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Employability & Competences

innovative curricula
for new professions

International Conference
University of Florence

Final Event of the Project PRIN2012LATR9N

The future of Higher Education

An institutional perspective





VQR > VQD

Quality Evaluation of research and didactic for an appropriate *competence supply*

Italian University has increased its focus on quality of research. It did the same in relation to the processes that generate quality and results in university teaching.

Next step: to ask ourselves about the impact of education on the employability of young graduates.



The expected outcome: “good brains” and/or “good professionals”

In the past, the issue of employability has been solved through the formation of good brains.

It corresponded to business models including internal business schools that took on the responsibility of taking care of people’s growth.

Today most of the companies theorize and practice lean training models.

Organisations employ skilled personnel and for short or medium term projects.

This has consequences on the function of the University.



Some research outcomes

1. Building professional identity

1. the mean of calling computed on the whole group of respondents does not change across time
2. it is the clarity of our professional identity and being engaged in domain-related activities that foster the development of a calling toward a career

2. Teaching and guidance

1. the end goal was to construct and propose many learning opportunities on the basis of the students' needs and interests as well as the labour market and organizations' requirements.

3. Work experiences

1. Foster graduation and further education (higher education),
2. Foster professionalisation (apprentissage du métier), socialisation (apprentissage du milieu du travail), professional development, professional guidance towards the labour market.

Open questions (from longitudinal studies)

- unemployment seems not to exist in reality

But people spend one year or more to fill the gap in knowledge and capabilities they missed during the university pathway

The year after graduation plays a crucial role in meeting the labour market needs and demands as well as one of the jobs that is "consistent" with their investments in training. It is the year where young people:

- Redefine their professional identity
 - Look for alternatives to their first little jobs
 - Use and build up networks also in a dynamic learning perspective
- Simple things, but crucial

All of this refers to the issue related to the University's functions.



Three issues to enhance a didactic for employability supporting young graduated in their future transitions in the labour market

1. Can we bring the work culture in the construction of curricula of graduates and postgraduates programmes (without limiting this feature to apprenticeships and to some event or service)?
2. Since professional recruitment does not really depends on headhunters like in the past but more and more on social (personal, professional, business, institutional) networks joined by young people, how can the University take this into accounts?
3. Whenever we find fast transitions towards qualified jobs it is frequently connected to a close relation between teaching and applied research. How can we encourage this practice in a mass university?