



European labour mobility-led Career and Service-Learning System in Higher Education

Toolkit Guidance for HEI Educators on Career Development through CSL Practices

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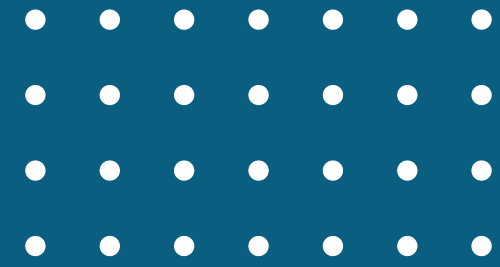
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Methodologies for integrating CSL into teaching



A practical route from concept to classroom implementation

What this chapter explains



How educators can design Career Service-Learning in real courses.



How partner challenges become learning activities.



How reflection, assessment and recognition support career development.



How country examples can be translated into transferable teaching practice.

Key questions



Which CSL implementation models can be used in higher education?



How can educators design CSL-based courses and learning outcomes?



Which teaching strategies support active, reflective and career-oriented learning?



Which country examples offer transferable lessons for educators?

Core CSL implementation logic



The same logic can be adapted to business, management, education, health, engineering, social sciences and interdisciplinary courses.

Models of CSL implementation



Curriculum-based CSL

Service activity is part of course requirements and assessment.



Project-based CSL

Students solve real business, public-sector or community challenges.



Community-based CSL

Students work with NGOs, municipalities or local communities.



Blended or virtual CSL

Digital tools support teamwork, reflection and partner engagement.



Recognition-oriented CSL

Outcomes are documented through badges or micro-credentials.

Designing CSL-based courses



Start with course learning outcomes and target competences.



Select a partner challenge that is authentic, manageable and ethically appropriate.



Define student roles, deliverables, timeline and partner feedback points.



Integrate preparation, action and structured reflection into the course flow.



Assess both the academic process and the competence evidence produced by students.

Teaching strategies for CSL



Problem-Based Learning and case studies for authentic decision-making.



Project-Based Learning for interdisciplinary teamwork and real outputs.



Role-play, simulation and micro-teaching for professional practice in safe settings.



Guest lectures, field visits and employer panels to contextualise theory.



Digital collaboration tools to support blended or cross-border CSL experiences.

Reflection and assessment as the pedagogical core



Before action

Expectations, ethical guidelines, role clarity and personal goals.



During action

Diaries, mentoring, checkpoints, peer feedback and partner input.



After action

Reflective reports, presentations, self-assessment and debriefing.



Evidence of learning

Outputs, portfolios, reports, videos, feedback and competence mapping.



Recognition

Grades, micro-credentials, Europass entries or digital badges.

Austria: practice-oriented CSL

The Austrian example shows how applied higher education connects courses with real-world challenges

Context

-  Universities of Applied Sciences experiment with modular, competence-based learning
-  Lecturers have autonomy, with alignment through programme directors
-  CSL links employability, civic engagement and sustainability

Typical CSL practices

-  Company-defined challenges in compulsory courses
-  Practical Project modules linked to students' work contexts
-  Career Day, alumni webinars, student clubs and international buddy programmes
-  Business and management projects with sustainability and reflection components

Transferable lessons for educators



Use a real client brief as the starting point for student work.



Assign clear project roles, including project manager and client representative.



Structure the process as orientation, analysis, action, reflection and presentation.



Use reflection diaries, peer feedback and self-assessment rubrics.



Support blended CSL with MS Teams, Miro, Moodle forums or similar tools.

Slovenia: career development & local partnerships

The Slovenian case shows how career centres and project offices can support CSL integration

Context

- ✓ Micro-credentials are gaining attention in the national higher education context
- ✓ UNM and applied programmes link theory with practical organisational experience
- ✓ Career centres and project offices mediate cooperation with external stakeholders

Typical CSL practices

- ✓ Collaboration with local employers, NGOs and municipal services
- ✓ Projects in management, communication and career development courses
- ✓ Activities embedded in curricula and formally assessed
- ✓ Virtual cooperation and online reflection through MS Teams and Moodle

Transferable lessons for educators



Preparation and orientation

Define scope, partner challenge and learning goals.



Collaboration with partner

Identify real organisational or community needs.



Active engagement

Design and test practical solutions with the partner.



Reflection and evaluation

Connect outcomes with theory, teamwork and career development.



Align with ELIX pillars

Career development, civic engagement and impactful partnerships.

Serbia: CSL as an emerging practice

The Serbian case shows gradual introduction of community- and career-oriented projects

Context

- ✔ CSL is not yet formally embedded in national higher education policy
- ✔ Universities and vocational colleges integrate community-based and career-oriented projects
- ✔ Students work with local communities, SMEs, NGOs and public institutions

Typical CSL practices

- ✔ Curriculum-based CSL connected to mandatory courses
- ✔ Project-based CSL using interdisciplinary problem-solving
- ✔ Biodiversity monitoring and natural resource protection projects
- ✔ Digital solutions for local entrepreneurs and organisations

Transferable lessons for educators



Map CSL activities into the syllabus: preparation, engagement and debriefing.



Develop partnerships with community organisations for meaningful service opportunities.



Use flexible formats: short-term projects, long-term partnerships or embedded components.



Balance theory, hands-on experience, guided reflection and case analysis.



Address barriers through teacher training, ICT competence and clearer project goals.

Slovakia: professional collaboration & employability

The Slovak example links university teaching with employers, internships and regional development

Context

- ✓ CSL is an emerging practice aligned with innovation and employability strategies
- ✓ EUBA has developed collaboration with the professional sphere
- ✓ UMB and the University of Prešov show curriculum-based and project-based CSL

Typical CSL practices

- ✓ Entrepreneurship in Practice and business-oriented projects
- ✓ Student work with companies, NGOs and community partners
- ✓ Career centre activities, job fairs and matchmaking
- ✓ SARIO projects connecting universities with companies

Transferable lessons for educators



Alternate theory sessions with practice sessions led by company or NGO representatives.



Use a semester-long PBL structure: problem definition, team formation, plan, implementation, validation and presentation.



Develop the 4Cs: critical thinking, creativity, collaboration and communication.



Use tools such as Belbin, Systems Thinking, Design Thinking and Lean Startup.



Strengthen employability through career centres, internships, job fairs and startup incubators.

Greece: teaching practice & community engagement

The Greek example shows CSL integration in education, language learning and social inclusion

Context

-  Micro-credentials are still in an early stage but increasingly recognised
-  CSL is viewed as complementary to employability, social engagement and lifelong learning
-  University courses connect theory, practice and community contribution

Typical CSL practices

-  Teaching Practicum at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens
-  Community-based English teaching and micro-teaching
-  Educational outreach, literacy and intercultural dialogue projects
-  NGO collaborations supporting refugees and migrants

Transferable lessons for educators



Prepare students with CSL theory, project objectives and ethical guidelines.



Use community observation to identify authentic learner or community needs.



Require practical action such as micro-teaching, lesson design or community support.



Use video analysis, peer feedback and reflective essays to deepen learning.



Assess the process through lesson plans, observation reports, recordings and reflection.

Cross-country comparison



Austria

Applied, practice-oriented courses with company and professional network input.



Slovenia

Career centres, local partnerships and a clear four-stage CSL cycle.



Serbia

Emerging community-based and interdisciplinary project work.



Slovakia

Employer-linked PBL, career centre support and employability pathways.



Greece

Teaching practicum, micro-teaching and inclusive community engagement.

What is common across the country examples?



Real-world problems are used as the starting point for learning.



External partners provide authenticity, feedback and career relevance.



Students work actively, usually in teams, on outputs that matter beyond the classroom.



Reflection is structured and linked to academic theory and career development.



Assessment combines learning process, practical output and competence evidence.

What differs across the country examples?



Level of institutionalisation: from emerging practice to established course models.



Dominant partners: companies, NGOs, municipalities, schools or community organisations.



Main sectors: business, management, education, social work, environment or digital innovation.



Use of digital tools and virtual CSL formats.



Degree of formal recognition through micro-credentials, badges or assessment frameworks.

CHAPTER 3

Practical design principles for educators

A compact checklist for transferring Chapter 3 into teaching practice



Start small: embed one meaningful CSL activity into an existing course



Choose a real partner need that matches the course learning outcomes



Prepare students and partners before engagement begins



Make reflection compulsory, guided and connected to career competences



Assess evidence: process, product, reflection, teamwork and partner feedback



Improve the model after each cycle using feedback from students and partners

Key message

CSL is not an additional activity; it is a pedagogical design logic



It connects curriculum, external partners and real-world challenges.



It transforms student action into learning through structured reflection.



It supports employability, civic engagement and lifelong learning.



It can be adapted across countries, disciplines and institutional contexts.



The educator's role is to design, facilitate, assess and continuously improve the learning experience.



THANK YOU

For exploring Career Service-Learning with ELIX



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