

## Paper 125 – Poster

### BELLCURVE research project

M.L.Siriwardena  
Co-Investigator  
School of the Built Environment,  
The University of Salford  
[M.L.Siriwardena@salford.ac.uk](mailto:M.L.Siriwardena@salford.ac.uk)

#### Abstract

Built Environment Lifelong Learning Challenging University Responses to Vocational Education (BELLCURVE) is an EC (European Commission) funded research project jointly undertaken by the University of Salford, UK (Lead partner), Vilnius Gediminas Technical University, Lithuania, and Tallinn University of Technology, Estonia. This project addresses issues associated with the mismatch between graduate skills and labour market requirements, which is considered as one of the factors behind graduate unemployment and employer dissatisfaction, particularly in the Built Environment (BE) sector. BELLCURVE considers 'student engagement' as a continuous through-life process rather than a temporary traditional engagement limited by the course duration. This through-life studentship defines the essence of the new innovative "Lifelong University" concept, where it provides an opportunity for learners to acquire and develop skills and knowledge to respond to changing construction labour market needs on a continuous basis. To enable universities to become innovative and responsive to cater to such change, reforms in governance systems based on strategic priorities which promote lifelong learning are needed. Therefore BELLCURVE focuses on governance reforms in HEIs delivering Built Environment programmes across the EU. The existing interactions between the HEIs and the labour market are investigated and possible improvements to such interactions will be analysed. The objectives of this project are therefore formulated as, to develop a framework for HEI's to promote the concept of lifelong university in capturing and responding to labour market skill needs in the Built Environment; to refine, test and validate the developed framework through existing HEI Built Environment programmes/ sectors; to provide recommendations on governance reform for HEIs to become 'continuing education centres' for graduates while responding to labour market skill needs.

Project details can be found at <http://www.disaster-resilience.salford.ac.uk/bellcurve/>