# Integrating employability and career competencies into curriculum

Discover Together Conference, Uppsala, June 15th, 2023

Stine Pilsmark Kaldahl Marie Sindberg Jensen University of Southern Denmark



#### **Presenters**

Stine Pilsmark Kaldahl Head of Office

Marie Sindberg Jensen Careers and Employability Consultant

Reaearch & Innovation Organisation (SDU RIO) University of Southern Denmark







#### **Agenda**

Introduction

Working strategically with employability

Our take on employability

Examples: The Transfer Model and Teach-the-Teacher

Perspectives ahead

# SDU in short



SDU**∻** 

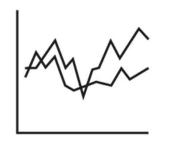
#### **SDU Key figures**



3,972 employees (full-time equivalents)



21,096 full-time students



DKK 3.4



6 cities

#### **Faculties & cities**

**Business & Social Sciences** 

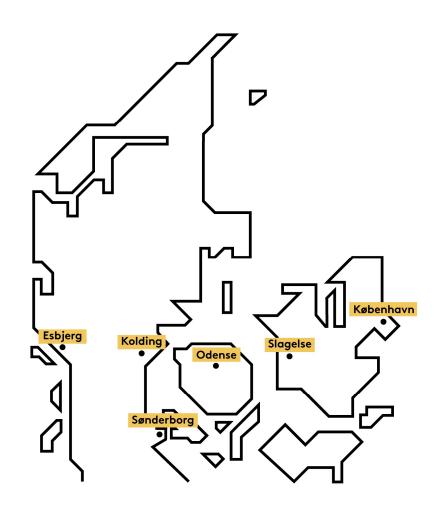
**Science** 

**Humanities** 

**Health Sciences** 

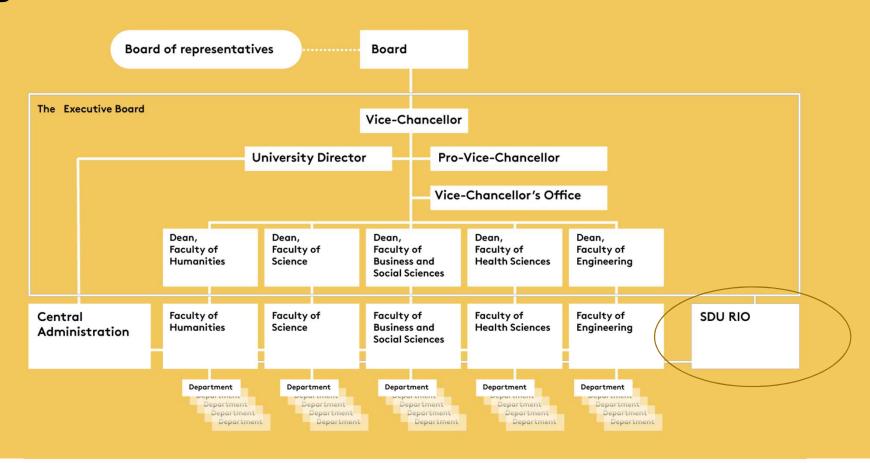
**Engineering** 

**The Central Administration** 





#### The organisation





## SDU RIO / Research & Innovation Organisation

A separate unit at the university, supporting the whole university 80 employees, 5 teams

Link between the university and the surrounding society:

- → Research support
- → Legal services
- → Commercialisation
- → Start-up
- → Outreach
- → Careers & Employabiliy



### **Team Careers & Employability**

The team:

1 head of office

7 careers and employability consultants

1 business intelligence officer

4 student workers (2 student career counselors,1 communications assistant, 1 data specialist)

- → We run the central Career Guidance Service for all students at SDU
- → We teach Career Management Skills courses at 4 out of 5 faculties
- → We support faculty staff and management at all 5 faculties in their work with employability
- → Our aim is to help students achieve and maintain relevant jobs throughout their career.

# Careers and Employability Consultants in SDU RIO

# Competency profile

#### Counselor

Target group: Students

#### **Teacher**

Target groups: Students and Faculty

#### Consultant

Target group: Faculty



# Working strategically with employability

- → The Employment Effort has been a part of SDU's Strategy 2020-2023
- → Working strategically:
- → Collaboration with management Deans, Vice Deans, Heads of studies
- → Action plans for all collaborations: Activites, efforts, goals, ressources
- → Creating Action plans for all collaborations ensures
  - → that our ressources are spent where the need is
  - → involvement, commitment and ownership in our collaborations

## What is employability?

#### SDU RIO's definition of employability:

Employability is not the same as getting employed after graduation. Employability is building the ability to successfully maintain an occupation, develop oneself professionally and personally as well as being able to change jobs and careers many times during one's working life.

→ The employability effort contributes to higher employment **as well as** an increased focus on students developing relevant and attractive competencies that meet the demands of the future labour market.



27% get a job within their field of education

Graduates from 2023 wil during their working lifeon average change jobs 17 times across 5 sectors or industries

11% of employers believe that universities give graduates the competences needed

96% of university leaders believe their institutions effectively prepare their students for the labour market. 47% of all jobs are automated in 2033

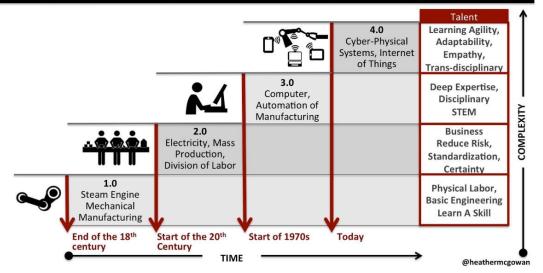
65% of students of year 2010 will be living on jobs that do not exist yet

Within 45 years we have developed 'machines' that can work on their own to provide solutions better and cheaper than any human being.

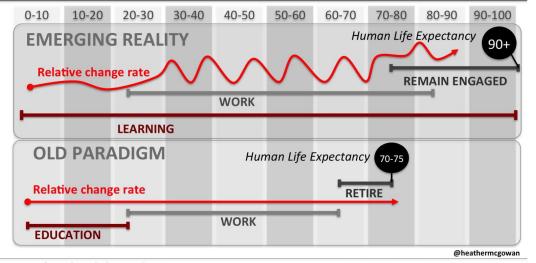
Sources: Gallup 2014; Foundation for Young Australians; H. McGowan (2017)



#### Context: Next Industrial Revolution (World Economic Forum 4th)



#### Career Arc: Longevity + Change Rates = Lifelong Learning



**Future of Work and The Academy** 

Robert E. Johnson | Heather E. McGowan

# Four challenges with traditional and reactive employability efforts

Traditional and reactive Employability efforts

- Extra curricular activities
- Voluntary workshops
- Voluntary career services

WHO?

Who seek out employability activities?

The resourceful students



The "wrong" students

WHEN?

When do they seek out employability activities?

When they graduate



At the wrong time



What is the biggest challenge for our graduates?

"How do I apply my knowledge on the labour market?"



Disconnected from the subject knowledge of their studies



What effect does an employability activity have on a student's employability?

??



We have no knowledge on whether what we do makes a difference



#### Employability as a part of curriculum

#### Why the employability effort as a part of curriculum can be a solution

- Career learning is no quick fix but a process over time. Students acquire the competences and ownership to explore and challenge the connection between education and practice during, and not after, their education.
- All students' career learning process is evaluated and minimum secured and data on student involment in employability efforts is systematically collected.
- Students learn to **connect their subject knowledge to practice** by engaging in practical activities and reflect on and contextualise the proces (Lightner et al. 2008)
- Students appreciate when teachers adress employability in their teaching (Cranmer 2006, Mason et al. 2009, O'Leary 2017).
- All students work with their career development and employability, including those who need
  it the most (Daubney, 2021).





#### Your turn ©



Do you work strategically in your units?



Do you work with employability?



What potential or opportunities do you see for working with these things in your units?

SDU 🏠

#### **Employability in curriculum – how?**

Two examples

Transfer and the Transfer Model

Teach-the Teacher

#### **Transfer**

- → Working with transfer means facilitating students' ability to transfer their knowledge into new contexts
- → When we work with transfer, we focus on the ability to apply knowlegde and skills into a practical setting in or outside academia.



#### Why work with transfer?



STUDENTS FIND IT HARD TO UNDERSTAND WHAT THEY LEARN AND HOW IT CAN BE USED IN SETTINGS OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM.



IT IS HELPFUL FOR
TEACHERS TO HAVE A
FOUNDATION FOR
INCORPORATING
EMPLOYABILITY ELEMENTS
IN THEIR TEACHING.

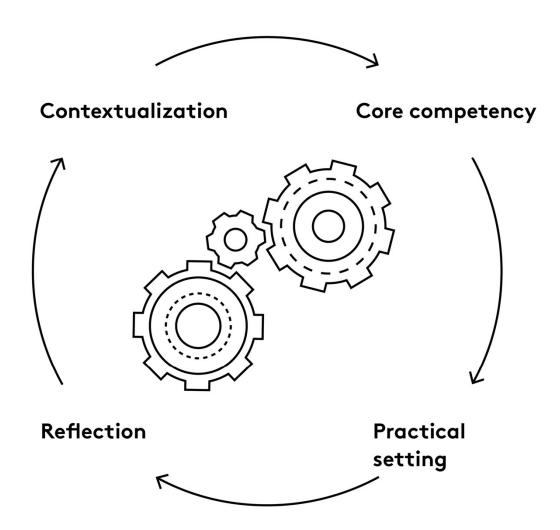


STUDY PROGRAMMES
NEED A TOOL AND A
FRAMWORK FOR
INCLUDING
EMPLOYABILITY IN
STUDY PROGRAMMES
AND COURSES.

#### The Transfer Model

A tool for building employability activities in curriculum

→ The model is the point of departure for all our career and empolyability activities





© Stine Pilsmark Kaldahl and Kim B. Hansen, SDU RIO, 2019

#### **Teach-the-teacher**

- A competency development programme for university teachers
- Builds on Kate Daubney's concept of extracted employability (Daubney 2021)
- We support teachers in integrating employability and transfer into their teaching by structuring activities in curriculum around the Transfer Model
- A very hands-on and practical approach

# Part 1 Before the semester

- The teacher prepares teaching activities in a practical setting
- With an employability consultant

#### Part 2

During the semester

- They try out teaching with the practival setting during the semester
- On their own

#### Part 3

After the semester

- We follow up on the activities
- With an employability consultant and the head of studies



### **Example: Teach-the-teacher**

Associate professor, Danish

**Course:** Textual production

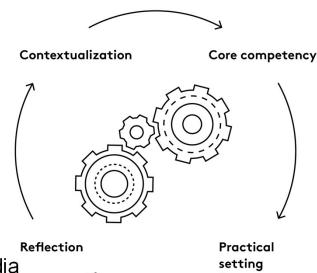
Core competency trained in course: Communicating in different genres or media

**Practice setting:** SDU Communication unit gives feedback on the students' rewriting of academic papers into SoMe-friendly texts.

#### **Outcome:**

- Students became more aware of how their subject knowledge can come into play in other settings.
   Students reached a higher academic level
- The teacher became more aware of the process of learning in new settings. It was a good opportunity to try new things.





#### Teach-the-teacher experiences

- → It is challenging to work with for teachers, especially because it is a new way of working with curriculum and facilitating learning. Especially the reflection part is very different from typical academic ways of working.
- → But, teachers who have completed the programme also state, that:
- → "Employability and subject knowledge can go hand ind hand they do not contrast with each other"
- → "Working with employability is important and relevant"
- → "It is not dangerous to try out new things"
- → "It makes sense to our students to work with their subject knowledge in practical settings"

#### In the long run...

 Increased graduate employability and employment •Students and graduates meeting the demands of the academic labour market

•Students and graduates getting prepared for lifelong learning

#### Our vision:

 That employability becomes a natural part of the development and improvement of educations and study programmes at the university, thus improving the emloyment rate of university graduates.

SDU &

### Thank you for your attention

Stine Pilsmark Kaldahl Head of Office, Team Careers & Employability <a href="mailto:spka@sdu.dk">spka@sdu.dk</a>



Marie Sindberg Jensen Careers and Employability Consultant, Team Careers & Employability msj@sdu.dk



Research & Innovation Organisation
The University of Southern Denmark

www.sdu.dk www.mitsdu.dk/karriere



# References

- → O'Riordan et al. 2017
- → Cranmer 2006
- → Mason et al. 2009
- → O'Leary 2017
- → Lightner et al. 2008
- → K. Daubney, 2021
- → H. E. McGowan 2017 and 2020

