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Work-Integrated Learning Within the Bachelor`S Program in Pedagogy (An Example of WIL Project)

Lene Birgit Vaala , Adina M. Nydahl , Sunniva Myhre

University of Agder, Norway

Abstract

In higher education, the focus on workforce relevance has been highlighted as central and important for developing high-quality study programs. It is about preparing students for their future careers. At the same time, ensuring workforce relevance is challenging within disciplinary programs, such as the Bachelor's program in Pedagogy, as these programs are more academic and lack strong workplace connections (Meld. St. 16 (2020–2021)). This challenge is also evident in our study program. For several years, students attending the disciplinary study program "Bachelor in Pedagogy" at the University of Agder have expressed a desire for stronger connections to the workforce. Until now, the study program has not included work-integrated learning (WIL) at all. To address this, a project group has been established, consisting of the program leader, two subject teachers, and two students from the program (one from year 1 and one from year 3). The project is funded by the university and were conducted in the period of June 2024 to December 2025. The primary goal of the project has been to integrate WIL activities into the majority of the study program, making them an intentional part of both the curriculum and individual subjects. The program consists of 12 subjects in addition to the bachelor's thesis. Eight of these subjects, along with the bachelor's thesis, have the potential for work-integrated activities. So far, the project group has implemented work-related activities in five out of the twelve subjects.

Keywords: Work-Integrated Learning; Workforce Relevance; Disciplinary Programs; Pedagogy