



International Institute
for Educational Planning

IIEP-UNESCO research on flexible learning pathways (FLPs) in higher education: international perspective

National Webinar on FLPs in Jamaican higher education


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National policies for flexible learning pathways

- Chile, Finland, India, [Jamaica](#), Morocco, Malaysia, South Africa and the UK
- Shaped by global and local trends: massification, diversification, globalisation
- Balancing human resource development and equity objectives
- Equity groups in focus: cross-cutting categories are income, age, disability, gender, geography and ethnicity



Stages of FLPs	Jamaica
Flexibility in access	K-13: Career Advancement Programme (CAP) and the Occupational Associate degree (OAD); RPL for national vocational qualification (NVQ) mature entry; '2+2 model'
Flexibility during studies	Part-time, distance, evening, blended learning provisions in all case study countries; Varied across institutions
Flexibility towards graduation and employment	OAD; '2+2 model'
Student guidance	Labour Market Information System; Student guidance varied by institutions

Flexibility in access

- Preparatory programmes:
 - Preparatory courses between upper secondary level and HEIs (**Finland, Chile, Jamaica, South Africa, the UK**)
 - K-13 policy: additional two years of upper secondary school (grade 12 and 13) facilitate the Career Advancement Programme (CAP) and the Occupational Associate degree in Jamaica)
- Transfers:
 - National transfers: (**Finland, Malaysia, South Africa; 2+2” model in Jamaica**)
 - Internal transfers through inter- and intra-institutional agreements (**Finland, India, Chile, South Africa, Morocco, Jamaica**)

Flexibility in access: Recognition of Prior Learning

- Two types:
 - National system for RPL: **Malaysia, the UK, South Africa**
 - Institution-led RPL: **Finland, Chile**, RPL for awarding NVQ at TVET institutions and mature entry at academic HEIs in **Jamaica**
- Often practiced by vocational institutions for recognition of labour competences
- Difficulty linking TVET and HEIs' qualifications for RPL
- Not a mainstream route in most of the studied countries
- Typically supported by NQF



Flexiblility during studies: mode of delivery and curriculum

- Part-time, distance, evening, blended learning provisions in all case study countries
- Flexibility in curriculum varies across institutions
- '2+2 model' in **Jamaica** allows flexibility in study location, change of programmes

Flexiblility towards graduation

- Practices for flexibility towards graduation and transition to the labour market vary across countries
- Provision in studies to enhance employability (**Finland, the UK, Morocco**, '2+2 model' in **Jamaica** allows students to move flexibly to the labour market

Governance and autonomy for implementing FLPs

Governance framework matters for FLPs !

- Administrative fragmentation
- Balancing regulation and autonomy to enhance implementation of FLPs
- Implementation of FLPs is similar across HEIs in regulated HE systems (**Jamaica, South Africa, Morocco, Malaysia**)
- Implementation of FLPs varies across HEIs in decentralised HE systems (**Chile, the UK**)

Funding for implementing FLPs

- Government funding mechanisms strongly support FLPs (**Jamaica**, Finland, India, Malaysia, South Africa)
- Student support can enable access and retention of equity groups in FLPs (**Finland**, **Chile**, Programme for Advancement through Health and Education (PATH) in **Jamaica**)

Quality assurance and NQFs for implementing FLPs

- QA with focus on the implementation of FLPs (**Finland; India, the UK**)
- Guidelines for implementation of RPL and ODL (**Jamaica, India, Malaysia, South Africa, Finland**)
- NQFs are important for facilitating understanding and comparability of qualifications

Enablers and barriers for implementing FLPs

- FLPs as a holistic policy that emphasises flexibility in access, during studies and towards graduation
- Shared vision and policy orientation on FLPs, including equity groups
- Balance between regulation and autonomy in implementation of FLPs
- Incentives and support for HEIs to implement FLPs
- Monitoring and evaluation focused on the implementation of FLPs

Thank you again for the attention!