

ARCADA'S PEDAGOGICAL POLICY

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PEDAGOGICAL POLICY

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this document is to describe Arcada's pedagogical approach in relation to curriculum design, learning and educational work. The perception of qualitatively good profession-oriented university education is rooted in continuous pedagogical development, and in interaction between society and working life. This means that learning is competence and context based, with a problem-solving focus relevant to society. Learning occurs on various arenas both inside and outside of the university. The pedagogical core is a student-centered and dialogical approach to learning. The focus lies on tutoring, designed to support an active, flexible and individualized approach to studies, as well as the integration of research in education. A high standard of education should rest on a solid research foundation, which in turn requires investment in pedagogical competencies and merits.

Digitalization affects education. Digitalization, with technology as one of the prime movers, creates cultural shifts and new

educational functions. These require new types of competencies amongst staff and learners alike (Pedagogical digital competence PDC). Arcada's strength is based on the personal contact and communication between students and teachers. Digitalization changes the students' possibility to acquire knowledge and information both inside and outside the University. Digitalization and e-learning is thus utilized in interaction with active full-time students, as well as to expand study opportunities for new student groups. Online studies and online supported blended learning are realized in all target-oriented and user-oriented educations. Arcada applies the principle of BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) for students. Arcada's pedagogical ambition is to support the student's active and life-long learning experience by taking into account diversity, choice and flexibility in terms of time and space. Dialog and presence on social and cognitive arenas are prerequisites for learning.

Why is a pedagogical policy needed?

It is expected that professional higher education meets the knowledge and competence needed in greater society. Therefore, as digital education occurs through a variety of platforms both inside and outside the university, this places higher demands on the teacher's competence. Since the teaching at Arcada occurs within several education topics, there must be

flexibility where the pedagogical performance can be adapted to the current topic. Therefore this policy highlights values and pedagogical frameworks for a common pedagogical thinking. The main objective is to be able to use this policy as a tool in day-to-day activities.

ARCADA'S PEDAGOGICAL PLAN OF ACTION

All pedagogical activities are based on an explicit or implicit view of mankind and knowledge. Core values refer to the values upon which the foundation of pedagogy lies: the student as subject; collective learning; and sustainable societal development. The pedagogical work itself resides in a competency-based curriculum design grounded in a specific orientation – “core knowledge” – and organized according to content knowl-

edge or education topics. At all times, there is a focus on the future needs of society. The ambition of this approach is to create and enhance active and dynamic learning processes, as well as multi-form work, where the student's own engagements are significant. The digitalization of studies is included as an integrated approach to ensure sufficient and flexible study processes, and the opportunity to study regardless of time and space.

THE STUDENT AS SUBJECT

“When the user is included in the formulation of the problem to be solved, the responsibility and commitment are distributed in an effective way. Recognition of knowledge applies both ways. Students who value teacher expertise, learn from it; the teacher who involves students in knowledge construction, learns as well.”
- *Ellinor Silius-Ahonen*

We support a student-centered approach where the student takes responsibility for his/her own learning, and is seen as equally responsible for the development of new knowledge. In education, this means that we:

- meet the student with respect to all aspects of their education
- set high expectations and demands on the student's independent study efforts and active learning
- intervene early when the study process is not proceeding as planned
- see the student's development potential, and create opportunities for the student to develop further into a skilled and qualified expert in his/her field
- inspire to study engagement
- prepare the student in terms of future career development.

ARCADA AS AN INNOVATIVE UNIVERSITY - A PLACE FOR SPACE

“We at Arcada see the environment as a “place” for “space”, as an arena that enables innovation. Studies should be exciting and demanding, but also requires freedom and safety. Nothing new can be created if failures are not allowed.”
- *Camilla Wikström-Grotell*

We start from reconstructionism as a pedagogical approach, based on the understanding that innovative problem-solving occurs in cross-border cooperation. It is not possible to place the pedagogy solely in the classroom any more than the teaching can be distinguished from regional development and research. Increased interaction between research and learning within the profession oriented university education requires action on several different levels. The starting point lies in an innovative study and work environment. Other key elements include a curriculum design that supports increased research efforts, and the involvement of both staff and students in that process. This should be a collaborative effort with, and relevant to, local working and business life. Professional higher education is based on

the integration between research and education. It should therefore:

- use various learning environments and arenas to create innovative learning processes
- clarify the objective of sustainable societal development in curriculums and courses
- respond to working life and university's needs of knowledge development through cooperation and partnerships
- support students' competence in entrepreneurship, service design and ability to create their own workplace.

COMPETENCY-BASED CURRICULUM AND ACTIVE LEARNING

"A competence driven curriculum connects students' learning to social issues and service needs."
- Ellinor Silius-Ahonen

A competence driven curriculum creates a quality education that focusses on the student's learning and readiness to act. It also emphasizes integrated study modules, learning outcomes and competence in examinations. The learning is based on the requirements in relation to the European qualification framework of competence (EQF 6 and EQF 7). Flexible and individual study pathways including credit transfer for studies completed elsewhere, and enables versatile competence profiles of studies.

The following questions arise:

- What knowledge does the student need to develop in this module?
- What skills does the student need to develop in this module?
- What professional attitude does the student need to develop in this module?
- What study activities, literature and examination will support the competence development?

- How are previously acquired skills (formal and informal) validated in this module?
- How can flexible and individual study processes be supported?

THE WORK OF THE TEACHER TEAM AND PEDAGOGICAL COMPETENCE

"The work of the teacher team is demanding but cooperation is a prerequisite to guarantee sufficient depth and width of knowledge, especially when new areas of competence are developed."
- Mikael Paronen

The nature and organisational culture of the teacher team is characterised by a long-term professional development arena, through continuity and participation. Collaborative learning necessitates that both students and teachers contributes to the educational experience, in that everyone learns with and from each other. A central issue in the teacher team's work in connection with study design is the question of interaction between learning outcomes, examination and pedagogical activities (constructive coordinated teaching).

- How should the team foster positive attitudes and challenge students to engage in independent reading and thinking?
- Which tools should be offered to inspire students through the teacher team members' use of expertise in a versatile, result-oriented and effective way?
- What does coaching from future professional, coworkers in working life imply for the individual members of the teacher team?
- When the pedagogical tutoring is seen as a part of teaching, it becomes clearer to see the purpose of tutoring and study services, and all its features, particularly when considering special needs.