

Authors

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Suitability of this case to the ApprEnt definition of HEA

Workplace/
training



Mentoring



Remuneration



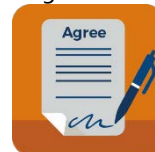
Formal
programme



Certification



Contract/
Agreement



Evaluation of how the programme/practice reaches the following goals
Scale: 1 = not at all; 2 = very little; 3 = somewhat; 4 = well; 5 = very well

	1	2	3	4	5
i. Enhances relevant working life skills and qualifications	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
ii. Promotes professional growth	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
iii. Develops learning environment practices as a whole	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
iv. Develops work-based learning practices and materials	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
v. Improves work performance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
vi. Improves tutoring and mentoring practices	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
vii. Enhances University-Business collaboration	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
viii. Showcases potential aspects for programme standardisation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Title

Águeda School of Technology and Management – University of Aveiro (ESTGA-UA)

Description

Model

Portugal's Higher Education Sub-systems

The University of Aveiro (UA) integrates the two sub-systems of higher education in Portugal: university education and polytechnic education. In both subsystems, there are courses that offer students opportunities to learn by doing, either through partnerships with entities outside the University, through the provision of curricular and extracurricular internships or through projects.

In addition to the Bachelor's, Master's and Doctoral programs, the University offers programmes of Higher Professional Technical Courses (CTeSP) taught in its Polytechnic Schools. Two of these schools are located outside the Municipality of Aveiro and inserted in areas with a strong industrial component, helping to widen the spectrum of the intervention of the University and to enhance the synergies that can be created with the business sector. The contact with the employers allows to adjust the training according to the needs of the labour market.

Higher Education Short Cycles

In the case of the CTeSP, which are short courses of studies taught exclusively in polytechnic higher education (Higher Education short cycles, do not award a degree but a level-5 diploma within the National Qualifications Framework) the courses offered with this typology are developed in collaboration with the companies of the region and adapted to the specific needs of the labour market of the region where it is inserted. These courses have a duration of four curricular semesters of student work (120 ECTS), and the last semester is devoted to the internship, with a length of 680 hours within a company, and its main objective is to apply, in a professional context and in an integrated and interdisciplinary way, the knowledge acquired throughout the different components of the training. In some UA degrees, there are also internships, the length of which may vary (e.g. from 12 to 28 ECTS for Bachelor's degree - 180 ECTS), and whose main objectives are to provide students with learning in the work context and to bring them as close as possible to business realities.

Support and Objectives of the Training

Whatever the type, of course, the student will be accompanied by a teacher from the UA and a counsellor to be appointed by the host organization where the training takes place. Also for the Master's courses (300 ECTS) is now foreseen the possibility of the student choosing to either do a dissertation, develop a project, or perform a curricular internship (30 to 54 ECTS). The latter encompasses 1000 hours of work in the enterprise. As with the other levels of courses, the objective is for the student to apply in a company context the knowledge acquired throughout the Master's, thus also developing applied scientific research.

In the UA, in addition to the curricular stages, other initiatives are developed along with the courses aiming to bring the students closer to the business reality. Examples of these initiatives are the mentorship plans for the degrees in Retail Management, Quality Management, Public Sector and Local Government Management and Office Management and Business Communication. These degrees include a curricular internships and extended partnerships with, respectively, the Jerónimo Martins Group, the Intermunicipal Community of Aveiro Region, the Industrial Association of Aveiro District and the Business Association of Águeda, which, in addition to the placement of trainees, make it possible to implement tutoring programs and collaborates in the promotion of the undergraduate degrees.

From our perspective one of the strongest points of this approach is that it allows students to get in

contact with the labour market earlier than usual, so that they may not only gain experience from actual working contexts but also learn directly from the professionals that are tutoring them. We think that one of the aspects to improve will be the relationship between the school and some of the companies, mostly in order to allow the whole process to unfold naturally and without glitches.

Best practice

University-business cooperation

The Águeda School of Technology and Management – University of Aveiro (ESTGA-UA) has long been recognised by its strait collaboration with the business sector. Over the years, through the implementation of different strategies, this proximity to the companies has led to an appropriate preparation of students to the labor market. The present case study focuses on describing the strategies of University-business cooperation, which have been implemented by the 1st cycle degree in Office Management and Business Communication (SCE), one of the six 1st cycle degrees offered by ESTGA-UA. The SCE aims at training qualified professionals, capable of assisting and providing support to board or administration members of public and private companies. In order to strengthen the connection between the academy and the enterprise sector, this degree has implemented different strategies, namely a Tutoring Programme and an Internship Programme that will be briefly described, bellow:

- The Tutoring Programme is conducted in partnership with an important business association of the region, the Águeda Business Association (AEA), and provides a unique platform for students to connect with and learn from the experience of senior professionals. This Programme consists in one senior professional accompanying one student during the degree (one tutor is designated to each student). Through regular meetings, visits to the company by the tutor, as well as by observing the tutor's behaviours (e.g., how the tutor makes decisions and handle tasks) a practical learning experience is provided to the student. By giving a practical context to the academic knowledge, this Programme is able to contribute to better preparing students for the challenges of today labour market.

- The Internship Programme focuses on learning professional skills, abilities and competencies related to the area of expertise of the degree. The internships offer personal real world insights and exposure to actual working life, as well as the chance to build valuable business networks. The 400-hours internship takes place during the final semester of the degree, in a private or public organization, with the support of two supervisors: one from ESTGA-UA and the other one from the host organization. Before the beginning of the internship, a meeting with the student and the two supervisors takes place, in order to develop the working plan, which includes the identification of the different learning experiences that the trainee will develop during the internship. Regular meetings are held, over the internship period, for follow-up. At the end of the internship, the student prepares a report that describes, in detail, the learning experience. This report is presented by the student in a public defense, being both supervisors members of the jury, as well as a third member that is nominated by the ESTGA-UA director. The mark obtained in the internship is the result of the weighting of three criteria: the performance of the student in the host organization, the quality of the internship report, and the public presentation.

Feedback from users

The feedback that has been received from the students is very positive. With regards to the Tutoring Programme, the students consider the opportunity of coming into contact, right from the beginning of the degree, with the actual labour market, as a strength of this programme. In fact, this aspect allows students to understand the relevance of the theoretical knowledge that is taught and its application to the professional context, leading students to invest more resources in the learning process.

Concerning the Internship Programme, students report that the internship is a great opportunity to learn from experience not only technical but also soft skills, such as problem-solving capacities, the ability to communicate with different audiences, and the competence to cooperate and interact in order to perform a task. Moreover, by giving the opportunity to have a first professional experience, the internship facilitates further integration of graduates into the labour market. There are, even, many examples of students who start their professional careers in the organisation where they have completed the internship.

In general, the participants state that they have awakened and expanded their interest in innovation through the challenges encountered. Currently, the first edition of the programme is being finalised, therefore within a few months information on how it has influenced the professional lives of the students might be available.

A double testimony of a student and a company supervisor:

Luís Rodrigues - TeSP finalist in Industrial Maintenance (ESTGA): "I learned a lot and I would like to have a chance to evolve in the future" (28.7.2017)

"After my experience with Luís Rodrigues, I have no doubt that the training you have had is an added value for the Fapril Cycle or for another company that looks for someone to integrate its teams of Maintenance." Vítor Fernandes, Director of Production, Fapril Cycle, company of the metal-mechanical branch installed in Águeda, has no doubts after the follow-up of the internship of Luís Rodrigues, finalist of the Course Higher Technical Professional (CTeSP) in Industrial Maintenance, in the Águeda School of Technology and Management (ESTGA). Luis was one of the first finalists of the CTeSP courses taught in polytechnic schools at the University of Aveiro (UA). These higher education courses last two years, with six months of internship in a business environment.

After the experience in the company, the student also expressed his satisfaction: "I have had the opportunity to work with excellent professionals who provided me with great moments, both in a practical and theoretical context. I learned and very much enjoyed, in the near future, the chance to evolve in this experience". Speaking of the company's highly receptive environment, Luís Rodrigues continues: "I had the opportunity to observe and/or work in many areas with many different employees and all of them have helped me in one way or another to grow as a professional and get a different perspective of the reality of the world of work".

On the other hand, since the work area of the Fapril Cycle metalworking is very wide, the trainee points out the opportunity to come into contact with "a wide variety of manufacturing processes and a wide range of equipment and machinery. [...] In some cases, I had the opportunity, not only to carry out, but also to plan maintenance interventions. These interventions were of a varied nature and required knowledge of the most diverse areas. It was extremely interesting and enriching to apply the technical knowledge that I have been taught during the course. [...] I was very satisfied with the content covered and also with the teachers I came across who were always very helpful and always tried to show the applicability of contents in a practical perspective, exemplifying with real cases."

Relevance and Transferability

N/A

Comments

N/A