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Transfer of innovation - Net University, lifelong learning University based education

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How to organize the University based lifelong learning?

How to involve the region?

How to cooperate?

How do we know what courses to offer?

Jönköping University, Sweden, has for many years tried to take a deep interest and serious action in courses to offer for the inhabitants, firstly in the region - Jönköpings län.

Universities in Sweden have three obligations: education, researching and cooperation with the society. Since the late nineties Jönköping University has taken a leading position in the region and even in the western part of Sweden concerning University based lifelong learning.

We have had regular discussions, meetings and negotiations with the municipalities in the region. The cooperation was from the very beginning starting out of initiative from Jönköping University. Every year we have seminars with the politicians and representatives from the learning centres. This cooperation was formulized into a council called "The Council for regional higher educational cooperation" with regular meetings, appr. 6 per year. I have the honour to be the chairman.

In the council we discuss the needs for different courses out of the interest and desire from each municipality - inhabitants, companies and organizations. We also discuss the different techniques, evaluate courses and the University is quite clear about the necessity of a tight dialogue with the municipality and the learning centres. To be able to secure the quality we agreed to follow the guidelines in a handbook (attached in last e-mail) written in close cooperation between the University and the learning centres.

As the years have passed the technique is turned more and more from video conference system into net based courses. We are just now discussing the somewhat new roll for the learning centres.

We have over the years tested different ways of finding out the needs and desires for University based courses - interviews, a special digital tool - a questionnaire for individuals as well as for companies and organizations -, discussions with trade unions, marketing methods, study guidance, open house and more.

Jönköping University has over the years supported the learning centres with resources for their equipment as well as continuous competence development for the personnel working at the learning centres.

During the last years some faculties have developed the cooperation with some learning centres into establishing special nodes which means that the cooperation is deeper by offering educational programmes as well as different courses adjusted to the needs in these municipalities.