

Proposal: Symposium NERA, March 7th – 9th, 2013

Titel:

Drop out, recruitment, and coherence in professional and vocational education

Organiser:

Lars Emmerik Damgaard Knudsen

Abstract:

In Norway and Denmark both shorter professional and vocational education programs follow the concurrent model where periods of theoretical study at school or university are alternating with periods of practical training. One of the reasons why students are attracted to these programs is the expected interplay between theory and practice and their clear orientation towards specific occupations in the labour market. In the international research literature the concepts of coherence and connectivity have often been used to designate an optimal relation between theory and practice and between education and work. However students are often frustrated concerning the relation between theory and practice and either develop lower quality of professional competencies or drop out of these programmes during their early professional careers.

The three projects in this symposium have approached concurrent education programs with different theoretical perspectives, different methods and different kinds of data. But the projects share a comparative perspective on profession or vocational programs and believe that this perspective will expand knowledge generated from within-profession or –vocation perspectives and is therefore of great interest for professionals, policy makers and higher education providers.

Presentations:

- *Qualifying for Professional Careers* (project coordinator: Jens-Christian Smeby),
- *Retention of Students in the Danish VET System* (project coordinator: Klaus Nielsen)
- *Bridging the Gap between Theory and Practice* (project coordinator: Per Fibæk Laursen)