

The curriculum in higher education challenged

Educa-T

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Flemish Education Council (VLOR)

Flanders - Belgium



Flanders

- Population: 6,4 million (Belgium: 11,4 million)
- Area: 1/4 Croatia
- Students in HE: 230.000
- 5 universities (Academic HE)
- 12 university colleges (Professional HE & Fine Arts HE)

The Erasmus+ project

VLOR Working Group Curriculum Design Discussion paper

Experts

Ben Brabon
Liz Thomas
Bruce MacFarlane
Michaela Horvathova
Tine Prøitz

Jakob Ravn
Filip Dochy

Paul Ashwin
Paul Blackmore

Peer Learning Activities

Ministry of Croatia
University of Bristol
Artevelde University
College

University of Grenoble
University of Uppsala
University of Amsterdam
University of Iceland
Faculty of Design,
Slovenia

University of Rome Tor
Vergata

Autonomous University
of Madrid

Dissemination

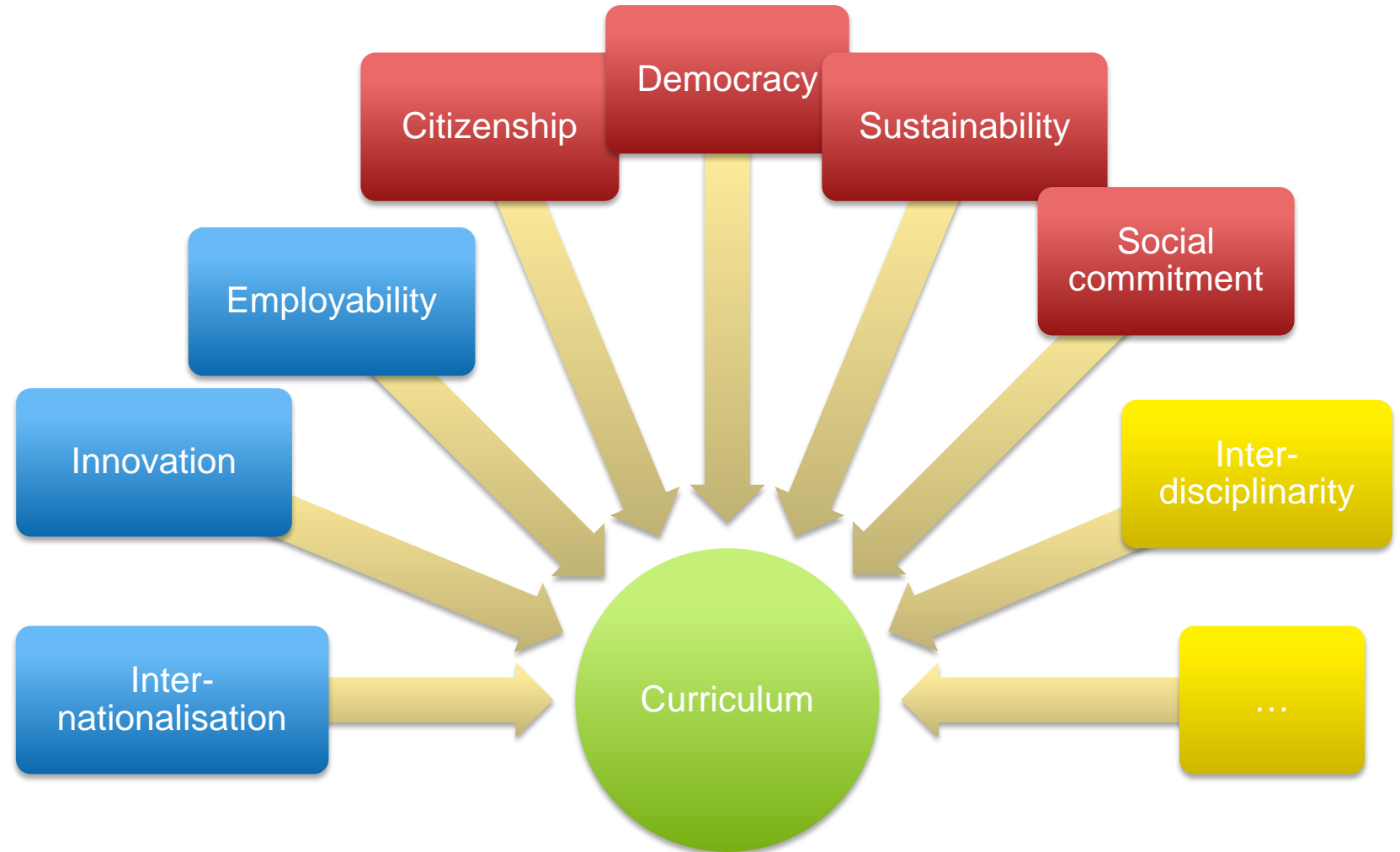
Report
European Higher
Education Area
Learning outcomes
What is a curriculum?
Curriculum design in
HEIs

**Good practices in the
Flemish HEIs**

**VLOR
Recommendation
Student-centered
curricula**

www.vlor.be/curriculum-higher-education-challenged

Society's expectations



How can HEIs deal with increasing societal demands placed on the curriculum?

Recommended approaches

Focus and Alignment

Independent Learning &
Support/guidance
Universal design for learning
Interwoven competences
Interdisciplinarity
Joint programmes
Workplace learning

Bruce Macfarlane: *focus and use the principle of student academic freedom*
You can please some of the people all of the time, you can please all of the people some of the time, but you can't please all of the people all of the time. (John Lydgate, Poet)

Jacob Ravn

How can we cope with all these trends (and more) at the same time? My response: we cannot.

How can the curriculum be expanded and 21st century skills be added to the curriculum? My response: they cannot.

My approach: Re-think organisations and make them innovative.

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Liz Thomas:

Teaching people how to think, rather than about transmitting knowledge is a fundamental principle underpinning HE.

...

There is scope to develop the independent learning curriculum to meet many of the HE challenges in the 21st century.

This will require transparency about the relevance of the curriculum to students, a directed learning approach to support students to develop the skills required, and engaging contents: students were more engaged by 'real-world' and employment-relevant learning

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Primary aim: the design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design.

Students with full access to learning and teaching are more likely to engage with learning, and to reach their full potential

(From: Ben Brabon, HEA, UK)



Recommended approaches

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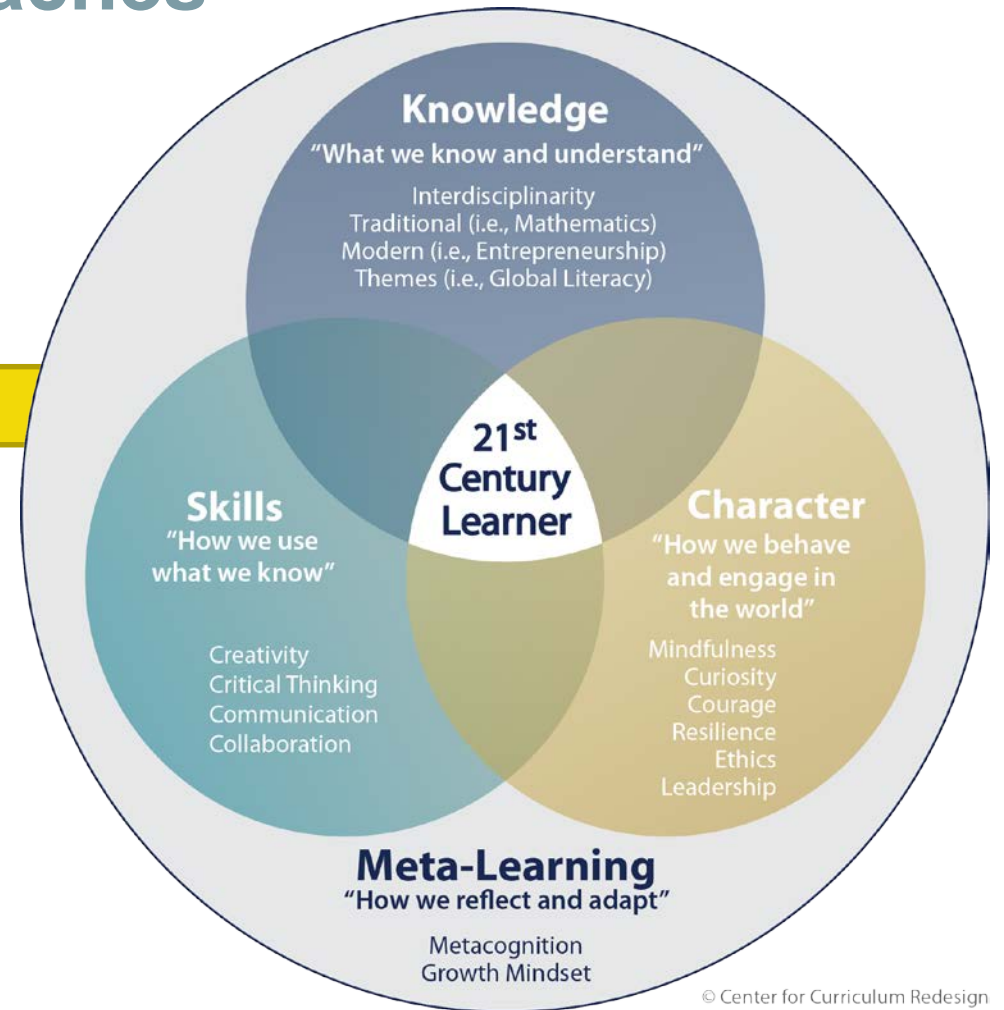
Universal design for learning

Interwoven competences

Interdisciplinarity

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Workplace learning



From: Michaela Horvathova, CCR, OECD, France

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Copenhagen Business School:

- *No single department can offer a programme (at least two departments and usually more).*
- *Interdisciplinary programmes combine two or more academic disciplines into one activity (not a double curriculum!)*
- *Interdisciplinary programmes demand interdisciplinary research or at least platforms for close cooperation between researchers from different disciplines*

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Amaya Mendikoetxea, UAMadrid :

Joint Programmes are at the core of UAM internationalization strategy and central to promote collaboration within the YERUN network

*What do we look for in a partner institution?
Mutual Knowledge + Trust + Commitment +
Quality*

The demands on and functions of universities in society have become highly diverse and complex, making it increasingly difficult for any single academic institution to discharge these varied roles successfully and efficiently.”

[from Doctoral Studies in Europe: Excellence in Researcher Training, LERU, May 2007]

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Different forms of workplace learning : an observation or orientation internship, a working internship, a business project, etc.

- competences from the programme are broadened and deepened
- competences from different aspects of the programme are put together
- competences are interwoven in the curriculum

(From: Corrado Cerruti, U. of Rome Tor Vergata)



Organisational context

Shared vision on teaching and learning

Collaboration and Co-creation
Autonomous HEIs - Supportive governments
Platforms for curriculum development

- Academic leadership
- Institutional profile
- Decentralisation and autonomous implementation
- Staff training

Organisational context

Shared vision on teaching and learning

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Platforms for curriculum development

Bristol Students Union – why we like it...

Bristol Futures sets out a political vision of what Bristol graduates should look like.

It prioritises values like sustainability, ability to work across disciplines, creativity and conscientiousness, and we believe these priorities are exactly appropriate for the world today.

Most importantly, it allows students the chance to move outside of the classroom, meet people from across the University and beyond, and become reflective and self-aware learners through the use of PDP.

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Platforms for curriculum development

In order to change learning, you need to plan for sustainability and win hearts and minds.

(John Gardner – from Filip Dochy)

- *Quality Assurance*
- *Joint programmes / degrees*
- *...*

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Platforms for curriculum development

Croatian example: International projects as a new driving force in curriculum development.

