

Integrating employability and career competencies into curriculum

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Agenda

Introduction

Working strategically with
employability

Our take on employability

Examples: The Transfer Model
and Teach-the-Teacher

Perspectives ahead

SDU in short



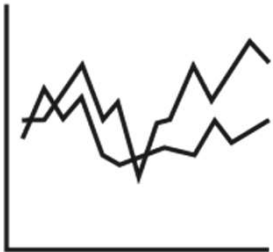
SDU Key figures



3,972 employees
(full-time equivalents)



21,096
full-time students



DKK 3.4
billion in revenue



6
cities

Faculties & cities

Business & Social Sciences

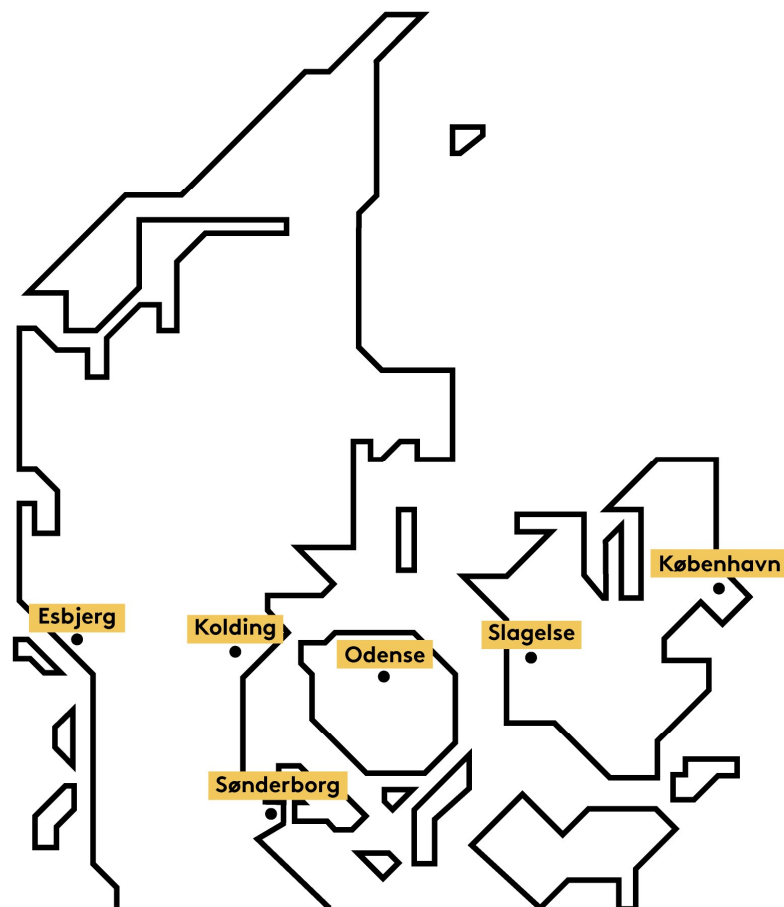
Science

Humanities

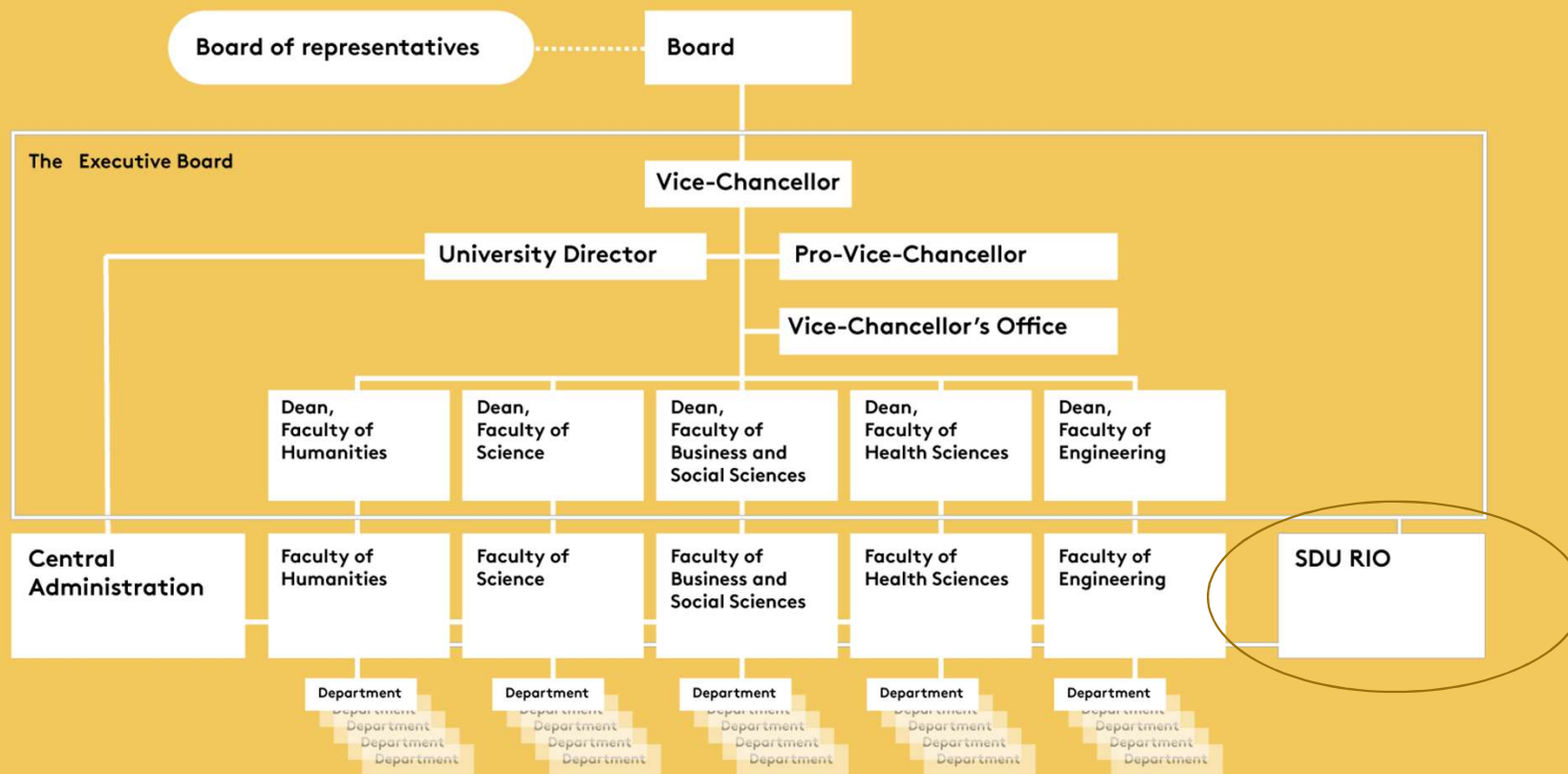
Health Sciences

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 & Employability**

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: Activities, efforts, goals, resources
 - Creating Action plans for all collaborations ensures
 - that our resources are spent where the need is
 - involvement, commitment and ownership in our collaborations

What is employability?

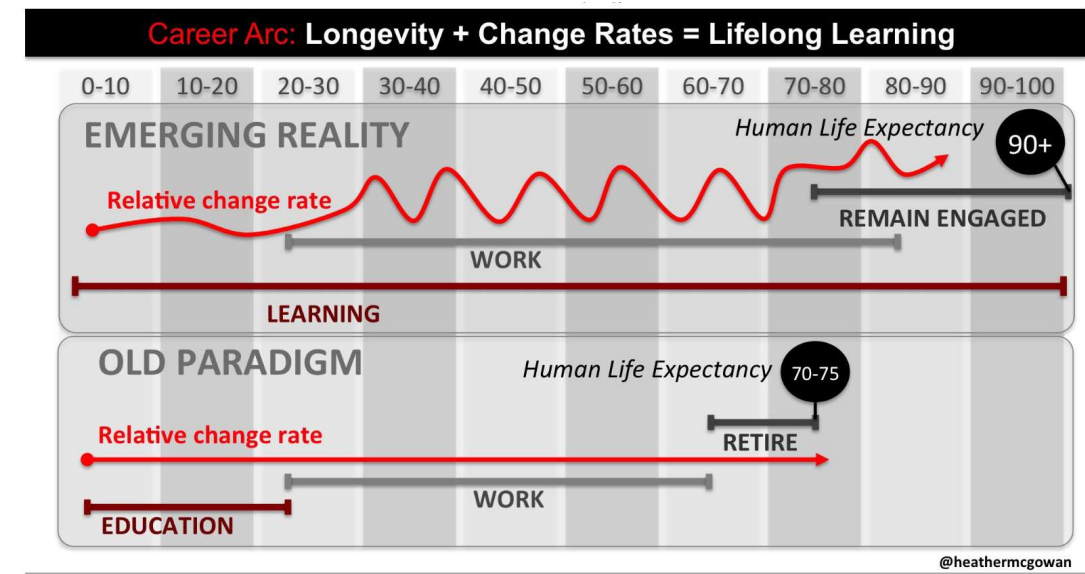
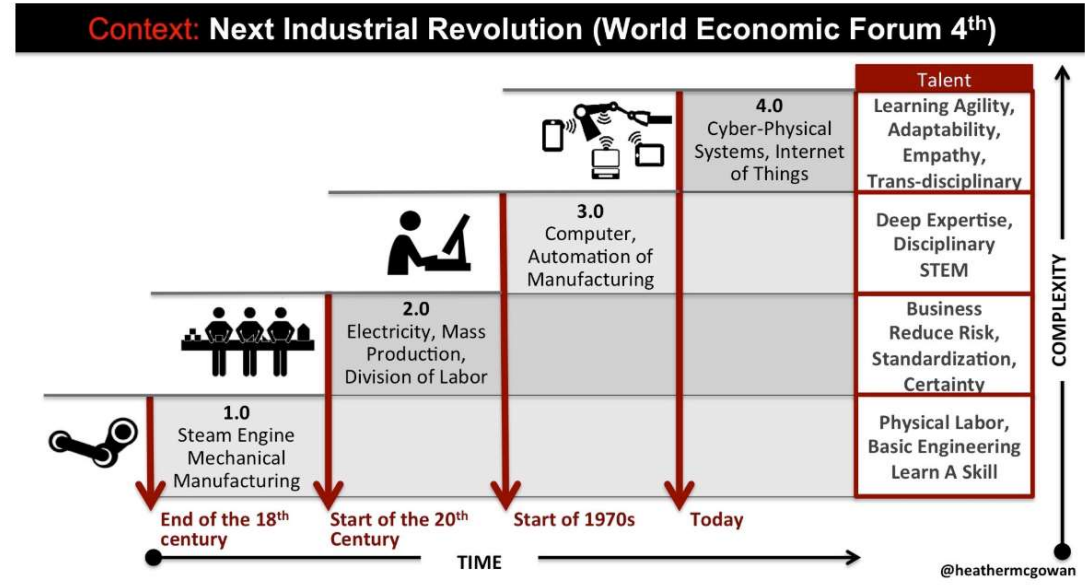
SDU RIO's definition of employability:

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.

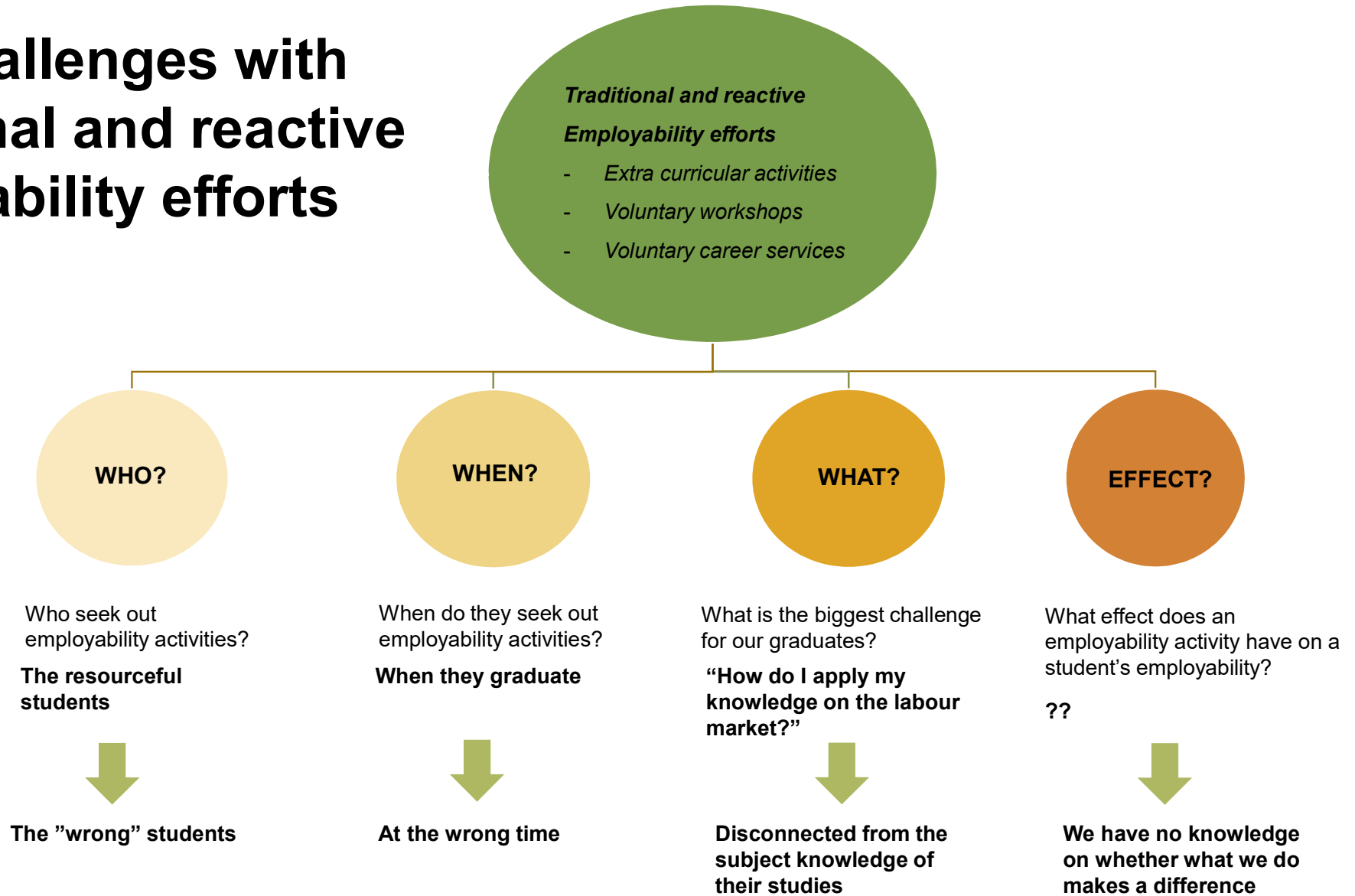
→ The employability effort contributes to higher employment **as well as** an increased focus on students developing relevant and attractive competencies that meet the demands of the future labour market.



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



Four challenges with traditional and reactive employability efforts



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 involvement 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 process (Lightner et al. 2008)
- Students **appreciate when teachers address 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?

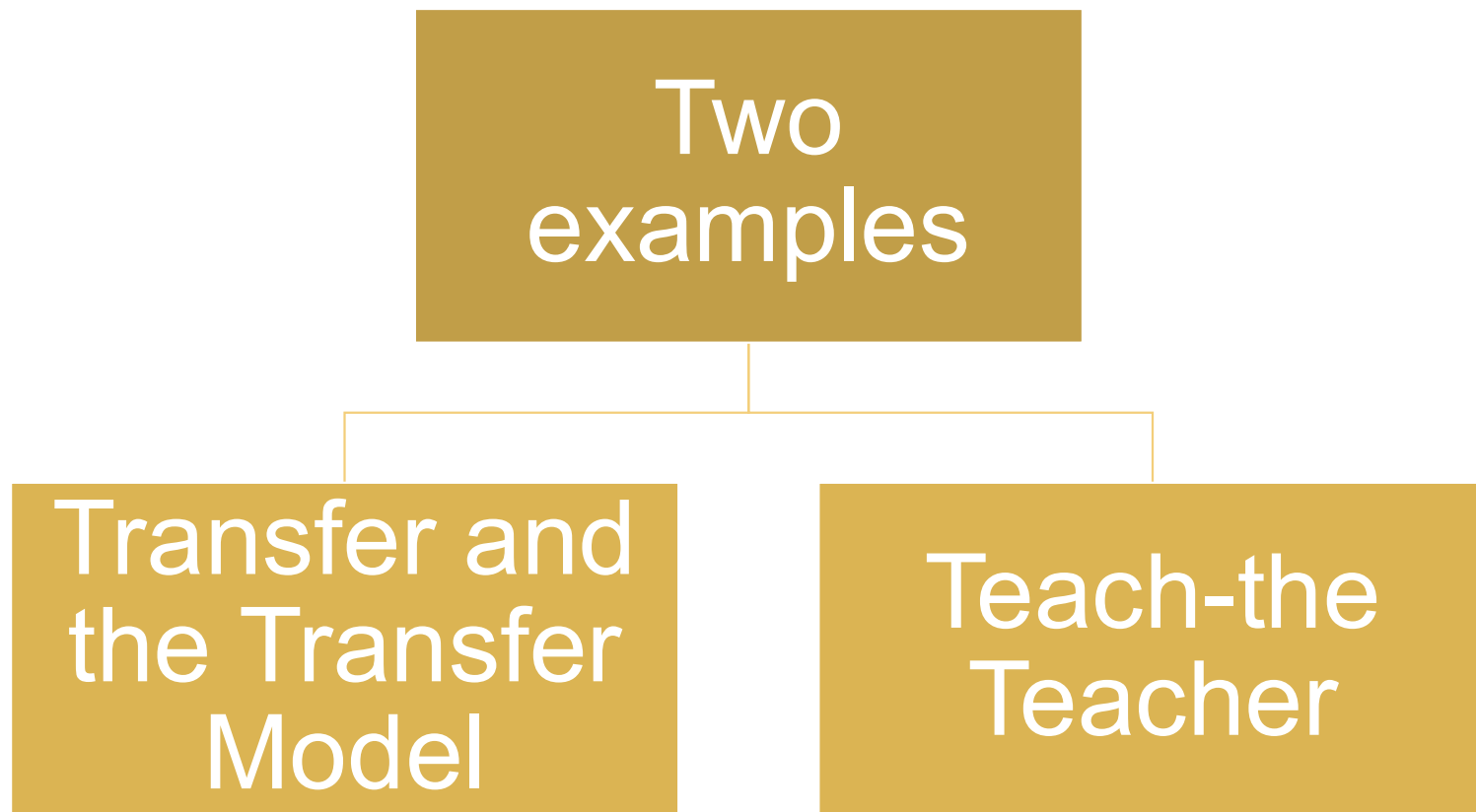


Do you work with employability?



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

Employability in curriculum – how?



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 knowledge 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.

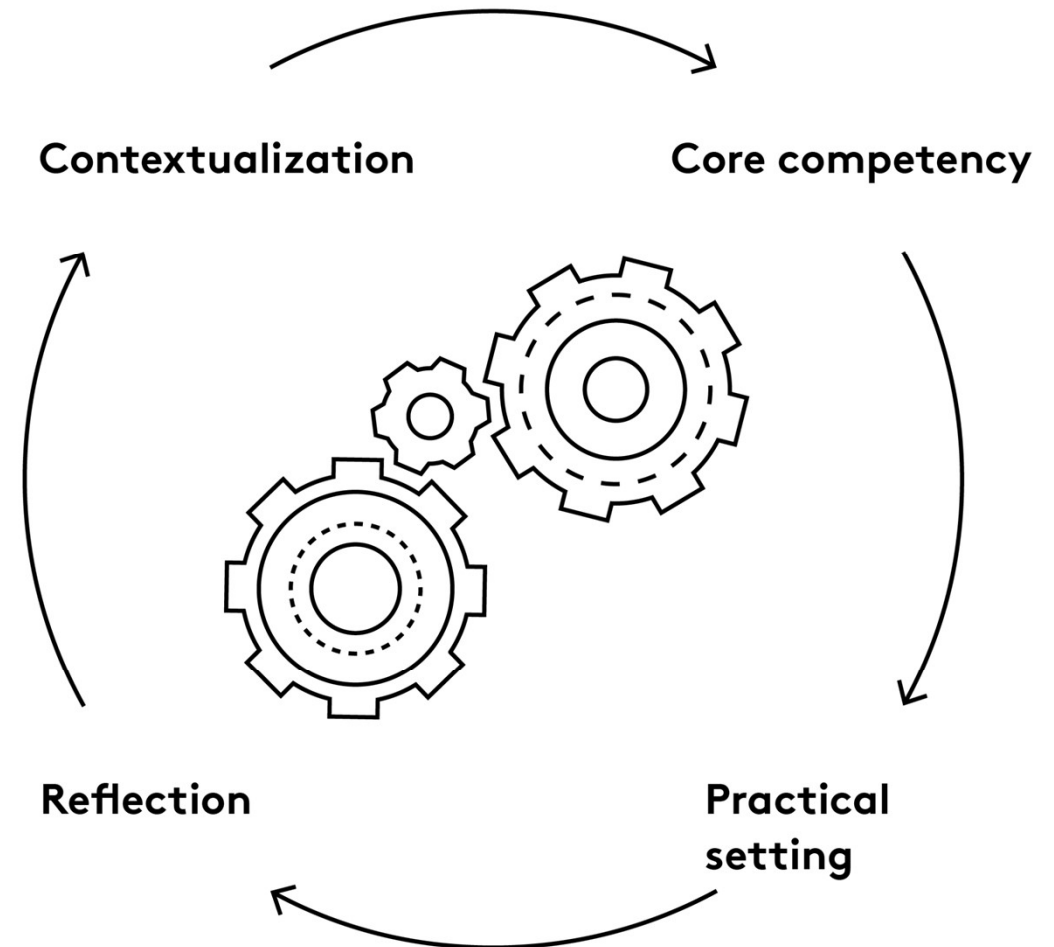


STUDY PROGRAMMES NEED A TOOL AND A FRAMEWORK FOR INCLUDING EMPLOYABILITY IN STUDY PROGRAMMES AND COURSES.

The Transfer Model

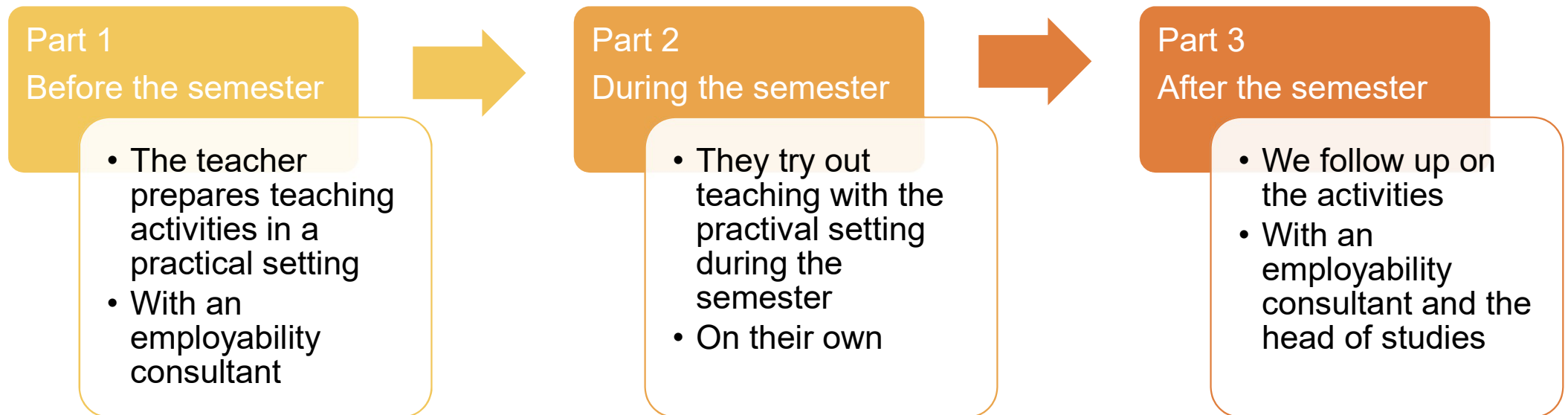
A tool for building employability activities in curriculum

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



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



Example: Teach-the-teacher

Associate professor, Danish

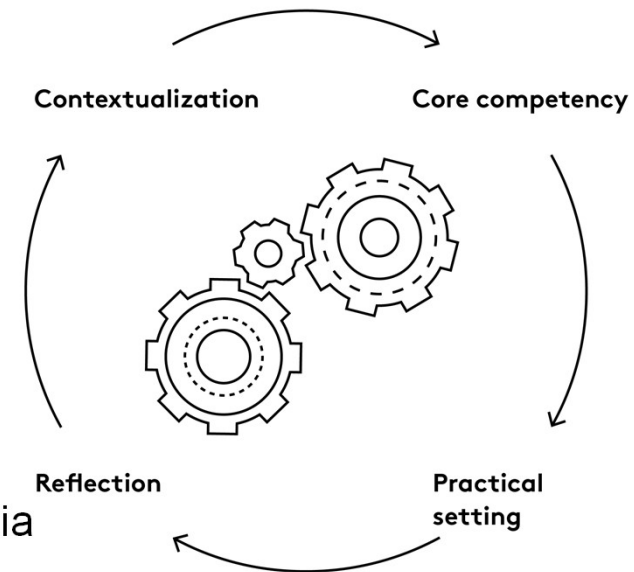
Course: Textual production

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 in 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 employment rate of university graduates.

Thank you for your attention

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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