Can RPL/VPL facilitate more efficient learning pathways?

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The Swedish Higher Vocational Education

Yh Yrkeshögskolan

- Post-secondry (EQF level 5 & 6)
- Training for specific vocations
- Offered throughout the country
- Responds to labour market demands
- Curricula/learning outcomes developed by providers
- Employers contribute to the shaping and running of the study programmes
- Extensive periods of work based learning are part of most programmes
- Study programmes 1 to 3 years in duration (1 year = 200 HVE credits)
- Range of study programmes vary over time
- All study programmes qualify for student finance (Swedish Board of Student Finance) and most of them are free of charge
- www.yrkeshogskolan.se

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HVE-flex – piloting a validation pathway in higher vocational education

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Background

- Exemptions based on prior learning regulated since 2009, for part qualification
- Right to exemption for students enrolled into a programme
- VPL as a specific tool is NOT regulated or prescribed as a tool for exemptions – but we recommend
- Internal review conducted 2019 → the idea of HVE-flex was born

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Piloting

- Government assignment: develop and pilot models based on exemption and individualised complementary training to achieve full qualification (HVE-degree)
- Pilot project from June 2020 to April 2023
- Aprox. 3 million Euros in funding per year → 500 students/year
- Project was tasked with proposing a permanent model for implementation

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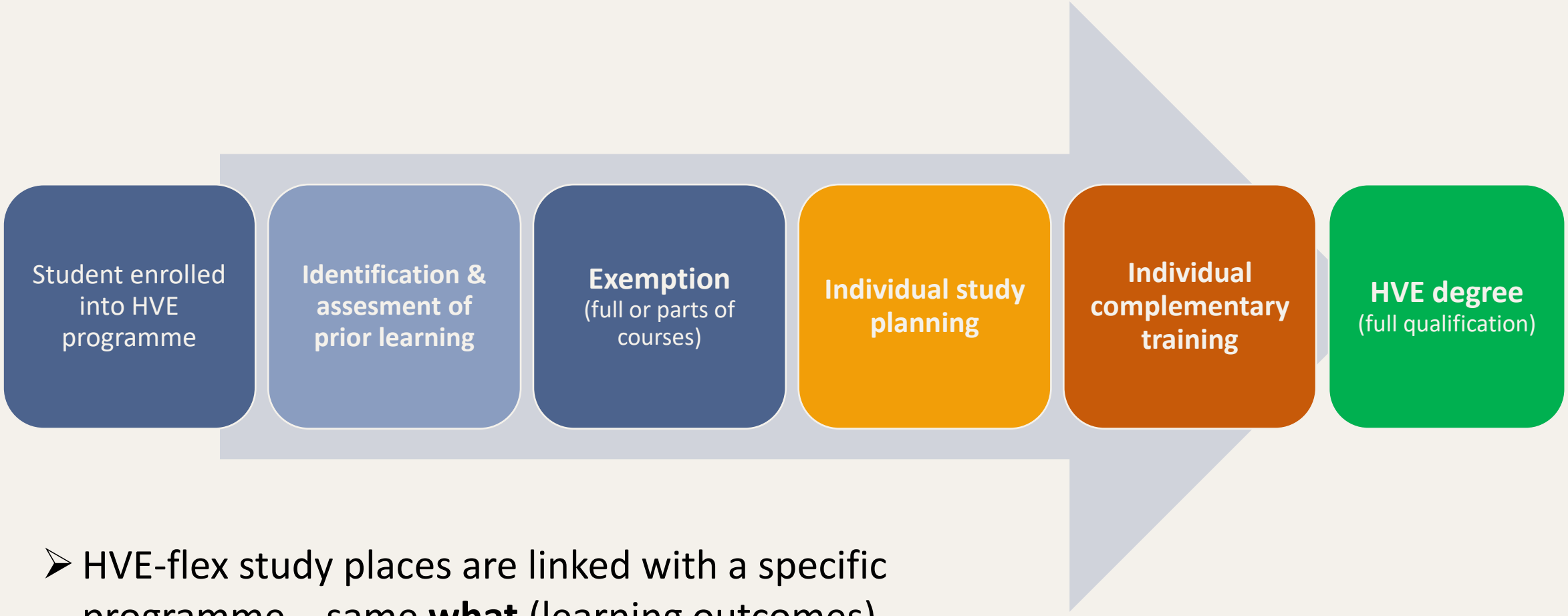
Aims of the pilot

- Develop and test a financing model that supports balance between exemption/VPL and complementary training
- Support capacity building for HVE providers to carry out VPL and individualised complementary training towards a full qualification
- Develop support materials

→ Create faster routes to full HVE qualification and/or more efficient use of government funding

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The HVE-flex route



- HVE-flex study places are linked with a specific programme – same **what** (learning outcomes)
- HVE-flex has a flexible **how**, **when** and **where** (agreed in individual study plan)

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Funding model

A new model of funding for HVE-flex study places:

1. **Validation:** Fixed grant SEK 10 000 per student
2. **Individual complementary training:** variable grant based on number of credits to be provided

   Grant ceiling of 75% of regular grant per study place

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Capacity building

- Necessary precondition – support providers!
- Operational support
- Allow time for necessary development of procedures and tools
- Create arenas for and promote peer-learning
- Trial and error is important
- Don’t copy paste – adapt to your own conditions and context

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The HVE-flex pilot program 2020–2022

- A total of 1,539 places were granted, 811 were used, and 127 programs participated
- On average, students received credit exemptions for 44 percent. 47 percent received credit for at least half of the program, and 19 percent for at least 75 percent
- 65 percent graduated, or 73 percent when students who did not begin their studies are excluded
- Half of all students graduated faster
- 77% of graduates completed their studies faster
- Older student group - median age 38 compared to 33
- 44 percent cost savings for graduated HVE-flex students.

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Conclusions

The pilot has shown that VPL used for exemptions contributes to faster and more flexible training pathways within HVE, and that students enrolled in HVE-flex graduates faster and because of that better can utilise their skills in the labour market.

The cost of HVE study places can be reduced with up to 40 %. The project also clearly shows the importance of funding models that supports the use of VPL for the uptake of VPL to increase.

As most VPL processes identifies a skills gap for the individual, the fact that HVE-flex as a model encompasses both the validation and the complementary training, makes it an important model for validation also in other contexts.

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Concluding remarks

Integration into education and training. Validation should connect directly to credit exemptions and individualised complementary training towards a full qualification.

Permanent, targeted funding. Sustainable funding must cover both validation and flexible training, giving providers appropriate incentives to recognise prior learning.

Systematic follow-up. Data collection and tracer studies should track completion, time saved, costs and subsequent employment or further learning.

Provider capacity. Providers need time, competent staff, practical support and opportunities for peer learning to develop reliable assessment and flexible provision.

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Thank you!

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More information

Återrapportering YH-flex

Läge och utveckling av validering

Validering och SeQF

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