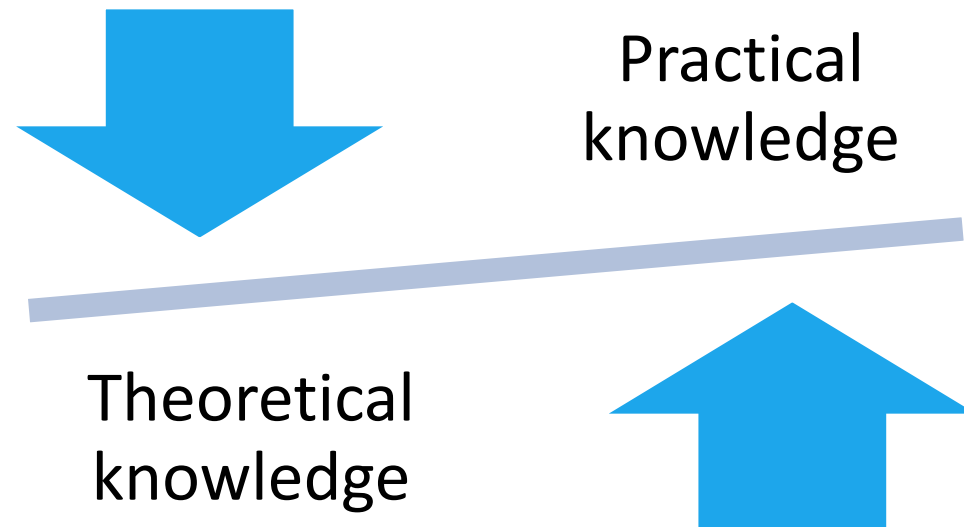


"CRAZY ENOUGH"



Work-integrated learning

Focus on the integration between theory and practice



Question

- **How does your institution achieve an integration between theoretical courses and practical elements, possibly in specific study fields?**

Universtiy West
regard work-
integrated
learning (WIL) as
an educational
design, a
pedagogical
method and a
perception of
knowledge

“Work-integrated learning is a pedagogical practice whereby students come to learn from the integration of experiences in educational and workplace settings”

Billet (2009)

WIL activities



- Cooperative education - COOP
- Work placements and internships
- Sandwich courses
- Project and thesis work based on challenges defined by external partners
- Field studies
- Mentorship
- Case-studies
- Guest lectures
- Portfolio
- Activities that support analytical and academic writing skills

***Independent
thinking, analytical
skills and reflection
are key parts of WIL
in higher education***

- Clinical rotations of staff between the university and strategic partners
- Guest professors



WIL and enhancing strategic partnerships



- **Institutional agreement on how to select and make contracts for joint development with the key strategic partners**
 - **Mutual objectives**
 - **Civil society, industry and public sector**
-

The strategic partnerships



An institutional strategic partnership is a formalised cooperation with an external partner outside academia.

The partnership is defined by the engagement and participation of the leadership both at the university and the partner. It builds on prior cooperation, joint objectives, values and challenges and supports complex forms of cooperation and activities.

The partnership creates joint results and supports competence development and lifelong learning, and promotes sustainability and added-value for both parties.

Our six partners represent our different areas of engagement: 1 civic organisation, 1 regional knowledge center, 1 regional education center, 1 public employer and 2 Swedish/international companies.

Joint objectives



WORKING TOGETHER



LEARNING TOGETHER



ETHICS AND VALUES

Reflection

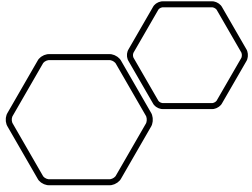
- Does your institution, faculty, and/or programme reflect on the value and sustainability of collaboration with (strategic) partners in teaching and learning?



Characteristics of the strategic partnership agreements at institutional level



- Building on prior cooperation and sustainable over time in mutual cooperation
- Win-win
- Cooperation through education, research, societal development and innovation
- Common values on democracy, societal challenges, sustainability, and equality
- Engagement in joint and joint competence development – learning organisations
- Joint responsibility for students and doctoral students
- Added-value – the strategic partners want to address joint challenges through their partnership with University West.



Joint values and examples of cooperation activities



Education

Student projects
ex-job/thesis work
Lifelong learning courses
Micro-credentials
Up-skilling and upgrading
Practical placements and internships
mentors
Mandatory placements
COOP students
Targeted courses for the partners



Research

HV doctoral students/ industrial Phds-do
post-docs
Senior researchers
Joint staff/professors
Commissioned research
Joint research projects
Competence development



Innovation/societal challenges

Sustainability
Equality
Joint projects
Ethics



How we interact



- **WIL PLATFORMS: MODELS FOR COLLABORATION**

It is a transboundary arena for co-production of knowledge and skills which students, researchers and work come together in a common physical or virtual environment.

- **BILATERAL MEETINGS**

The collaboration with the strategic partners builds on clearly established structures with bilateral meetings between representatives from the strategic partner regularly every year and base on an annual wheel. Outside the meetings between leaderships from both partners, there are cooperation at faculty and programme level as well as in research.

- **JOINT MEETINGS**

Bi-annual meetings where all the strategic partners discuss common challenges eg, on competence development, lifelong learning, inclusion, attraction to the labour market, research

Strategic partnership and WIL in the NU- hospital group

This is NU Hospital Group

- NU Hospital Group employs around 5 600 people
- On an average day
 - 9 children are born
 - 175 patients are treated at our emergency room
 - 1 800 patients visit us for outpatient care
 - 13 000 analyses are carried out in our laboratories



The focus is on an operational angle and the challenges of an emergency hospital

- WIL from our operational perspective
- Learning is integrated in different ways into our daily work and contributes to the mission of an emergency hospital
- Evolving demand for competence development and lifelong learning also in our environment



BEFOLKNINGSFÖRÄNDRINGAR

Förändringar i procent i olika åldersgrupper, år 2030 jämfört med 2020.



Learning in healthcare

- The rapid development in healthcare places demands on education and lifelong learning for all professions.
- Doctors need to maintain and further develop their competence, while there is a lack of time and structured continuing education.
- Research (within WIL) highlights the importance of integrating learning into daily work to meet the need for new skills required in a rapidly changing working life
- Need for more research and developed knowledge about digitized forms of teaching.



Internship and Workplace-based learning (VFU)

- **WIL** in the form of internship and WPBL
 - students and employees have an exchange of knowledge including **proactive and active involvement** in the learning and integrating **theoretical knowledge and practical experience**.
- **Peer learning** – students learning with and from each other, student tutoring in pairs during placements



Continuing professional development (CPD)

- CPD program for pediatricians
 - physicians specializing in medical care for children
 - Integration of general pediatrics and educational skills
 - Needs assessment, adult learning principles, case based
 - Digital platform
- Ripple effects of learning



An aerial photograph of a city, likely Umeå, Sweden. In the foreground, there's a large, modern university building with a curved facade and a prominent brick tower with a green copper roof. The city extends into the background with various residential and commercial buildings under a cloudy sky.

THANK YOU!

WIL – MAKING LEARNING WORK

Hanne.smidt@hv.se@hv.se and johan.linder@vgregion.se

Project members in KAILU
Quality framework for WIL in higher education

Question

How do you engage your stakeholders in teaching and learning - in competence development and lifelong learning?



WIL certification process at HV

WIL as certification process in all education program



"Working together, learning together"

- Decided by the university board in 2018 that "all education programs must be WIL certified"
- Program managers and teacher teams write an *application* to become WIL certified
- The participants are invited to a certification program - a collegial process set up with a supportiv structures (e.g. workshops, think tanks, inspirational lectures, feedback sessions, exchange of experiences with colleagues, etc.)
- Evaluated against certain criteria and guidelines ("Approved", or "not yet approved")
- Unique in Sweden

WHY certify WIL in our programs?

A way to internally quality assure and make explicit the WIL profile in the training programs.

Collegial self-assessment process with a focus on which teaching can clarify the AIL profile.

Get a receipt that we run WIL and that the profile is possible to communicate within the framework of our own teaching.

The WIL certification is process-oriented and is based on three questions:

Why WIL in the training program, the overall purpose of integrating theoretical and practical knowledge as well as sustainability aspects?

What does WIL and sustainability mean for the program, what pedagogical methods and activities are included?

How is this implemented in the education?

= Describe and explain in a teaching tone!

Criteria for WIL certification

In order to achieve "Pass" in the WIL certification with connection to sustainability aspects, it is required that the program description clearly states the following four (4) criteria areas:

- that the program rests on a pedagogical basic view where the connection between theoretical and practical knowledge is motivated and discussed in relation to the program's goals and content
- that the integration of theory and practice, on an overall level, systematically permeates and supports the progression of the program and develops students' readiness to meet and drive sustainable societal development / societal change
- that the student through internship-related activities is given the conditions to develop a learning where practical / experience-based and theoretical knowledge is problematized, challenged and integrated with the help of critical reflection
- that the educational program includes internship-related activities / elements that are designed and implemented in collaboration with actors in the surrounding society, and that these are developed in a way that strengthens the integration of theoretical and practical knowledge

Lessons learned and implications so far...

How to enhance quality in education programs through WIL?

"Working together and learning together"

- Exchange of experience when experienced WIL certifiers meet and share their lessons learned to other colleagues - the collegial aspect of co-creating knowledge about and with WIL is key
- WIL should not be understood as one thing applicable in the same way in all academic disciplines, instead WIL should be developed in relation to the specific discipline or field and its preconditions, traditions and views of knowledge





WIL as a profile and knowledge view

Our WIL profile furthers higher education pedagogy and is realized through a certain knowledge view and an educational design as well as it conceptualizes our collaboration:

- WIL knowledge view encompasses designs for learning that facilitates critical reflections on the integration of practical and theoretical knowledge
- WIL educational design has a special focus on internship-related activities in systematic and mutual collaboration with actors in the surrounding society
- WIL creates conditions for developing a learning where our students become independent and collaboration-driven societal actors

One key process currently taking place now is the WIL certification process



WIL in teaching practices and education



WIL takes many different forms in different programs: The WIL "elements" might be:



Internships, field studies, workplace-based education (VFU), clinical skills training, industry/role playing, guest performances, laboratories with professional/experts, Cooperative education (Co-op), internships, cases, mentorship in courses, etc.

And more!

A taxonomy for WIL-related elements in teaching

(i) Using Practice as Inspiration (“Case”)

This category encompasses instructional designs such as “Teaching Cases”, “Practice-Oriented Simulations and “Role-Plays”, i.e. activities that to some extent are related to practice and may be more or less edited versions of actual situations.

(ii) Bringing Practice to Class (“Imprint”)

This category contains the use of imprints of practice as resources in educational practice. Examples are inviting “Guest Lecturers” and importing artefacts from various professional fields, e.g. “Commercial programming Code” and “Annual Reports” from existing corporations.

(iii) Utilising Professional Tools (“Tool”)

For the activities in this category, the point is to train students to use de-facto standard tools of a profession in the educational design, such as “Reference manuals or databases” (online or printed), “State of the art software packages”, or “Professional Routines and Procedures”.

(iv) Bringing Class to Practice (“Field”)

The activities in this category comprises empirically oriented fieldwork, where students leave campus in order to experience and study real professional settings as part of their education, e.g. “Projects” or “Thesis Work”.

Congrats to 20 programs so far!

Another ten (10) programs are under process this year.

In September 2023 we will hopefully have 30 programs certificated.

In 2023-2024 we will have all our programs certified – also the PhD program in WIL!



Aligning purposes and processes in educational WIL

Dewey (1916)

– two purposes associated with education for occupations, comprising assisting individuals to:

- i) identify to what occupations they are suited
 - ii) develop the capacities required to practice those occupations
- also a third purpose -
- ii) sustain their employability across lengthening working lives



How can the future of work impact the content of education?

Some drivers and signals of changing demands ...

- Potentially through two things: 1) The curriculum and 2) The ways of learning
- And it would work for all types of educational programs:
 - i) the more traditional academic/theoretical programs and
 - ii) the more vocational/profession-based programs, i.e. programs from all the different schools of art, engineering, social science, education and nursing etc.

