



ELVETE - Case Study no 4: Icelandic College of Fisheries

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Summary

MSS in Iceland collected four cases at three organisations. The fourth case was collected at Icelandic Collage of Fisheries, a young VET organisation that provides short vocational education (2 years).

The conclusions indicate that there is very limited collaboration between the educational organisations and the companies providing vocational training, however this fourth case is an example of a VET organisation, Icelandic Collage of Fisheries, which built their initial curriculum in a very close collaboration of companies in the fishing industry sector. Most changes in curriculum are derived from advice from companies in the industry, -also new lines of studies have been created based on the needs of the sector.

General Information on VET Organisation

Institution: Icelandic Collage of Fisheries

Type of Institution: Icelandic Collage of Fisheries is a VET organisation that provides short vocational education, which built their initial curriculum in a very close collaboration of companies in the fishing industry sector. Most changes in curriculum are derived from advice from companies in the industry, -also new lines of studies have been created based on the needs of the sector.

Locality and Country: Grindavík, Sudurnes area, Iceland

Course name and level: Fish technician, there are three main lines available; Seamanship, Fish farming and Fish factory work.

Target Group of Course/Curriculum: Students that seek short vocational education, the main target group is the students that had in many cases not sought further education after finishing primary school.

Pedagogy used? The teaching model is built on the Danish model, the studies take four semesters; first and third are taught at school but the second and fourth semesters are conducted in training with employers that work in the field of line the students had chosen.

Is the course accredited? Yes, courses are organised on a unit-credit basis.

Statistical Information (if relevant)

The Collage was founded in 2009 and the first group started in March 2010.

General Information on Business involved

Name of Business: Thorfish Ltd. is a company operating freezer trawlers, longliners and land based processing plants for whitefish fillets, fresh or chilled, wet-salted codfish fillets.

Number of employees: There are about 105 people employed in the company's processing plants and another 150 are employed in their fishing ships.

Area of involved Business: Grindavík, Iceland.

How is the Business involved in the curriculum?

The Marketing director of the company has a seat on ICF's board; also the company's Quality and R&D director participated in the shaping of the curriculum before the first group of students were enrolled. He has also written some textbooks for the school. The company currently has 3 interns from Icelandic College of Fisheries.

Engagement profile of business: In what way(s) does the business cooperate?

Apart from the above stated that the company has assigned a member on the ICF board and regarding teaching material the Business takes on interns from the college. There is a "mentor" assigned to make sure that the intern shows up to work, and to help the intern fill out a file that states that certain tasks have been conducted. Also the mentor gives a very simple valuation regarding those tasks; simply if the intern has met the requirements to complete each assigned task or not. This is not valued as an exam, rather to make sure the intern understands which are the important roles to learn.

Interview with a participant

Student name: Guðrún, she is currently taking her third semester of the studies.

Relevance of IT: IT is important in some courses but not at all in other. We use Moodle, an IT system to hand in projects and to get our grades.

Give an overall rating of the program: When asked out of 10 what would the score be, she chose to give the program 8.5 and she wanted to highlight that she is among the first groups so this would be the grade because the program is still being shaped. She thought the grade would probably be higher when the program has been settled to become more formal.

How effective is the cooperation of the program provider and the employer? There is great cooperation between the program provider and the employer. I chose to focus on quality matters and the school came up with two places for my training period so I took a few weeks at each place. We tell the division managers at school where we would like to take our training periods or in what field and the school handles everything else.

Can it be applied to other areas of ICT? Yes and next semester I will have to use IT a lot more, as then I will take a working period and my studies and projects will have more “distance learning” as all projects will be handed in that way.

Can you apply the achieved knowledge? I think I absolutely can, there are many things that I can rely on knowing from school.

Does it do the job for you as a learner? Yes I think this has been a brilliant start of my carrier. I especially like the program being set up like the Danish model; 1 semester at school, 1 semester training throughout the studies so that every other semester is conducted at a workplace.

Interview with a participant

Student name: Algirdas Kasulis, who had recently graduated with from ICF.

Relevance of IT: IT is important for handing in projects.

Give an overall rating of the program: When asked out of 10 what would the score be, Algirdas rated the program at 7. He also made a comment about the program still being shaped.

How effective is the cooperation of the program provider and the employer?
There is a great cooperation between the program provider and the employers. However I would also see it as very important to get the program acknowledged by the unions for us that have graduated to fall into their categorising regarding wages. Also in the future I would like to see the program adapted as a formal trade, as that would make matters like pay and acknowledgement in the sector easier maybe because everyone knows the trades but as this is such a new program many people have not heard of it and have a hard time categorising it.

Can it be applied to other areas of ICT? I think it is fine as it is.

Can you apply the achieved knowledge? Yes definitely. As part of our studies we take many certification exams, which work as milestones on the way through our studies e.g. we get certified to sail the smallest fishing boats, too drive forklifts, to work the engines of the smallest fishing boats, we also get certified to know the HACCP quality standards....

Does it do the job for you as a learner? Yes I like the set up of the program very much, that every other semester is at work. It suits me excellently.

General Information about VET Organisation

Icelandic Collage of Fisheries is a VET organisation that provides short vocational education (2 years). ICF is a very young organisation and the initial idea was to find short but useful studies for a certain group that had tended to drop out from collage or not to seek further education after finishing primary school.

ICF has built their initial curriculum in a very close collaboration of companies in the fishing industry sector. Most changes in curriculum are derived from advice from companies in the industry, -also new lines of studies have been created based on the needs of the sector. To promote engagement of this delicate group of students that had tended to drop out, the program was designed, as they would acquire quite a few milestones on the way. Such as certificate to be a captain of the very smallest fishing boats (up to 12 meters), license to work the engine of fishing boats of the same size. Also a license to drive forklifts and a certification to know a quality system called HACCP used in fish factories.

As a result of the close collaboration of ICF and the companies in the sector there are two new lines of studies being designed and will be offered from early year 2015. The two lines are Quality line; for those that aim for jobs in the sector handling quality matters, maybe to become quality managers. The other line is called Marel –technician, and is developed in very close collaboration with a company (called Marel) that develops and produces machinery that is used in fish factories. There have been very few people that know how to handle those machines, which are a built as a combination of machinery ant computer technique and therefore it takes quite some special knowledge to be able to handle them. This is a very clear example of an educational program responding to the needs of the businesses in the sector by changing or adding to the curriculum.

The duration of the programs

The duration of the program is 2 years, and then students can add the new lines that will be available from early year 2015 if they wish.