

Quality Culture and Excellence in HE – Some Lessons learned from a Norwegian perspective

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Disposition of the presentation

- The Norwegian Centres of Excellence schemes
- Centres for Excellence in Higher Education:
 - Background, aims and conditions for the SFU-initiative
 - Selection criteria
 - How to document excellent Educational Quality?
- Changing attitude towards education
- Impact of the SFU-initiative
- Creating a culture for Quality Enhancement

Norwegian Centres of Excellence) schemes

- Centres of Research-based innovation
 - ✓ Technology transfer, innovation and value creation
 - ✓ R&D-performing companies and research
- Centres of Excellence in Research
 - ✓ Promote scientific quality in Norwegian research at high international level
- Centres for Excellence in Higher Education
 - ✓ Development of excellent quality in higher education
 - ✓ Encourage outstanding research and development-based education

Different priorities

Education:

- Bachelor and master's level

Innovation/Research:

- PhD and master's level



SFU - Centres for Excellence in Higher Education

- Established by the Ministry 2010, managed by NOKUT
- National prestige arrangement for educational activities in higher education– BA + MA
- Parallel to Centres of excellence in Research

SFU - Centres for Excellence in Higher Education - Aims

- To identify and reward excellent education
- To offer excellent R&D-based education
- To support innovation in education
- To stimulate the dissemination of excellent educational practices across the higher education community
- Encourage student engagement and ownership of learning
- Contribute to stronger interaction between higher education and the relevant societal and professional fields

SFU - Centres for Excellence in Higher Education

- Pilot phase in 2011-2012 related to teacher education
 - ✓ ProTed (Centre for Professional Learning in Teacher Education) was appointed as Norway's first Centre of excellence in December 2011 (University of Oslo and the University of Tromsø)
- First open call for all disciplines in 2013
- 3 new Centre's appointed in November 2013:
 - ✓ Norwegian Academy of Music - Centre of Excellence in Music Performance Education (CEMPE)
 - ✓ University of Agder - Centre for Research, Innovation and Coordination of Mathematics Teaching (MatRIC)
 - ✓ University of Bergen - Centre for Excellence in Biology Education (BioCEED)

SFU - Centres for Excellence in Higher Education

- Second open call for all disciplines in 2016
- 4 new Centre's appointed in November 2016:
 - ✓ University of Oslo – Center for Computing in Science Education (CCSE)
 - ✓ Lillehammer University College – Centre of Excellence in Film and Interactive Media Arts (CEFIMA)
 - ✓ Norwegian University of Science and Technology - Centre for Engaged Education through Entrepreneurship (Engage)
 - ✓ Norwegian University of Science and Technology – Centre of Excellence in Computing and IT (EXcITed)
- There are currently eight Centres for Excellence in HE

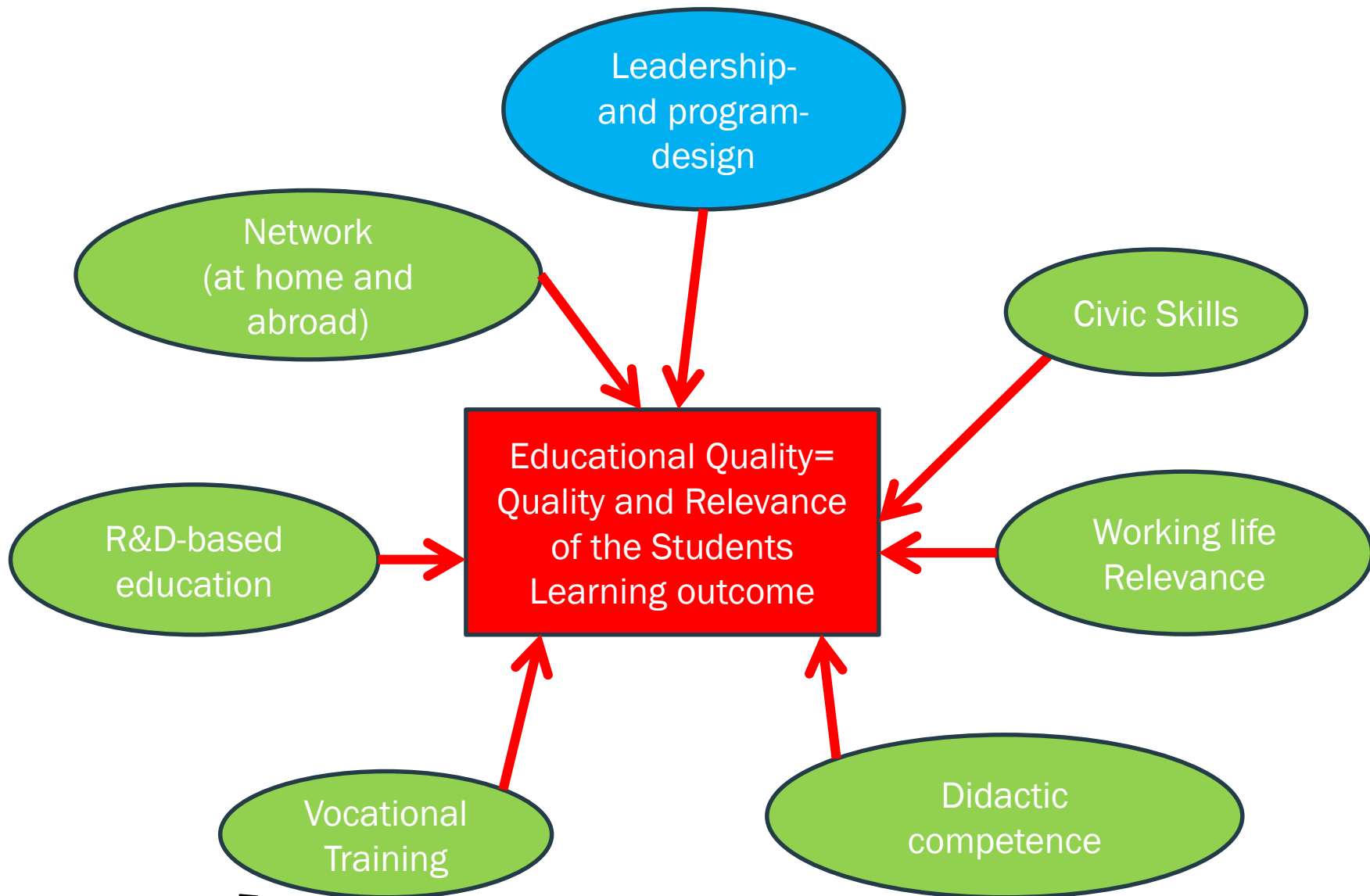
SFU – Centres for Excellence in Higher Education

- Each Centre will receive an annual top funding of NOK 4 to 8 million for a five-year period
- Considerable funding from the HEIs own budget
- An evaluation will be carried out after three and a half year
- Based on the outcome of this evaluation, a centre may be granted funding another five years
- A successful applicant will accordingly, receive NOK 40 to 80 million over a ten-year period
- According to the plans, new bids will be announced every three years

Selection criteria

3 main criteria

- 1) Document excellent quality in the established educational provision
- 2) Centre plan: Present good and innovative plans and strategies for further enhancement of the educational provision.
- 3) Dissemination: dissemination of knowledge, good practices and results and the centre's plan to support and stimulate educational enhancement



Knowledgebase

Documented Educational Quality in Existing Provision

- Quality in education is contextual and multifaceted

Important preconditions for innovative quality work include consideration of:

- The knowledgebase
- The learning environment
- Programme design
- Internationalisation
- Educational competence
- Student involvement and learning outcomes

All quality aspects must be seen in development terms and as interrelated

Excellence in the SFU initiative

- Is multifaceted and contextual
- Innovative R&D based education (inquiry based)
- Student engagement and ownership of learning
- Integrative educational models/work where there are strong interaction between students, academic staff, support services, the labour market, professional bodies and the wider society
- Based on knowledge, developed in an scholarly and critical way- scholarship of teaching and learning

What is excellence ?



- “ ... still ambiguities and contention around the definition of teaching excellence” (p6)

Teaching excellence:

- Dynamic engagement
- Inspire & motivate
- Respect for students as individuals
- Active learning
- Critical & scholarly

The two academic cultures:

Research

- Research groups
- Cooperation, taking benefit of complementary strengths
- Scientific methods
- Writing and publish new results
- Sharing results and experiences
- Assessment of colleagues
- Adopting new methods and technology
- Being up-to-date with literature

Teaching

- Alone behind the teacher's desk
- Everyone doing the same, everyone does it all
- 'Experience'
- Everything ends up in the desk drawer
- One's own experiences
- Student evaluation
- Conservation of methods, the 'Lecture'
- Pedagogical course when employed

Changing attitude towards education

- More analytical approach towards teaching
- Arenas to discuss and evaluate teaching efforts and methods
- Higher priority and status to teaching and related R&D at their institution
 - More attention and prioritization of teaching and learning
 - Deprivatising teaching

Example: bioCEED

Centre of Excellence in Biology Education (bioCEED) at University of Bergen, CoE-Education

BA-biology:

- Practice training included in curricula
- R&D (PhD and postdoc) to study effects on learning and motivation
- Preliminary results:
 - ✓ Highly motivating for students
 - ✓ Significantly reduced drop-out rate from 1st to 2nd year

Impact of the SFU-initiative (I)

- Time and money invested in students provide the centres with better results
- Social and academic integration of staff and students
- Changing focus at Centres for Excellence:
 - Creating a culture for Quality Enhancement
 - Professional development activities related to teaching and learning

Source: CHEPS/CHEGG 2016

Impact of the SFU-initiative (II)

- The SFU arrangement increases the attention paid to quality in education and to more innovate teaching methods and student-centred learning
- Quality enhancement efforts more systematically anchored in the institutional leadership
- Priority of resources for quality enhancement
- More cooperation between faculty and administrative staff

Impact of the SFU-initiative (III)

- Academics across Norway are increasingly discussing with each other about the way they teach, and they are more involved with both the administrative staff and pedagogy units
- An increase of the status of teaching compared to research
- More research on teaching practices and dissemination of results

Creating a culture for Quality Enhancement (I)

- Common values and norms that defines high quality in teaching and learning
- Teaching and learning should have the same characteristics as research activities
- The provision of resources, especially linked to time
- Communication: creating a shared language and baseline of shared values

Source: CHEPS/CHEGG 2016

Creating a culture for Quality Enhancement (II)

- Quality enhancement requires leaders with clear vision and careful timing
 - Effective leaders are those that commit themselves to implement changes with careful timing and convincing narratives
 - A blended leadership style – bottom up collegial initiatives combined with a managerial vision – is particularly relevant
- Institutionalizing regular reporting and reflecting on achievements

Source: CHEPS/CHEGG 2016

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