

Lifelong Learning: Opportunities And Challenges

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Abstract

We currently find our society in the greatest transformation process in history. This can certainly not only be applied to economy, but also to the changing educational landscape, as the previously predominant linear educational path, i.e. the clearly structured sequence of education and training courses, is being supplemented by the more flexible concept of lifelong learning, which means continuous education and training throughout life.

This need for (further) training can only be met with high-quality training opportunities. This means:

- professionally relevant, state-of-the-art teaching content that is continuously evaluated,
- modern curricula that include forms of teaching and learning adapted to the nature of professional training,
- interdisciplinary and practice-oriented teaching such as real-life case studies,
- highly experienced teaching staff in terms of technical and didactical competences.

One particular curricular characteristic that will have to play an increasingly important role in continuing education, but which also represents a particular challenge, is the modularity of the curriculum. Learning outcomes, this means acquired knowledge, skills and competences, can be recognized by different education providers according to previously defined, comprehensible standards if they are comparable and if there is no significant difference. These learning outcomes can be acquired in a transparent module structure, i.e. in small volumes, the so-called microcredentials. I see clear advantages in learning in modularized, small units, because the learner can plan much more flexibly and at short notice. Thus, offering microcredentials enables universities to react more quickly to social changes and changing labor markets.

Keywords: continuing education; curriculum design; microcredentials; qualification; role of the teacher