15. External collaboration

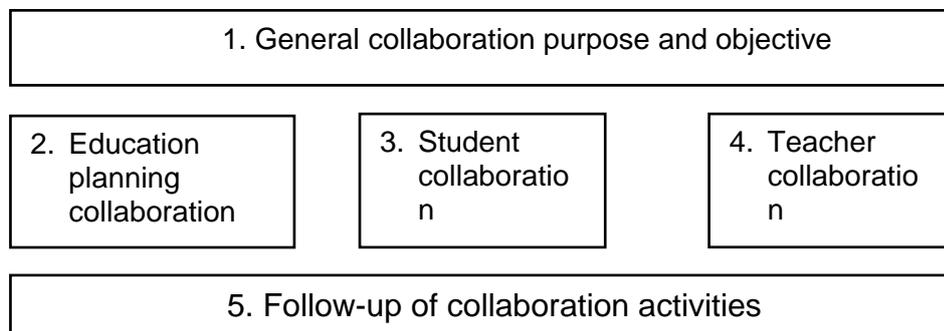## 15.1 External collaboration

Important concepts

External collaboration is a means or a process that requires two or more parties to achieve a common goal that it would not have been possible for them to achieve on their own. SLU's external collaboration partners can be national or international. Systemic educational collaboration activities should be planned focusing on joint objectives and both parties' conditions.

Who is responsible for what?

The programme boards are generally responsible for educational collaboration, and it can be planned in the following way:

1. General collaboration purpose and objective

2. Education planning collaboration	3. Student collaboration	4. Teacher collaboration

5. Follow-up of collaboration activities

15.2 External collaboration purpose and objectives

The responsible programme board must state the students' intended learning outcomes, educational quality objectives and other collaboration objectives.

The degree programme's external collaboration objectives should be listed. How does collaboration benefit the programme? Does it focus on student employability and day-one skills, and/or educational quality in general? According to programme and business representatives, which expertise and skills are completely necessary for students to learn?

15.3 Education planning – external collaboration

SLU's external collaboration partners should be given a real opportunity to take part of educational planning.

Collaborating with working life representatives when planning a programme, course or teaching can contribute to better preparing students for their future working lives. It can also give future employers an insight into the education process and possible parts of research. To reduce dependence on personal contacts, business clusters, alumni and industry organisations can be used, as well as organised systematic collaboration (e.g. programme board or industry council participation) (equivalent).

When a course or a programme is revised, external reference groups should be given the opportunity to provide viewpoints. External viewpoints must also be included when deciding on the dimension of a course or programme.

15.4 External collaboration and student progression

External collaboration activities and their intended learning outcomes must gradually become more complex for students on a course or programme. Professional contacts must be made available to students even if they decide not to take an optional placement course.

External collaboration can be organised into individual courses such as placement or project courses, seminar series or course components. Courses should be divided into appropriate years. In addition, external collaboration objectives and content should be listed in course syllabuses.

External collaboration progression can mean introducing professional contacts early during a course or programme and subsequently deepening and integrating them in teaching activities. Ultimately, a student can then use their learned skills and knowledge at a company, within an organisation, public authority or in a similar, realistic context. Higher progression may mean increased student activity requirements and more actively involved students. An example of a model with an increased complexity degree involves study visits, guest lectures, cases/assignments and more "concentrated" external collaboration projects.

The choice of components and collaborations forms should be governed and justified based on the intended learning outcomes and conditions of the specific course or programme and industry that it specialises in.

External collaboration activities should complement the students' unions' business and labour market days or mentor programmes.

15.5 External collaboration for good working life connections (teachers)

Through collaboration, teachers should be given the opportunity to stay updated about relationships and conditions for an external working life.

Working life involves many changes, and it can be difficult for teachers to have current knowledge of which skills are in demand in the private sector. In order for courses and programmes to be relevant to society and current, various forms of external collaboration can make e.g. teacher study visits, teacher exchange, adjunct teachers, externally employed senior lectureships, etc. possible, which can contribute to connect teaching to the current labour market.

15.6 Follow-up

Follow-up of the external collaboration objectives must be done from the course or programme's, students' and external partners' perspective.

The university is responsible for maintaining good teaching quality from a student perspective. Collaboration activity qualities can be followed up through e.g. course evaluations and examinations. Special focus should lie on how relevant the collaboration components are to the students.

Course or programme collaboration can be clarified and followed up through systematic documentation of the external collaboration activities, for example in a digital skills portfolio.

It is in SLU's interest that our external partners are satisfied and wish to continue collaborating with us. Therefore, follow-up of the joint objectives for external collaboration must be carried out, or supported, by SLU, even if it partly lies outside the university's assignment.