Work-based learning models at EQF-levels 5 to 7: BiBB, 29 April 2015, Bonn

Ireland

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Higher VET in Ireland

- Ireland joined EU in 1973 when GDP was approx. 60% of EU average.
- By 2008, Irish GDP was approx. 110% of EU average.
- Higher education prospered because of EU Social Fund support to the point that 65% of Irish 18-25 year-olds entered higher education.
- Economy suffered serious decline 2008-2011.
- Government introduced re-training programmes for those who lost their jobs and to assist others into the labour market.
Irish Education System

Higher Education - Postgraduate

PhD (3+ years)

Masters degree/postgraduate cert. or diploma (1-2 years)

Higher diploma (1 year)

Higher Education - Undergraduate

Ordinary bachelor degree

Honours bachelor degree (3-4-5 years)

Higher certificate (2 years)

Further Education & Training

Apprenticeship – up to 4 yrs
Traineeship
PLC Course & Other FET

Further Education & Training

Second Chance
- Youthreach – for early school leavers aged 15-20
- VTOS – vocational training for the unemployed
- Back to Education Initiative – part-time FET option for adults
- Other FET

Optional Transition Year

2nd Level
Senior Cycle
LCE or LCVP (2 years)

2nd Level
Senior Cycle
LCA (2 years)

2nd Level
Junior Cycle (3 years)

Primary Level (8 years)
Recent Developments 1: Higher Education

• National Strategy for Higher Education, 2011
• Engagement with wider society must become more firmly embedded in mission of HEIs
• Encourage more mobility of students & staff between HEIs and industry
• Establish technological universities with very strong links with enterprise, with focus on science and engineering and workplace learning
Higher Education Strategy (continued)

- There should be clear routes of progression and transfer as well as non-traditional entry routes
- There should be system-wide collaboration between HEIs; and smaller HEIs should merge
- All HEIs should ensure that all teaching staff are both qualified and competent in teaching and learning
Recent Developments 2: Apprenticeships

• A new government agency, SOLAS, established for Apprenticeship training
• A majority of its key National Apprenticeship Council are industrialists
• SOLAS has decided to allow the creation of more apprenticeships; currently there are only 27 accredited apprenticeships but 85 applications for new ones. Approval likely for some.
• Ireland may move closer to the German Model
Recent Developments 3: Mergers

• 4 agencies for QA and awards have merged to form Quality and Qualifications Ireland
• Teacher Training colleges to be reduced from 19 to 6
• Institutes of Technology must merge if they wish to become Technological Universities
• The number of local education agencies for further education reduced from 33 to 16
Work-based learning: Business Management in DIT

• Many higher education programmes in Ireland involve a placement in industry
• DIT College of Business has 6 honours degrees with placement, usually in 3rd year
• Students are paid and must maintain a log of their progress which must be signed each week by their supervisor
• Performance on the placement is assessed and ECTS credits (30) are allocated
Industry involved in programme design

• DIT operates programmes in which industry partners were involved in the design
• Partners include Enterprise Ireland, Ericssons, Musgraves & Supervalu (supermarket groups), ICT Ireland, Institute of Advertising, Marketing Institute of Ireland
• In some instances the partner pays the lecturers but DIT is responsible for the award
Work-based learning: Engineering in UCD

• UCD (Ireland’s largest university) has changed its Engineering programmes from 4-year Bachelor to 3 + 2 year Bachelor + Master’s “Bologna” model
• A mandatory internship is part of year 1 of the Master’s programme
• Duration of internship: 8 months (Jan to Sept)
• 30 ECTS for successful completion
• UCD has policy document entitled Internship/Work Practice Experience: Guidelines and Good Practice
Engineering Work-based Learning

- Placements usually occur in penultimate year
- Most placements are in Ireland but can be overseas
- Increasingly, employers see the internship as part of their recruitment policy: a chance to see a student in action before hiring him/her
- Most universities have an Industry Liaison Committee to advise on programme development
Conclusion

• Ireland now enjoying economic growth of approx. 4% per annum
• Pressure growing for end to austerity measures
• Teachers seeking restoration of pay levels
• Capital investment in education being restored
• Thank you!