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HEIBus Project

WORK PACKAGE 5: Flexible Student Mentoring by Companies (Flex Mentoring)

D5.6. Recommendations

Draft

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Introduction

The aim of Flex Mentoring Program was a deeper integration of the companies to the student groups throughout the studies provide good recruiting way for the company. Flexible Student Mentoring by Companies help companies to find the right and suitable level of cooperation with student groups in all partner countries.

In this cooperation universities and companies tested a set of methods to involve companies in the education at HEIs. Each company had a group of students they are mentoring throughout four semester studies of the group. One student group could have several mentoring companies.

Flex Mentoring improves the quality and work life relevance of the education, gives HEI students and staff new skills and work life contacts. For companies Flex Mentoring gives better labour force, easy access to recruiting and to knowledge transfer from HEIs. In our four semester testing the participating universities have the following company partners in this program:

P1 JAMK Jyväskylä Ammattikorkeakoulu FI

- Elomatic since September 2017
- Moventas skipped 2017
- Valtra since March 2018

P2 TUCLUJ Universitatea Technica Cluj-Napoca RO

- ProTehnic (HEIbus Full Partner P7)
- Automates (HEIbus Full Partner P8)
- Bosch Rexroth

P3 ME Miskolci Egyetem HU

- Electrolux Lehel Ltd. (HEIbus Full Partner P9)
- Bosch Power Tool Ltd. (HEIBUS Full Partner P10)

P4 HE Hochschule Esslingen DE

- Stöbich Brandschutz GmbH (HEIBus Full Partner P11)
- FESTOOL GmbH (HEIBus Associated Partner)
- Wieland Werke (HEIBus Associated Partner)
- Werner Bayer GmbH

- Schmeing GmbH & Co. KG

P5 UJA Universidad de Jaen ES

- *Andaltec* (HEIBus Associated Partner)
- *ISR*
- *Marwen Ingeniería*
- *Valeo Lighting*

During the implementation of the Flex mentoring Program the following main activities were implemented:

- Tailored lectures given by company representatives
- Dedicated courses by companies
- Company visits, factory tours/practices activities
- Job Fairs
- Developing bachelor projects, supervising students (BSc, MSc, PhD)
- Companies provide lab facilities for students' work
- Workshops, where the students will meet with company representatives preparing different kind of student projects

After feedback is collected from everyone involved in Flex Mentoring group and a control group of regular HEI students and the comparison of the results is analysed recommendations on Flexible Student Mentoring by Companies-program are made. The recommendations are directed at the use of other HEIs and decision makers involved in educational issues.

This recommendations on Flexible Student Mentoring by Companies is produced for other HEIs and decision makers.

Based on experiences of WP5 of the HEIBus project we prepared a report including models for different levels of company involvement, recommendations on what should be taken into account when implementing a cooperative study program and how it could help students in trouble with their studies.

We present the recommendations prepared by the participating universities.

Recommendations

Based on four semester testing the Flex Mentoring models and analyzing the results recommendations on Flexible Student Mentoring by Companies-program are summarized. Taking into account the student's, teachers' and staff feedback, the flex mentoring program could be strongly recommended for other HEIs with the following suggestions:

- Increase the involvement of the company personnel.
- Seminar of real cases study offered in some courses have motivated the students enhancing their participation and involvement in the course.
- Offer real cases of study as final thesis. This option is highly valued by the students. Most of those taking part in the flex mentoring program demanded this option.
- Increase the participation of students in their final years of their degrees in the flex mentoring program. After participating in the program, some of them have taken the opportunity and have done an internship in the company whose expert acted as mentor.
- The mentoring is successful at all level, involvement of students at all study levels (BSc, MSc, PhD) has benefits.
- Both university and company mentors are important. Mentors also need time resources to work with the students.
- Schedule of the projects; time is needed to manage them.
- Commitment of the company is important for the whole project period. Motivation ways for companies are important to find. In addition, a lot of effort is needed when choosing suitable companies with suitable projects.
- Commitment of the students is important. For the whole project period. Motivation ways are important to find, for example more communication.
- The needed level of English language skills is necessary in every part of participants: students, teachers as well as company members in international environment.
- It is valuable if this kind of co-operation continuous after the project, too. To include this kind of projects as a part of the study program curricula. To find ways, how to continue, develop and deepen company-university-student co-operation.
- Both the group-mentoring as well as individual mentoring (personal meetings) are welcome by students.
- Stable contacts to interested and motivated company representatives are needed; the company location is not quite as crucial as students are usually rather open to search for employment within a wider radius.

We strongly recommend similar programs like Flexible Student Mentoring by Companies for other HEIs and decision makers. After our four semester testing we can say that the program promises success for students, for companies and for universities as well.