Inspiration
for
hbo lecturers

TRUST
IN QUALITY

Zestor

arbeidsmarkt- en opleidingsfonds hbo

Zestor was established
by social partners in
higher professional education:

Vereniging Hogescholen

ACb·Algemene Onderwijsbond

ABVAKABO FNV

CNV Onderwijs

UNIENFTO/CMHF

FORE WORD

The quality of education is largely determined by the quality of the lecturer's expertise and professionalism. Employers and employees are aware of this fact and are thus in continuous dialogue regarding this under the heading of 'professional autonomy'. This dialogue renders the building blocks of professional autonomy ever more distinct by:

▷ Greater involvement and right of say of professionals in determining educational practice
▷ Professional development
▷ Strengthening the team approach
▷ Developing the balance between responsibility and accountability

To support this process, Zestor, the job market and education fund for universities of applied sciences, has developed an incentive scheme. Universities of applied sciences can take advantage of additional funding to launch projects to create professional autonomy. More than 18 universities of applied sciences have started experimenting with increasing the right of say and involvement of lecturers as part of this scheme. The challenge here has been to determine how to deal with the tension generated by using and creating professional autonomy within a turbulent policy environment.

Autonomy, including professional autonomy, exists merely by the grace of limitations. Within each university of applied sciences these limitations are, among other things, determined by external regulations and legislation, internal policy and regulations, standardisation based on guidelines, protocols and instrumentation. But the universities of applied sciences' mission and vision also create limitations.

The 'game' of broadening or, alternatively, limiting professional autonomy, has two sides of play. On one side, lecturers attempt to expand their professional autonomy, which is more easily achieved if the limitations are not set in stone. On the other side, parties that feel authorised to do so limit the professional autonomy of lecturers (e.g. the government, unions, institutional board, management and/or staff). Occasionally, there appears to be more autonomy than assumed. All players have individual responsibility in bringing the game to a successful conclusion and actively giving shape to that autonomy.

This booklet explains the rules of play of this intriguing game and offers inspiring strategies, practical examples and tips for ultimately becoming the 'winning team'.

Jan-Willem Meinsma José Muijres
Chairman of Zestor *Vice Chairman of Zestor*

CONTENTS

QUALITY THROUGH DIALOGUE AND TRUST

The debate on professional autonomy in higher professional education has been going on for some time. It is important for the quality of higher professional education to continue with this debate and keep this topic alive.

Change demands an open mind and perseverance, not only on the part of lecturers and lecturer teams, but definitely also among managers, administrators and the government.
A successful broadening of the professional autonomy and quality improvement requires collaboration and is closely linked to the development of teams, peer consultations, professional standards, administration and policy.

One is not possible without the other. A holistic approach, understanding, dialogue and trust are all needed. Lecturers and lecturer teams play a key role in this.

For a lecturer to perform this key role, it is important that insight is obtained into the area of tension and into the complex interaction between lecturers and their professional environment with regard to professional autonomy and educational quality.

Practical & professional wisdom

Leadership and responsibility

HR

Professional autonomy area of tension

Expertise

Administraton and policy

Psychological contract Good employer /employee practices

Source: "Ruimte voor vertrouwen". Essay (2012)

'Driven professionals'

Lecturers are driven professionals who actively develop in their role and discipline with passion and enthusiasm. They are often able to adequately estimate their work based on their own experiences, knowledge and insight, which in turn benefit quality. The more effectively the professional autonomy is utilised, the better the quality of the education.

The thought process and work practices of professionals are often difficult for others to fully comprehend. This also applies to the work performed by lecturers. In addition, professionals often struggle to make their expertise more explicit. As a student, colleague, manager and administrator, you simply have to trust that someone understands his or her field sufficiently and will make the right assessments.

The more faith in lecturers grows and the better they are personally able to maintain a high quality level of professional performance, the more professional autonomy will be 'granted' to them. If this confidence is insufficient or if there is a desire to actively manage based on quality, people resort to central determination and monitoring of quality criteria. All of this will be an attempt to manage the process and identify any errors in a timely fashion. The pressure to actively manage based on quality is considerable. This creates a field of tension between lecturers and administration and policy. But there is also insufficient dialogue and transparency among the lecturers themselves, as well as a lack of clear quality standards.

'Dialogue and transparency'

Society, educational institutes and fellow lecturers need to be able to trust that lecturers will utilise their professional autonomy to the fullest. This requires 'guarantees' (diplomas, relevant competencies, accreditation, an assessment and development system, etc.). Within higher professional education, the development of professional standards and ethical codes is therefore essential for the further development of professional autonomy.

The debate on professional autonomy and the role of lecturers must include a critical dialogue on and the further development of individual expertise, joint expertise (practical wisdom), a strengthening of the (status of the) professional group and an administrative philosophy based on trust. As a lecturer, you play a key role in this as the guardian of the profession and professional autonomy.

Don't focus on
what should be but isn't.
focus on what is
and what could be.

- Ja-maar ®

This publication aims to provide you with direction and inspiration to take action and constructively tackle the challenge of continually developing, monitoring and utilising your professional autonomy. The ultimate goal is to jointly enrich the profession and improve educational quality.

In the following chapters, we closely examine the three dimensions mentioned above. As inspiration and guidelines for getting started and persevering, we provide tips and examples of successful projects at universities of applied sciences.

Be inspired, experience the dialogue and take a step towards the (further) development of your own professional autonomy and that of your colleagues.

Rob Vink

What exactly does adequate action mean?
As a lecturer, what should you consider in determining
whether you're doing the 'right thing the right way'?

The professional autonomy of a lecturer at a university of applied sciences is not a purely individual matter without obligations. Autonomy entails the 'sacred' duty to make the most out of it. Lecturers must continuously assess whether their actions are adequate.

Educational goals are varied

The goals of higher professional education are viewed differently (and sometimes conflictingly!) from the perspective of the student, university of applied sciences administrator and professional field. So the lecturer must assess his or her own actions from these different perspectives and goals. Unfortunately, it isn't possible to meet all goals to the fullest. It is often a matter of optimising the goals of the different stakeholders. This is not something a lecturer can accomplish alone. Ideally, the assessment of this involves colleagues, students, managers and the professional field.

Adequate action then takes on the significance of justified action in the double sense of the word: Is it justified in terms of the intended goals? And can you justify it both as a lecturer and as a team?

Illustration: Film HU Focus on education
www.youtube.com/watch?v=64jNETH4otI&hd=1

INDIVIDUAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Expertise and professionalisation

To increase the quality of education, lecturers must be facilitated to use their common sense, act professionally, and assess based on intuition, personal discretion and an educated guess. Although lecturers appear to be able to drive their own professionalism, in many cases this does not adequately contribute to broadening professional autonomy. It might feel like 'fighting a losing battle' and a lack of trust.

As stated in the introduction though, professional autonomy cannot be broadened unilaterally. After all, autonomy within a university of applied sciences exists merely by the grace of limitations that are determined collectively. In other words, professionalisation alone is not enough; lecturers have a higher mission.

fantastic lecturers equal fantastic education

It is not surprising that as a professional – and therefore also as a lecturer – you are strongly oriented towards developing your professionalism: obtaining a Master's, developing research skills, and enhancing didactic skills. In other words, you pursue lifelong learning. To actually increase professional autonomy, you can link your individual professionalisation to that of other lecturers and share it with other colleagues within the university of applied sciences (managers, decision-makers and administrators). Targeted collaboration, transparency and dialogue increase trust, and with that the possibility of greater autonomy for individual professional action.

Intelligence and competence combined
with little daring or perseverance
is not a good recipe for success

As an individual lecturer, you play an important role in earning the trust of management and utilising your professional autonomy. Like a carpenter, you need to show that you are a master of your craft. The lack of specific and distinct professional training for higher professional education lecturers requires a learning and development-oriented attitude. This requires collaboration (within teams) and custom support (by the HR department).

To stimulate collaboration, you need to organise your professional practice to ensure a continuous and critical mutual dialogue on quality. You also need to be willing and in the habit of quality assessing (or having assessed) yourself and others. Intervision and supervision can further help you in this process. Collective professionalism must then be sustained through a sufficient professional level of knowledge, expertise, skills and experience – in other words: on-the-job professionalisation. Continuous training is preferable within the team instead of externally and separate from the lecturer's educational practice.

Custom support is necessary as different requirements are placed on lecturers in terms of knowledge and skills for every discipline, lecturer role and experience. As a novice lecturer, you will need more support and clearer guidelines for didactic approaches, for example, than an experienced lecturer would. Sufficient autonomy is needed early on in order to grow and demonstrate that you make the most of your autonomy. This is possible through a good HR policy aimed at specific (heterogeneous) lecturer wishes and needs in various career phases.

from lonely striker to teamplayer

Research (Benchmark Report 2012) shows that, fortunately, many lecturers are satisfied and appreciate the freedom they are granted to carry out their work. Collegiality is also often mentioned. Lecturers are less satisfied with open and honest communication within the team and collaboration outside the team. Debate and dialogue are essential to link the orientation towards individual expertise development and joint expertise, strengthen the status of the professional group, and create an administrative policy based on trust.

The question is: Are you, as a lecturer, willing and able to enter into dialogue about professional skill and autonomy? Are you being heard? Do you dare make yourself vulnerable and do you distance yourself from your autonomy? Talk to colleagues about educational content and quality instead of just the limiting conditions. How do you do that? What do you really feel is important? How do you deal with this as colleagues? Do you dare confront each other about a failure to fulfill agreements? Can you jointly develop standards?

Benchmark Report: Work perception in universities of applied sciences (2012)

Teaching staff figures

7,9   Autonomy to carry out work

7,8   Collegiality

6,5   Open and honest communication within department/programme

7,6   Collaboration within department/programme

5,5   Collaboration between departments/programmes

He who rules over others should first be his own master

Personal and professional growth requires active participation and depends partly on your surroundings. Your autonomy and its extent is based on confidence in your knowledge and skills as a professional. You develop this through permanent education and experience, as well as through critical dialogue, sharing, testing, reflecting and improving based on shared values and norms within your team, institution and professional group.

Open the classroom door,
seek out and support each other
through coaching, and together
determine how to work smarter
and more effectively

This requires good communication skills. Develop such skills with a view to engaging in dialogue with fellow lecturers and others within the organisation. This includes coaching skills and (team) leadership. Encourage others and be open to critical reflection on your work and that of others. Learn to balance and give direction to your work. Have the courage to confront each other regarding results and friction, and resolve issues together. Learn about working in a professional bureaucracy. Know your organisation, interests and sub-systems. Learn to read them and distinguish better between influence and involvement. (Stephan R. Covey)

Dialogue connects,
arguments distance

Several universities of applied sciences have started projects to facilitate this dialogue, gain experience and link it to individual professional development.
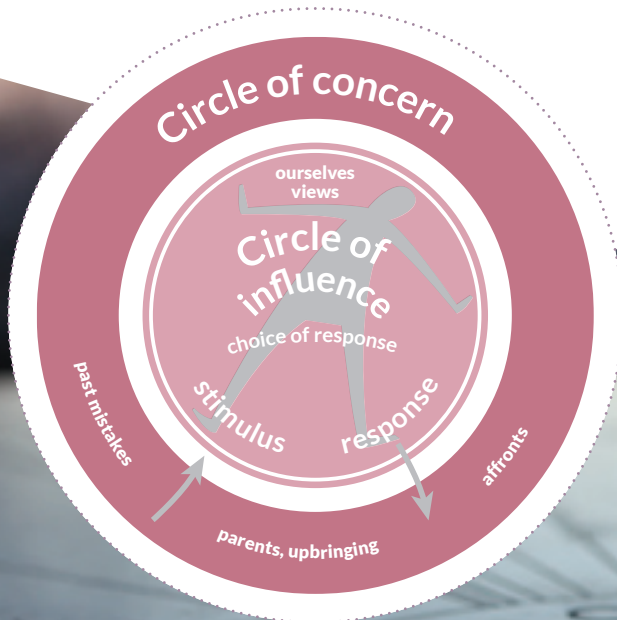
You've got the POWER!

Be proactive as a lecturer. This means more than just taking the initiative. Proactive people take the initiative to influence things they can do something about. Many people wait or conveniently hand over their responsibility to external events or others. Proactive people primarily focus on their own behaviour and thoughts. The ability to influence is an important part of this.

Covey talks about a circle of concern and a circle of influence. The first circle contains those things we cannot influence, such as 'the world', our upbringing and the past. "This is not something we should concern ourselves with", says Covey. Proactive people focus primarily on issues within their circle of influence.

Obviously, you cannot influence everything that happens to you. But you can decide how you respond. Proactive people realise that they choose their own response to a situation. There is always room between 'stimulus' and 'response' in which we can determine our own response.

Circle of concern

ourselves
views

Circle of
influence

choice of response

past mistakes

stimulus

response

affronts

parents, upbringing

*Source: The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People,
Stephan R. Covey (2009)*

Edith Roefs

Lecturers need to initiate the discussion of quality in education

For three years, I've been researching how to develop inspiring teaching. It turns out that a lecturer is more inspiring and inspired if he or she explores and determines educational goals and quality standards independently and together with colleagues, and has the opportunity to develop his or her professionalism in this direction.

Unfortunately, I still see too few lecturers 'consulting' one another in determining quality standards, lecturer competencies and working towards professionalisation. Lecturer professionalisation should be linked to own and shared ideals and views of high-quality education. Earning a Master's as a form of professionalisation in higher professional education contributes to a more solid theoretical basis, but does not guarantee better educational quality.

Insight into student learning and your contribution as a lecturer

Expertise is also improved by approaching daily practice with an open mind. Theoretical knowledge provides a better foundation for your actions, but primarily also insight into student learning and your contribution towards supporting this: what do my students need from me and how can I provide that? Ask them and take a closer look at their involvement and learning methods for your discipline.

Improving expertise does not have to cost a fortune

Critical talks with colleagues provide different perspectives: what kinds of professionals do we want to produce and how can we achieve that? Ask fellow lecturers to attend your classes. Have a critical mirror held up in front of you: are you achieving your goals? Universities of applied sciences and study programmes should facilitate these forms of learning more since, after all, improving educational quality in this way costs relatively little and becomes embedded in the roots of our education.

INSPIRATION I

Teacher Talent Toolbox – NHL

Discover your top 5 personal talents using the online talent development tool

The starting point for the NHL University of Applied Sciences project is the fact that the talents and personal competencies of lecturers and managers form the basis for their professional development. Discovering these enables a better match between talent and function. This positive approach makes it much easier to motivate lecturers to analyse themselves.

The tool is based on self-assessment and helps you identify your strengths. The toolbox contains 35 competencies. After answering the questions, you are shown your top 5 talents. You obtain insight into your traits and motives: what are you naturally good at? From what do you derive satisfaction? What is important to you in your work? This information helps you find a match between your talents and your position at work. The results of this tool are used for performance, development and career discussions.

'Identify your strengths'

Scan the QR-code,

or download the app in the App Store
or Google Play Store

This talent toolbox is used extensively at NHL University of Applied Sciences. Their experience with this tool is that the positive and appreciative use of the instrument alone is not enough to actually use it. Something must also be expressly done with the tool and results.

Lecturers have a constant need to talk to each other about their experiences. The role of a coordinator, who keeps this on the agenda, is essential to this.

Professional autonomy is not about you personally deciding what you want to learn and being facilitated in that learning. It is first and foremost about lecturers discovering their talents and talking to managers and colleagues about how to make the most of those talents within the team.

INSPIRATION II

Lecturers during project week – Royal Conservatory

An inspiring project week for lecturers and a catalyst for strengthening individual expertise, developing new methodologies, and jointly improving the curriculum.

At the Royal Conservatory of The Hague, a link was sought between main subject instruction (instrumental or vocal lessons) and theoretical instruction (general music theory, analysis, music history, etc.).

There was a collective realisation that change was needed, but what kind of change?

The theoretical instruction at the Royal Conservatory had always been divided into dozens of different subjects. There was too little coherence and an inadequate link to the students' main subject areas. This undermined the students' motivation to take the theoretical classes. Also, the content of the classes did not link up sufficiently with the knowledge and skills required of a musician in the 21st century to be independently successful. There was a collective realisation that change was needed, but what kind of change?

Complete freedom of content, but not without obligation

Lecturers were given the opportunity to determine all content. This was expressly aimed at quality improvement, not cost-effectiveness. The school administration gave free rein, and resources were made available to support the lecturers, provided they took their responsibility seriously and came up with a concrete proposal for a curriculum change. An additional requirement was that the new curriculum would not be any more expensive than the current one.

Giving the main subject and theory lecturers this professional autonomy, and facilitating its utilisation resulted in a successful collaboration with an unexpected and even international spin-off. Theoretical education took on a more coherent role within the new curriculum.

Most important success factors at the Conservatory:

▷ Lecturer awareness and a positive attitude towards change
▷ Freedom to determine content
▷ Not a savings project
▷ Maintaining, facilitating and organising a good pace
▷ Project week at external location as a driving force

The work conference was tremendously inspiring

The project started with a project week (work conference) in which 33 lecturers from various disciplines (theory and main subject lecturers) took part. A location outside the conservatory was chosen in order to schedule the conference ahead of time and ensure complete focus on the project contents. During the project week, goals were agreed, discussions held, and everyone listened to what the others had to say. International guest lecturers from partner institutions were invited to provide inspiration with examples from common methods used elsewhere, and so on. This gave the lecturers an international perspective on their work. The week proved to be a tremendous driving force for the entire process.

Lecturers 'reinvent' themselves'

The conference was followed by an intensive follow-up process, during which all ideas and agreements were developed further in four sub-groups.

The renewal process was facilitated and supervised by the conservatory to keep it progressing smoothly. The numerous individual subjects were combined in the new academic year and offered with updated contents.

A benefit of the project is that much effort is devoted to promoting lecturer expertise. Lecturers must learn and apply a new methodology in the new curriculum. That requires considerable flexibility but first and foremost provides energy and a challenge. It stimulates the lecturers in their individual professional development. "We have even received requests from abroad to explain our approach. That also provides an extra boost."

The new subjects and methodologies have since been described and tested with students. The new curriculum will be in place in September 2014.

"I hope that lecturers and institutions will make efforts to continuously improve education based on lecturer expertise. Lecturers need to be encouraged to continually ask themselves whether everything is going as planned, and given the professional autonomy to answer this."

JOINT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Team development, staggered (team) leadership, and professional and occupational standards

Increasing professional autonomy and earning trust in this regard within the institution requires the development of both individual expertise and joint expertise (practical wisdom). Using lecturer teams as a knowledge community is an important tool for shaping lecturer professionalisation. Teams also play a crucial role in reducing fields of tension within the organisation. Lecturers and teams also play an important role in formulating clear professional standards and ethical codes to serve as a compass.

Strength in numbers

This requires a different vision on the position and role of teams (and lecturers) within the educational organisation. Bottom-up support for team development and appropriate (team) leadership is preferable. However, lecturers also need to isolate themselves less and work more towards common goals, teamwork, and team strength.

Teams and lecturers first and foremost play a steering role in increasing, monitoring and utilising professional autonomy and, consequently, educational quality. To effectively fulfill this role as a lecturer and team, individual members also need to learn to think, direct (demonstrate leadership), collaborate and take a stand as a team.
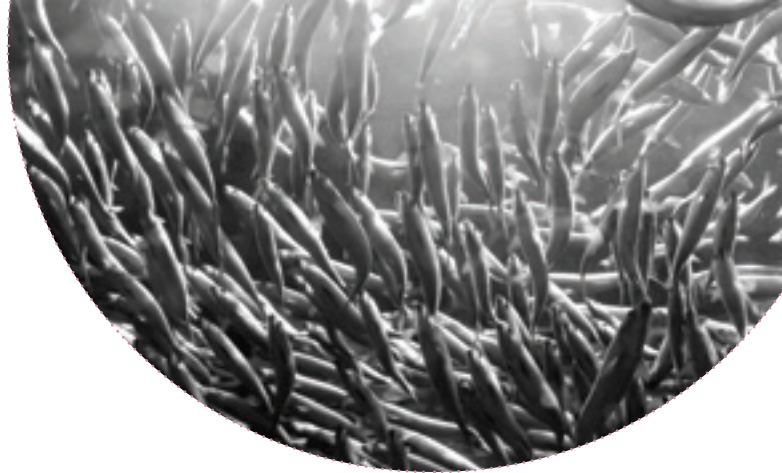
1+1=3

For lecturers in higher professional education, it is not necessarily a matter of course to collaborate and share experiences, knowledge and expertise with colleagues. Some lecturer teams work well together and succeed in improving themselves and the quality of education. Other teams struggle or fail to achieve this. One thing is certain: it does not happen automatically. Sometimes a vision, initiative, leadership, safety and/or openness is lacking. Often the problem is time or other priorities.

When universities of applied sciences do succeed in mobilising lecturers and teams, tremendous energy and solidarity is created. It becomes clear that, as a lecturer, you can indeed influence your own work practice, educational quality, and professional autonomy. For example, you can pick up the ball yourself (proactive) instead of dropping it elsewhere. This does not happen automatically. The educational institute must support and facilitate this process.

The essence of teamwork is learning to deal with the differences between you and the others

An educational institute must offer lecturers an attractive learning environment. This requires a form of personal team leadership aimed at increasing expertise, autonomy, and connections. Most institutions are still managed with a focus on performance and controllability which has a stifling effect. Staggered leadership can offer a solution. With staggered leadership, you have more influence as a lecturer based on your expertise and experience, which you claim (and are granted) as an educational professional and with as much discretionary power (freedom to assess or act independently) as possible.

Staggered leadership: a school of fish that appears to move in sync as a group and protects itself without any one fish taking the lead

Lecturer teams play a role in developing clear-cut, realistic, controllable, and measurable professional standards and ethical codes. They are in agreement on good teaching, the degree of study guidance, method of communication with students etc. within the team, institution or discipline and at any rate.

It is important that these standards are developed by the lecturers, teams and sectors. After all 'good' is a relative concept. And it is primarily the professional group that must achieve the self-regulating and 'self-cleansing' ability, in order to raise the practical wisdom of the individual lecturer to the level of the new professional standards.

7 tips
for strong
teams!

1 **Small teams**
Two small teams achieve
more than one big team.

2 **Choose variation**
Choose different personalities
and competencies in your team.

3 **Clear leadership**
Allocate leadership tasks or choose
a leader from your own network.

4 **Room for individuality**
Self-managing teams – leaders maintain a distance.

5 **Communicate**
Don't think for others, listen,
and make agreements on how
and whether or not to share information.

6 **Experiment**
Alternate tasks, allow for
different perspectives.

7 **Celebrate succes**
Hard work, goal achieved, time to celebrate!

Source: Intermediair PW (2010)

Joseph Kessels

Critical reflection on own expertise

To utilise professional autonomy and work together with your colleagues on strengthening expertise, it is important to have a good idea about your own strengths and weaknesses when it comes to teaching. Have I mastered the basic skills, such as clearly explaining content, creating a task-oriented work climate, and actively involving students in educational activities? Do I gear my explanation to the individual possibilities of my students? Do I develop custom assignments? Do I systematically follow the progress and development of each student? Do I offer them the attention they need? Am I able to give clear direction to my work? Can I motivate myself and organise my work so that I follow my own plans? Am I able to critically examine my own performance and invite others to help me with this?

Opening the classroom door, seeking out and supporting each other through coaching, and together determining how to work smarter and more effectively is what determines the quality of the learning culture at universities of applied sciences.

In an attractive learning environment, lecturers, managers and administrators share their leadership

The quest for professional autonomy originates from the question: how can we make a university of applied sciences an attractive learning environment for lecturers? Lecturers, managers and administrators share their leadership in this.

INSPIRATION III

Pit Stop for team development –
Inholland University of Applied Sciences

Successful team development by and for lecturers, bottom-up stimulation, central facilitation, and long-term safeguarding with Pit Stop for teams.

If you want your lecturer teams to be stronger and have greater responsibility, the teams themselves must also take the initiative. In the past, Inholland used a rigid top-down educational model for this.

We've held several team days in the past, made agreements and set goals. But that was the end of it.

Why do things differently?

The Pit Stop project better defines the position of teams. Management and HRM play a more facilitating role. Teams decide whether or not to participate. But participation is not without obligation.

Within the projects, the teams hold two meetings (at six-month intervals) that are led by a process supervisor/coach. Most are lecturers who are specially selected and trained for this purpose. The sessions are preceded by an intake interview. The reason for the initiative is discussed, as are the most important questions, joint issues, and what the team aims to achieve. Expectations in terms of the process and deadlines are also discussed.

To ensure success, the entire team must be involved and be given the ball. This way, every team member will feel a connection to the goal and be partly responsible for achieving it. The process supervisors solely provide support. This is necessary in order to stay on course and monitor progress. Contents are not set in stone but the schedule must be strictly observed.

Think big, act small

One of the teams in this project indicated that they were always extremely busy. "We're a small study programme with few staff and there is nothing we could do about it." The question is: What caused all that work pressure? How problematic was it really? Was there truly nothing that could be done? The problem was recognised by all team members. The goal (determine the cause of this time pressure) and ambition (change this) were embraced. The primary cause for the time pressure turned out to be an ambiguous and inconsistent message to students, such as with regard to the supervision of graduate projects. Students walked in to get help all day long.

What bothers you most? Each other

Also, there was no clear policy for how much graduation supervision should be offered. Students could ask the one lecturer all kinds of questions at any time or place. Others found that students should show more independence. This did not benefit the student's perception of the educational quality or collegiality, and certainly not the work pressure. Together it was decided that students would only be offered 30 minutes of supervision at a pre-scheduled time. This turned out to work well for the students and it immediately provided a good example of time management. This benefits how the educational quality is experienced. Lecturers can now better schedule their time and activities, thereby reducing work pressure.

The greatest benefit gained from Pit Stop was the experience that, as a lecturer, you have more professional autonomy than you realise and can utilise it by making small changes together with your team.

"I hope that everyone within a university of applied sciences who is looking for a team development tool will try this. It really works. And the teams are pleased with the results. Lecturers who now also serve as process supervisors enjoy this new challenge and personal growth."

INSPIRATION TOOLS

Team development and professional autonomy

Teams are better able to handle complexity than individuals. Bringing together different competencies, perspectives and backgrounds in teams pays off. How do you compose a team of suitable individuals?

There appears to be a significant and strong relationship between more team development opportunities and result satisfaction

Teams that can create development opportunities perform better. A focus on the following enhances team development opportunities:

▷ **Creating the future**
   asserting (long-term) goals

▷ **Organisation**
   making agreements, allocating tasks, agenda

▷ **Reflection**
   viewing and discussing problems and solutions
   from different perspectives

▷ **Engaging in dialogue**
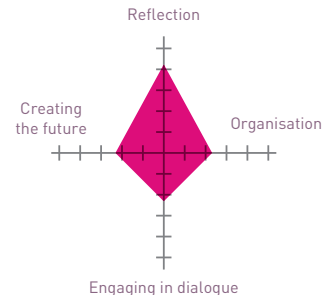   communicating, coordinating, discussing

If all of these activities are given an opportunity, teams are more successful in solving complex issues, achieving change and implementing innovation. Teams that primarily focus on the future and organisation struggle to acquire innovative insights. Teams that primarily focus on the shared experience (reflection and dialogue) are creative, but struggle to achieve results. The four dimensions are naturally at odds to some degree.

Dialogue is now experienced differently.

You are more aware
of the different roles and dimensions
that are important for
effective teamwork

Research shows that teams often have one leader. Most leaders focus on the future and organisation. As a result, development opportunities (and results) that originate through more dialogue and reflection are often neglected. By linking responsibility for each dimension/ activity to the personal competencies and roles within the team (shared leadership), a good balance is created and joint development opportunities are enhanced and utilised more fully.

With the help of the four dimensions and practical tools (model, dimension cards for shared leadership, and an online analysis tool), teams can improve their teamwork and results.

Reflection

Creating the future — Organisation

Engaging in dialogue

Evaluation pays off – also for teams!

It is often difficult for teams to evaluate structurally, yet this helps them achieve much better results. So why do they spend so little time on this? It may be because they need to be good at engaging in dialogue and reflecting, something most teams find difficult. Further research by Karin Derksen has shown that more development opportunities and structural evaluations lead to better results, which otherwise can be disappointing.

Every time they collaborate, Team A evaluates using the app for team development opportunities. The team members indicate that these evaluations have helped to more easily reveal mutual irritations, such as times when two team members really want to discuss more details, while the other two do not see the added value of this for the intended result. By discussing this openly, they resolved the problem relatively quickly and together made the best decision.

Team B only evaluated the first and last time they worked together on the assignment. In this team, one team member (c) wanted to further examine the problem, engage in dialogue and reflect, while the other three were not interested in listening and simply wanted to move on since they didn't have much time. After several attempts by team member (c), he gave up in frustration.

The effect is that Team A produced an 'end product' with which their customer and themselves are very satisfied. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said for Team B. Their own rating of their 'end product' was 6-, and the customer gave them a score of 4.5!

More information on team development opportunity, shared leadership and (free) support materials can be found at www.teamontwikkelruimte.nl

INSPIRATION IV

Team building in the kitchen

Cook together as a team, either at someone's home or during a cooking workshop. "Cooking is a great way to bring to light all kinds of group dynamics, teamwork and communication. It is so effective because everyone can be him or herself in a pleasant and safe environment. Moreover, everything you do or say in the kitchen whilst cooking has an immediate effect. Action = reaction. When you reflect your observations back to the group, they are usually recognisable to everyone and can be discussed. It sometimes has to sink in first, but something is always expressed that would have otherwise remained under the surface."

(Michiel Waterman, cooking coach)

Interactive musical team building

After only two to four hours in a music workshop, you and your team will be able to perform a swinging piece of music. Musically inclined or not, it works every time! While making music, you experience in a playful manner everything involved in a harmonious and swinging performance. It's all about listening, harmonising and collaborating. By making music together, you jointly achieve a tangible and great-sounding result.

(Teamsintune.nl)

ADMINISTRATION AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT

The debate on professional autonomy is not a true debate without including administration and policy. School boards find themselves in a complex field of tension both within their own organisation and outside of it. They need to balance their own professional autonomy (administrative autonomy) granted by society, politics and legislation, and that of lecturers and lecturer teams. In both cases, the tension involves trust, autonomy and self-regulation.

Trust creates opportunity

The complexity described above results in more control from the internal organisation. Administrators and policymakers are increasingly inclined to manage based on control/bureaucratic control principles, such as regulations, performance agreements (standardised goals), protocols and standardised accountability requirements. The more management is based on control, the more the individual capabilities and personal responsibilities of lecturers are interrupted and undermined. The less that lecturers are able to arrive at a basis of professional trust (compliance), the more difficult it is to break down that control.

The right type of administrative autonomy

There is much need for a different type of autonomy (administrative autonomy): one that gives administrators more opportunity to self-direct and assume responsibility for the goals of the primary process of education. This in turn provides motivation and opportunity to give meaning to the education and assume the necessary responsibility, together with educational managers, team leaders, lecturers, staff and students.

To achieve this, the myth that educational institutions are completely administrable and that educational quality can be measured objectively must be debunked in society, politics, the national government and school boards.

Practical & professional wisdom

Leadership and responsibility

HR

Professional autonomy area of tension

Expertise

Administraton and policy

Psychological contract Good employer /employee practices

The myth of fully administrable organisational institutes and objectively measured educational quality

It is understandable that attempts are made to create an educational world that we can measure, understand and control based on the need for transparency and insight into quality, and financed by public funds. However, this is inconsistent with the daily practice of lecturers who do not behave according to a predetermined goal-means rationality, but are more versatile, unpredictable and therefore less easy to control. Also, management is increasingly based on randomly established standards, reflecting what is proper and what is not. This bureaucracy-oriented management philosophy conflicts with the values and norms of professionals, who (certainly after gaining enough knowledge and experience) often consider themselves experts and who demand trust. This also makes the professional group less ambitious.

Administrator need to let go of the process and teams

Society, students, educational institutes and lecturers need to be able to trust that lecturers will utilise their professional autonomy to the fullest. There is the risk of a vicious circle on both the administrative and lecturer level: if the self-regulating ability of the professional group of lecturers is undermined, regulation by administrators or the government will increase, resulting in less professional autonomy, etc. This circle can be broken by either allowing more professional autonomy (political and societal support) or by having the professional group give off a strong signal with regard to its ability to establish its own professional standards and codes. A combination of both is ideal.
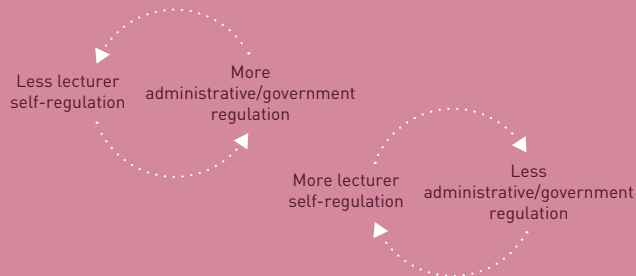
A new balance is needed in the relationship between the organisation and the professional. Lecturers will have to actively participate in the professional group and actively apply and conform to the applicable professional norms and standards. Educational institutions will have to release their grip on professionals and use trust as a central management principle, on the basis of which they in turn will have to be given the desired autonomy from society, politics and the government.

Autonomy and rule: Think in terms of 'and' rather than 'either/or'

In relation to lecturer teams, this means that the teams will have to position themselves to translate the university of applied sciences' ambitions into the goals that are meaningful to them; ambitious goals that fit within the reality of daily practice and appeal to the development of the ability to improve quality.

Less lecturer self-regulation

More administrative/government regulation

More lecturer self-regulation

Less administrative/government regulation

Managing autonomy

Do's

Self-management, limitations, determining course and framework, giving and taking responsibility, connecting, accountability responsibility, collectivities, greater interest, longer term, consideration of different interests, acknowledgment, equipping.

Don'ts

Isolation, individual determination, noncommittal, showing no interest, non-intervention, power talk, neglecting, passing the buck.

Edith Hooge

Rules, norms and accountability will always be part of the work context

Thinking in terms of the rules/regulating discrepancy versus autonomy/trust actually diminishes thinking in terms of professional autonomy. Left or right: rules, norms and accountability will always be part of the work context of education professionals and this applies to students and team leaders, as well as administrators.

Regulation or an accountability framework sometimes offers a worthwhile action perspective and can be used to do the work well or even better. In other cases, it does little or no justice to proper professional practice and may perhaps form an obstacle; another choice or action must then be made.

In other words, professional autonomy means the opportunity for influence and accountability willingness

The more autonomy that professionals are offered (and is taken by professionals) to influence rules, standards and accountability frameworks, the easier it will be to deal with this. In other words, professional autonomy means the opportunity for influence and accountability willingness. Subsequently, the better professionals master their craft, the better they can use their influence and be accountable for it. So professional autonomy starts with strong, well-equipped professionals.

INSPIRATION V

The road to quality –
Leiden University of Applied Sciences

Developing administration and policy towards more trust and professional autonomy, through a different perspective on quality measurement, and safeguarding it through inter-subjective assessment

The 'Road to Quality' project within the Music Teacher and Dance/ Eurythmy Teacher programmes at Leiden University of Applied Sciences was inspired by a Swiss management model specially developed for work areas with interactive services. What makes this model unique is it assumes that, unlike products, services do not have a fully predictable and manageable result. Since no two actions are identical in an interactive process, the true quality characteristic is the ability of the individual to create. Interactive services require a far-reaching individualisation of action, which in turn requires sufficient autonomy and freedom to give tasks an autonomous form within set limitations. This quality framework is in perfect line with study programmes at universities of applied sciences.

It is quite possible on the administrative and policy level to improve educational quality by facilitating greater personal responsibility and creative actions. This assumes, however, that individual lecturers act within the collaboration culture of the team, with jointly determined norms, a shared vision, concrete agreements and structural evaluation and accountability.

Quality can't be tallied

It is important here to establish that educational quality cannot be measured objectively, and certainly not with hard superficial criteria alone. Forced by the current central testing policy, teaching quality can be assessed solely on the basis of individual elements. These are measured objectively and quantitatively, such as the number of hours of class preparation or number of minutes of interaction during the lesson. Expertise then becomes so oversimplified and diminished that no justice is done to the added value of a lecturer, which comprises personal intuitive professional knowledge and experience.

Education is not just about 'music history and learning to read notes'. What matters is making a link to what you feel and creating something that lets others connect.

freedom

capability

trust

individual responsibility

protection

task

financial situation

community as lot

insight

individual & community

individual development

initiative

Strengthening autonomy through collective inter-subjective assessment

Within this project, a different testing procedure was developed by the lecturer team (bottom-up). "The basis is not individual subjective, but solely collective inter-subjective assessment." In practice, for work placement supervision for example, this means that several lecturers from the team visit and assess each other's students at the placement location based on jointly determined criteria. Where relevant, students are also tested using the traditional method (objective quantitative measurement), such as in music history. "This change in direction naturally created some tension with the university of applied sciences' central testing policy. We were given the opportunity to do things differently by complying, where possible, with the quantitative testing policy and also explaining (clarifying and justifying) what we did differently, why and how we safeguarded this through inter-subjective assessment."

After the pilot within the Music Teacher and Dance/Eurythmy Teacher programmes, this policy and approach were also implemented in other lecturer programme teams..

"In addition to more professional autonomy, the benefit of this project is that teams, students, managers and administrators have more contact, get to know each other better, collaborate and get a look behind the curtain. The result is trust and a culture with room for critical reflection, confrontation regarding attitude and behaviour, and helping each other improve."

More information on this management methodology can be found on the website:
www.wegezurqualitaet.info

INSPIRATION VI

PIT platform –
The Hague University of Applied Sciences

A PIT platform was established at The Hague University of Applied Sciences to stimulate lecturers and students in all areas and get them more enthusiastic about the earlier implemented creativity process and further develop innovativeness.
The platform's strength lies in the connections within the university of applied sciences with study programmes, departments, services and various layers of the organisation.

PIT stands for Professional Initiative Team: passionate and involved employees with initiative, innovative and interactive in thinking together and triggering talent.

	Management	Autonomy
Strategy	Stability	Renewal
Structure	Order	Chaos
Systems	Coercion	Freedom
Personnel	Solidarity	Uniqueness
Management style	Authenticity	Participation
Culture	Efficiency	Flexibility

Source: Van de Vorst and Roelofs (2009)

Worthwhile encounters give meaning to one's own organisation

What does PIT do?

▷ PIT is the leading spot within the university of applied sciences for innovation. Involved employees and lecturers can develop their creative ideas and bring initiatives together here. They can inspire each other and gain new insights. Connection is facilitated and the educational authority of lecturers enhanced.

▷ PIT gives advice to HRM and the Executive Board about the importance of professional autonomy and (social) innovation. This advice is based on literature research, meetings with stakeholders, lecturer surveys and intervention evaluations. The advice entails how the university of applied sciences can stimulate and facilitate the process of creativity and innovation in a sustainable way and what this demands of the organisation. This initiates dialogue between the Executive Board/organisation and educational professionals on content-related educational matters.

▷ PIT keeps the necessity of professional autonomy within the department continuously on the agenda.

▷ PIT should give lecturers and other employees a sense of ownership and involvement, something that is often lacking. This is done by creating connections through interventions and initiatives.

▷ Lecturers and other employees are stimulated and inspired to once again find focus and passion in their work.

▷ During the 'climbing over the fence' days, lecturers are invited to have a 'look over the fence' and initiate collaborations. PIT ensures that dialogue on management and autonomy is always on the agenda of different stakeholders.

▷ PIT organises a road show along departments and services in the form of PIT theme lunches. Sections of the school are brought together as a result and teamwork stimulated.

PIT: een initiatief van werknemers van De Haagse Hogeschool om De Haagse in beweging te houden

The strength of PIT

▷ Creative process
▷ Interdisciplinary
▷ Experience on the work floor and area of expertise
▷ Driven by passion

PIT organisational form must be:

▷ Sustainable
▷ Non-steering
▷ Flywheel effect
▷ Open and inspiring

INSPIRATION VII

Quality register and Lecturer Council – Zuyd University of Applied Sciences

Zuyd University of Applied Sciences has a quality register by and for lecturers. The register is in keeping with the vision of how to organise the professional autonomy of lecturers already in place and how to further develop it. The new quality register that lets lecturers demonstrate their quality is a tool that can facilitate this.

Taking stock of professional development

The goal of the register is continuous attention to expertise advancement: a quality register by and for lecturers with a focus on their 'permanent education'.

The quality of lecturers is safeguarded by taking stock of their professional development. An important point of departure for a quality register is the team concept implemented within Zuyd University of Applied Sciences. In the team, growth and career goals are coordinated and determined together with the team and a team leader, thereby enabling adequate efforts, optimal collaboration and the expertise advancement of professionals.
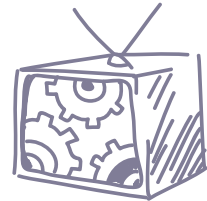
The quality register consists of a basic register (to ensure the basic qualifications of each lecturer) and a follow-up register (that reflects the lifelong learning of every lecturer).
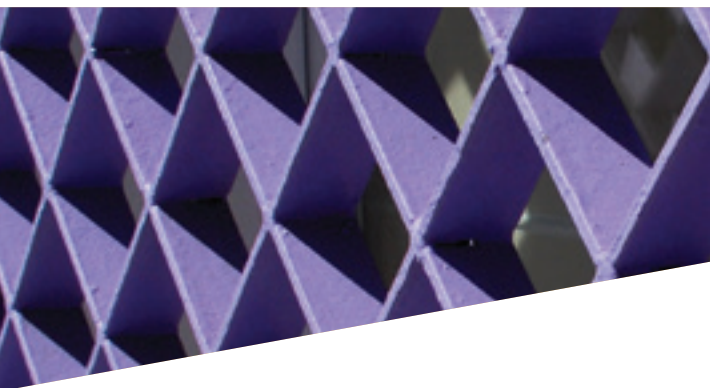
In developing the register, ten basic competencies were determined relating to the five core values of Zuyd University of Applied Sciences. Six themes were then established which are the focus of lecturer development. The initial registration is followed by a periodic registration, based on a digital portfolio in which work experience and expertise advancement are recorded.

Lecturer Council for solicited and unsolicited advice

The next step is the formation of a lecturer Council that gives solicited and unsolicited advice to the Executive Board about everything related to the lecturer's professionalism. The Lecturer Council (ideally) comprises eight lecturers; one from each faculty. The Executive Board has asked that a number of people be appointed who are innovative and have critical views on the profession of lecturer within the university of applied sciences. The Lecturer Council discusses the professionalism of the lecturer and reflects on how they interact in the development of the profession of lecturer.

It does, however, provide basic requirements that everyone must meet, including basic qualifications. It is also a register that lets you personally take the lead as a lecturer. The lecturer puts together his or her own portfolio of supporting documents. This lets you show your team and team leader that you are maintaining your professionalism, that you take ownership of your own register.

Field of tension between autonomy and structure/steering

The autonomy of the Lecturer Council to determine its own advisory role is great, however sometimes too great in the eyes of lecturers. From the perspective of the Council, frameworks are desirable and it is good to receive feedback on the direction chosen.

For the Executive Board, the autonomy of the Lecturer Council also causes some tension. According to the chairperson, the hardest part is "to refrain from interference when there's no guarantee results are being achieved." The Executive Board deliberately chooses to not arrange everything beforehand, but together discover and determine what is needed. This is challenging because lecturers tend to look to the Executive Board for answers and therefore the Executive Board needs to avoid that pitfall. It is important for the Executive Board to maintain dialogue as a 'critical friend'.

Maintaining dialogue

But this also demands administrative sensitivity on the part of lecturers. At present, they are hesitant to act. The risk is that lecturers dive into a topic and lose sight of the process. Interim coordination, the continuous involvement of colleagues, and finding the essence together is just as important in this type of process.

Lecturers are responsible for everything except their own role and professionalism

The Lecturer Council motivates lecturers to take action and have more of a voice. In this sector, lecturers are often responsible for everything except their own role and professionalism. The Lecturer Board confirms that: "It is common practice everywhere for a sector to determine its own professionalism and autonomy. This is less true, however, of the profession of lecturer at a university of applied sciences." This is also an important motivation for lecturers to participate in the Lecturer Council: "If something relates to your own field, you should be involved. It's also interesting to learn what's really going on in the field."

A number of fields of tension have now become apparent in terms of both the work process of the Lecturer Council and the quality register.

The field of tension between professional autonomy and the quality register

Quality registration and professional autonomy appear to be two incompatible concepts. The risk is a working method that is too prescriptive with regard to lecturer professionalism and requirements you must meet as a lecturer.

MORE INSPIRATION

For more inspiration, see the Zestor website at www.zestor.nl

Here you will find films, presentations and publications on professional autonomy in higher professional education.

Film - River of plenty (part 1)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=fMEi3asMjsQ&feature=youtu.be

Film - River of plenty (part 2)
www.youtube.com/watch?v=E6WMVG3H0k8&&feature=youtu.be

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Martin Prchal
Assistent Director
Royal Conservatory of The Hague

Robert Viëtor
Cluster Director
Leiden University of Applied Sciences

Joanneke Krämer
Project Leader for Team Development
Inholland

Experts

Rob Vink
Researcher / Adviser at IVA Onderwijs

Edith Roefs
Lecturer and Researcher
Windesheim University of Applied Sciences

Joseph Kessels
Professor of Human Resource Development
at the University of Twente and Professor of
Educational Leadership at the Open University

Edith Hooge
Endowed Professor of Educational Administration
TiasNimbas Business School, Tilburg University /
Senior Adviser at BMC advies

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SUMMARY

The goal of this booklet is to provide lecturers in higher professional education with direction and inspiration to take action and constructively tackle the challenge of continuously developing, monitoring and utilising their professional autonomy. The ultimate goal is to jointly enrich the profession and improve educational quality.

This book is divided into three chapters, each of which examines one of the following dimensions in detail:

1.   Individual professional development
2.   Joint professional development
3.   Administration and policy development

As inspiration and guidelines for getting started and persevering, we provide tips and examples of successful projects at universities of applied sciences for each dimension.

Be inspired, experience the dialogue and take a step towards the (further) development of your own professional autonomy and that of your colleagues.

REVIEWS

Frank Stiksma, lecturer at the HU University of Applied Sciences Utrecht

"An extremely relevant and topical theme is addressed: passion for the field, students and school. The booklet is an ode to the professional autonomy of lecturers.
The reader is inspired to find a balance between one's own strength and the professional requirements prescribed by the context."

Anne-Marie Schoonwater, lecturer at the Stoas Vilentum University of Applied Sciences

"I'm pleased that this booklet provides insight into how we can engage in genuine dialogue within educational teams. Do we simply need to be less stubborn? That would be a good start. But, even more so, we need to think as a team in order to personally create quality. It has already been proven that collaborating teams with genuine dialogue yield a much higher standard, more so than through measurements, protocols and performance agreements. I believe this booklet makes that clear."

Frans Coppelmans, lecturer at the Avans University of Applied Sciences

"It's great to experience how lecturers definitely perform better when granted professional autonomy and organising it together with colleagues. Education once again becomes 'bottom up', i.e. making each other better and stronger through dialogue. This is a great goal to pursue – together – with the result also being a better individual lecturer."

WWW.ZESTOR.NL