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WBL Practices in the European Union: General overview

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April 2019





European Level

Europe 2020 Growth Strategy

- Enhance quality and relevance of education and training
- Improve competitiveness
- Achieve smart, sustainable and inclusive growth

ET 2020 Strategic Framework

- Supports policy development in EU Member States
- Includes targets for implementation of national VET reforms
- Seeks to strengthen WBL and apprenticeship schemes

Agenda for New Skills and Jobs

- Supports the EU employment target (75% of the working-age population -20-64 years) by 2020
- Involves employers in the co-investment, development and delivery of education

European Alliance for Apprenticeships (EAfA)

- Promotes youth employment
- targets improvement in the quality, supply and perception of European apprenticeships



At **National level**, WBL policies are highly diverse and encompass a broad variety of work-based learning practices, across different European countries and diverse work and learning environments.

In some European countries, WBL has a long tradition, often within vocational education and training (VET), with dual apprenticeships and education-industry partnerships having operated successfully for many years (Austria, Germany, Switzerland).

There are other countries where WBL is recognised as an emerging trend (Ireland, Finland, France, Netherlands) yet, similarly, there are countries where WBL does not yet feature fully as a part of education and training provision (Poland).

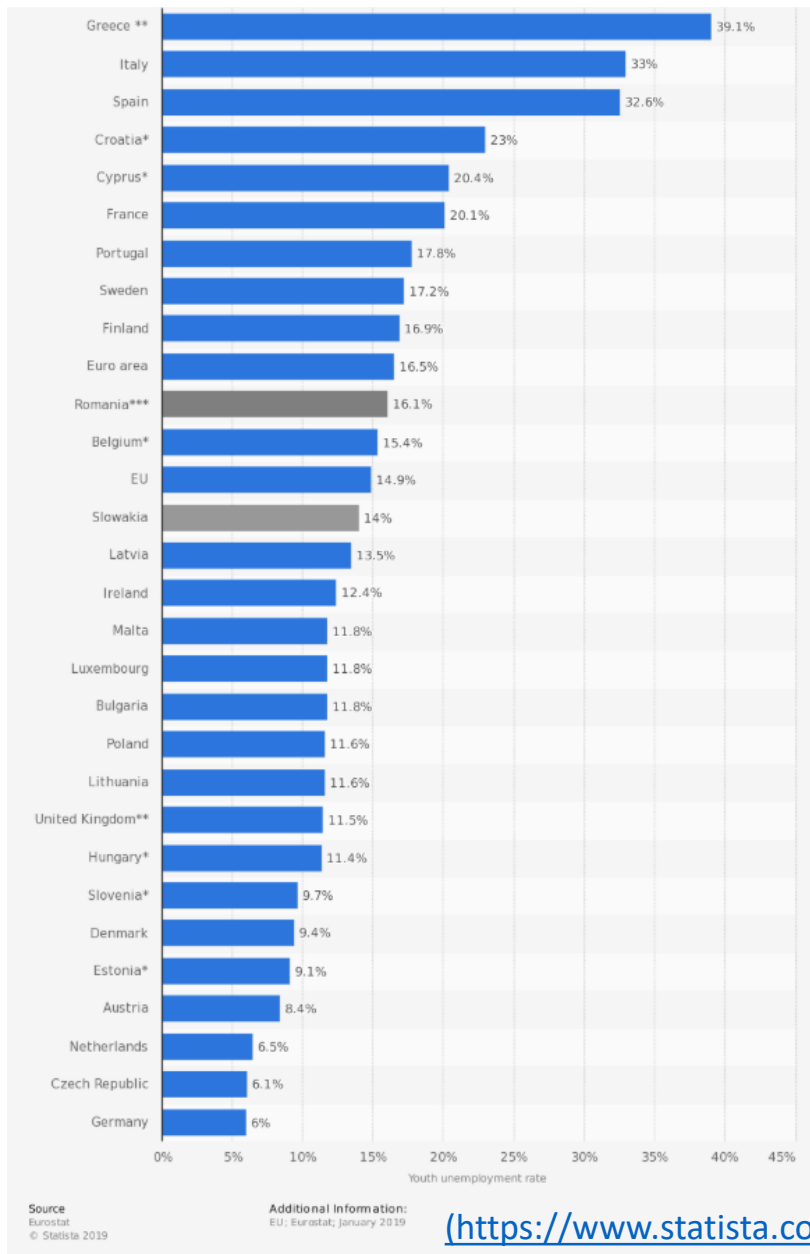


Why Work-Based Learning is Important

- 3.3 million young people (15 – 24) are unemployed across the EU
- In 2018, more than 5.5 million young people (aged 15-24 years) were neither in employment nor in education or training (NEETs) in the EU
- Although it has decreased – from 24% in 2013 to less than 15% in 2019 – **the youth unemployment rate is still very high in the EU** (with peaks of more than 30% in several countries)
- Young people face specific challenges in the transition from school to work. Being new to the labour market they are less likely to find a job, or are often employed on temporary and part-time contracts.



Youth Unemployment in the EU



(<https://www.statista.com/statistics/266228/youth-unemployment-rate-in-eu-countries/>)



- Improving employability
- Reducing skill shortages and gaps
- Increasing economic competitiveness
- Reduces youth unemployment
- Considerable social benefits



What is Work Based Learning?



... the acquisition of knowledge, skills and competences through action-based or reflective learning in a vocational or occupational context...



What is Work Based Learning?

The term WBL cannot be clearly distinguished from other terms used to refer to practice-based learning in a work context: several close (and interchangeable) synonyms are found in the literature, including employment-based learning, on-the-job training, enterprise-based learning and, in some contexts, workplace learning.

(ETF: 2013: 11)



Work-based learning is the term being used to describe a class of university programmes that bring together universities and work organizations to create new learning opportunities in workplaces

(Boud, D., Solomon, N. and Symes, C. 2001:4)



Integrated into programme

On the job training in companies

Apprenticeships

Volunteering

Placement

**Accredited
through
professional
body**

Informal **Formal**





Key Principles

- Experience comprises practical application of knowledge in work place environments
- Successful completion should lead to a nationally recognised qualification
- No explicit reference to the existence of a contractual direct relationship between the employer and the apprentice



- Main actors involved in the design of Vocational Education and Training schemes
- Role enterprises play in the provision of vocational skills and professional qualifications
- Uneven distribution of work-based training and school training
- Existing requisites for enterprises and students to participate in schemes
- Different selection criteria for students
- Presence of contracts or agreements between enterprises and students
- Different available financing
- Different quality assurance mechanisms.



Current tendency	Share of work-based learning	
	Low	High
Increasing	IE, FI, LU, FR, NO, NL	AT, HU, DE, CH
Decreasing	BE, ES, PL	SK, CZ, IS, DK



- Clear regulatory framework (Vocational Training Act 1969 in Germany)
- Guidelines on high quality work-based learning provided (Belgium)
- Employers receive exemptions from social contributions and receive a bonus for hiring apprentices (France)
- Tax and social insurance reductions (Netherlands)
- Apprenticeship levy for all organisations that have an annual pay bill of more than £3 million (UK)
- Organisation of networks (EuroApprenticeship project)



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Regulatory Framework



Policies and activities

Moving & working in Europe

EU rules make it easy for EU citizens to work in another EU country and protect their social security rights when moving within Europe.

Rights at work

EU employment legislation guarantees minimum levels of protection that apply to everyone living and working in the EU.

Agencies and partners

The European Commission works with a wide range of partners such as national governments, representatives of trade unions and employers, NGOs and experts.

European employment strategy

EU countries established a set of common objectives and targets for employment policy, to create more and better jobs throughout the EU.

Social protection & social inclusion

The EU supports and complements national policies in the fields of social inclusion and social protection.

Analysis, evaluation, impact assessment

The European Commission analyses important social and labour market trends, and evaluates the impact of EU policies and programmes.

Delivering on the European Pillar of Social Rights

The European Pillar of Social Rights sets out 20 key principles and rights to support fair and well-functioning labour markets and welfare systems.

Skills and qualifications

The right skills help individuals to adjust to these changes and ensure their well-being while contributing to society, productivity and economic growth.

Funding

Projects relating to employment, social affairs and social inclusion are financed through different EU funds and programmes.

- Range of legislation across Member States to support work based learning practices

Employment Law

Health and Safety legislation

Right to access placement (UK and EU passport holders; appropriate visa)

- Quality assurance frameworks (external and internal to the university)



The regulatory framework for apprenticeships needs in particular to ensure that:

- Employers do not use the apprentice status to replace regular workers.
- The administrative burden imposed on companies through the regulatory framework is not too heavy.



- Developing qualification standards or learning outcomes-based requirements
- Developing curricula and learning plans
- Quality assurance, evaluation and review
- Public funding and its use



COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION of 10 March 2014 on a Quality Framework for Traineeships 2014/C 88/01

- Written agreement
- Learning and training objectives
- Working conditions appropriate to trainees
- Rights and obligations
- Reasonable duration
- Proper recognition of traineeships
- Transparency requirements
- Cross-border traineeships
- Use of European structural and investment funds
- Apply the quality framework for traineeships

Recommendation on a European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships (13161/17 - COM(2017) 563 final)

- Written agreement
- Learning outcomes
- Pedagogical support
- Workplace component
- Pay and/or compensation
- Social protection
- Work, health and safety conditions



Stakeholder Roles and Responsibilities

Student

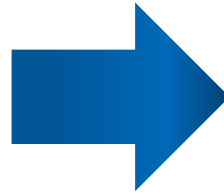
University

Employer

Scheduled Teaching & Learning Activities

Scheduled teaching and learning activities comprise:

- Lectures
- Seminars
- Tutorials
- Project supervision
- Demonstrations
- Practical classes and workshops
- Supervised time in studio/workshop
- Fieldwork
- External visits
- Work based learning.



- Requirement to report time spent on each activity (HESA)
- Work based learning can also be identified as individual learning



Undergraduate Programme Structure

Programme

Degree

Level 3

Module

Module

Module

Module

Module

Module

Level 2

Module

Module

Module

Module

Module

Module

Level 1

Module

Module

Module

Module

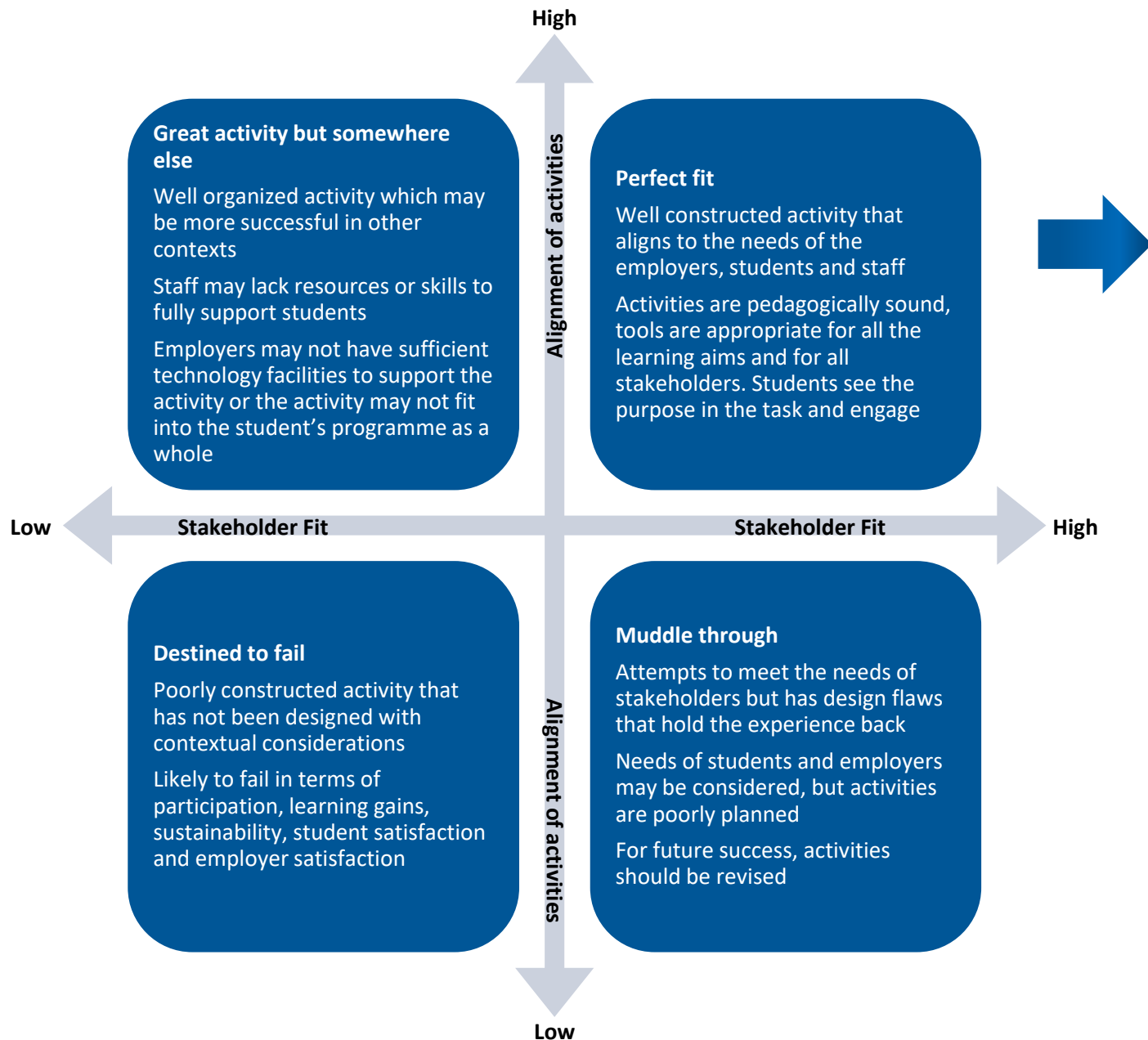
Module

Module

Note: an undergraduate programme must have a total of 120 academic credits for each year of study



Meaningful Work-Based Learning



For example:

- Linked coherently to student programme of study
- Contributes to qualification
- Skills, attributes and knowledge assessed
- External accreditation achieved

European qualification framework

<p>Level 4</p> <p>The learning outcomes relevant to Level 4 are</p>	<p>Factual and theoretical knowledge in broad contexts within a field of work or study</p>	<p>A range of cognitive and practical skills required to generate solutions to specific problems in a field of work or study</p>	<p>Exercise self-management within the guidelines of work or study contexts that are usually predictable, but are subject to change; supervise the routine work of others, taking some responsibility for the evaluation and improvement of work or study activities</p>
<p>Level 5^[1]</p> <p>The learning outcomes relevant to Level 5 are</p>	<p>Comprehensive, specialised, factual and theoretical knowledge within a field of work or study and an awareness of the boundaries of that knowledge</p>	<p>A comprehensive range of cognitive and practical skills required to develop creative solutions to abstract problems</p>	<p>Exercise management and supervision in contexts of work or study activities where there is unpredictable change; review and develop performance of self and others</p>
<p>Level 6^[2]</p> <p>The learning outcomes relevant to Level 6 are</p>	<p>Advanced knowledge of a field of work or study, involving a critical understanding of theories and principles</p>	<p>Advanced skills, demonstrating mastery and innovation, required to solve complex and unpredictable problems in a specialised field of work or study</p>	<p>Manage complex technical or professional activities or projects, taking responsibility for decision-making in unpredictable work or study contexts; take responsibility for managing professional development of individuals and groups</p>
<p>Level 7^[3]</p> <p>The learning outcomes relevant to Level 7 are</p>	<p>Highly specialised knowledge, some of which is at the forefront of knowledge in a field of work or study, as the basis for original thinking and/or research</p> <p>Critical awareness of knowledge issues in a field and at the interface between different fields</p>	<p>Specialised problem-solving skills required in research and/or innovation in order to develop new knowledge and procedures and to integrate knowledge from different fields</p>	<p>Manage and transform work or study contexts that are complex, unpredictable and require new strategic approaches; take responsibility for contributing to professional knowledge and practice and/or for reviewing the strategic performance of teams</p>
<p>Level 8^[4]</p> <p>The learning outcomes relevant to Level 8 are</p>	<p>Knowledge at the most advanced frontier of a field of work or study and at the interface between fields</p>	<p>The most advanced and specialised skills and techniques, including synthesis and evaluation, required to solve critical problems in research and/or innovation and to extend and redefine existing knowledge or professional practice</p>	<p>Demonstrate substantial authority, innovation, autonomy, scholarly and professional integrity and sustained commitment to the development of new ideas or processes at the forefront of work or study contexts including research</p>

UK qualification framework

Typical higher education qualifications awarded by degree-awarding bodies within each level	FHEQ	FQHEIS	Corresponding QF-EHEA cycle
	FHEQ level ^a	SCQF level ^b	
Doctoral degrees (eg, PhD/DPhil, EdD, DBA, DClinPsy) ^c	8	12	Third cycle (end of cycle) qualifications
Master's degrees (eg, MPhil, MLitt, MRes, MA, MSc)	7	11	Second cycle (end of cycle) qualifications
Integrated master's degrees (eg, MEng, MChem, MPhys, MPharm) ^d			
Primary qualifications (or first degrees) in medicine, dentistry and veterinary science (eg, MB ChB, MB BS, BM BS ^e ; BDS; BVSc, BVMS) ^f			
Postgraduate diplomas			
Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) ^g /Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) ^h			
Postgraduate certificates			
Bachelor's degrees with honours (eg BA/BSc Hons)	6	10	First cycle (end of cycle) qualifications
Bachelor's degrees		9	
Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) in England, Wales and Northern Ireland ^g			
Graduate diplomas			
Graduate certificates ⁱ			
Foundation degrees (eg, FdA, FdSc)	5	NA	Short cycle (within or linked to the first cycle) qualifications
Diplomas of Higher Education (DipHE)		8	
Higher National Diplomas (HND) awarded by degree-awarding bodies in England, Wales and Northern Ireland under licence from Pearson ^j		NA	
Higher National Certificates (HNC) awarded by degree-awarding bodies in England, Wales and Northern Ireland under licence from Pearson ^j		NA	
Certificates of Higher Education (CertHE)	4	7	



Postgraduate

Undergraduate



Where learning outcomes can be found	Purpose of learning outcomes
Occupational standards	Define the tasks and expectations of a given occupation. To serve as a basis for defining work practices, continuing training, recruitment, performance appraisal systems
Curricula	Define the expectations of each learning activity. To guide teachers/lecturers in the teaching process, choice of methods etc. To inform learners about what they are expected to be able to do/know after a given learning activity
Assessment criteria/specifications	Define what is to be assessed and ensure that the learning outcomes (for the qualification or learning activity/module) are met. To facilitate homogeneity in judging learners performance
Qualifications	Define overall expectations of a person holding the qualification. To inform employers when recruiting a person with a given qualification. Inform learners at the orientation stage. Manage the qualifications system
Qualifications frameworks	Define levels of learning in a country to classify the different types and forms of qualifications. Improve transnational understanding of qualifications in a country



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Factors Motivating Employers to Engage in WBL



Students:

- are intelligent, enthusiastic, keen and hard working.
- can assist with management, administration and many other significant or routine tasks.
- can help with short or long-term projects.
- have language skills that can help to develop export markets .
- have time for projects for that no-one else has time for and can be perfect for placement undergraduates.
- can research new business opportunities.
- will add a youthful and international dimension to your business.

Universities:

- play an important role in developing world class sectors
- share their research, partnerships and national and international links
- provide undergraduate and postgraduate skills
- provide CPD opportunities
- co-ordinate economic and social activity
- are innovators and investors in people and places



Improving employability

How **small businesses** can work with schools and colleges to improve young people's employability skills

Why should I take an interest in young people's education?

Opportunity to: investigate local potential recruits, e.g. through apprenticeships; shape employability skills; pass on enthusiasm for my sector; develop tomorrow's workforce; influence teaching to make it relevant to the local economy.

What am I going to get out of the relationship?

Opportunity to: meet potential apprentices; get involved in the local community; be promoted in the school e.g. logos on the website or around the school; benefit from better-informed recruits.

What different ways are there to get involved?

You could: take part in a careers education activity; support a course project or mock interviews; host workplace visits, work experience or teacher placements; advise on the curriculum; become a school governor.

How much time will this take?

It's up to you: the commitment could be one hour a week, a month, a year, or a few weeks. Your choice! Advance planning is recommended - schools and colleges work to different schedules to the world of work.

How do I make it happen?

Contact your local school or college, or inspiringthefuture.org; identify your key contact and use these five questions to guide an initial discussion.

Answer the 'what's in it for them?' question

Consider:

- Discipline background
- Skills students bring to the employment context
- Projects that would be helpful to the employer/placement
- Possible future collaborative projects





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Thank You