

# Curriculum Development as Cooperation between Business and Academia in Austria

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■ Martin Neubauer, born in 1972 received his Master's Degree and Doctorate in Economic and Social Sciences at the Karl-Franzens-University (Graz/Austria) and was studying Russian at the Karl-Franzens-University (Graz/Austria) and the Moscow Linguistic State University (Moscow/Russia). Since January 2008 he works in Moscow/Russia for Oleg V. Deripaska, supervisory board chairman and owner of Basic Element, where he is responsible for private issues of Mr. Deripaska.

■ From January 2003 until December 2007 he worked at FH JOANNEUM (JOANNEUM University of Applied sciences) as senior lecturer in the field of Operations Management, International Market Entry Strategies, Entrepreneurship and Cross Cultural Management at the Department of International Management and the Department of Aviation. Additionally to that he was setting up a research center at the Department of International Management at the same institution where meanwhile 7 researchers are working and was responsible for the implementation of international and national research projects with a total volume of more than 3 Mio EUR. He lectures at universities in the USA, Germany, Switzerland, Mexico and Colombia among others.

## About the institution

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- In 1995 FH JOANNEUM started with four degree programs and altogether 150 students. Currently about 3.200 students attend the 36 different programs which are offered at three locations in Graz, Kapfenberg and Bad Gleichenberg. Since some of the degree programs are fairly young and only have first or second year students yet, the student population will continue growing.
- FH JOANNEUM employs over 375 people in the areas of research, teaching and administration. Another 725 people work for the institution on an independent contractor's basis.. FH J is one of Austria's leading Universities of Applied Sciences. In order to maintain and consolidate this status, both our teaching and our applied research and development is modeled on the best colleges and universities in Europe.
- R&D activities (more than 500 ongoing projects) help to accumulate a knowledge base for the university. Additionally, the know-how we acquire from R&D projects helps to ensure the high tuition quality in our degree programs.
- FH JOANNEUM offers at 3 campuses vocational training activities which must be financed by the participants (all other study programs are almost fully financed by public authorities).

## The market needs....

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- For many years only traditional universities existed in Austria
- 1970 and 1976 first discussions about an expansion of education in the Austrian tertiary sector
- 21.12.1988 first serious discussion induced by the EU Council Directive 89/48/EWG on the development of a new educational segment at university level.
- The „Fachhochschul Studies Act“ became effective on 1 October 1993
- A completely new sector was developed, no upgrading of existing institutions!
- The first 10 programs started in the academic year 1994/95

## Main Goals

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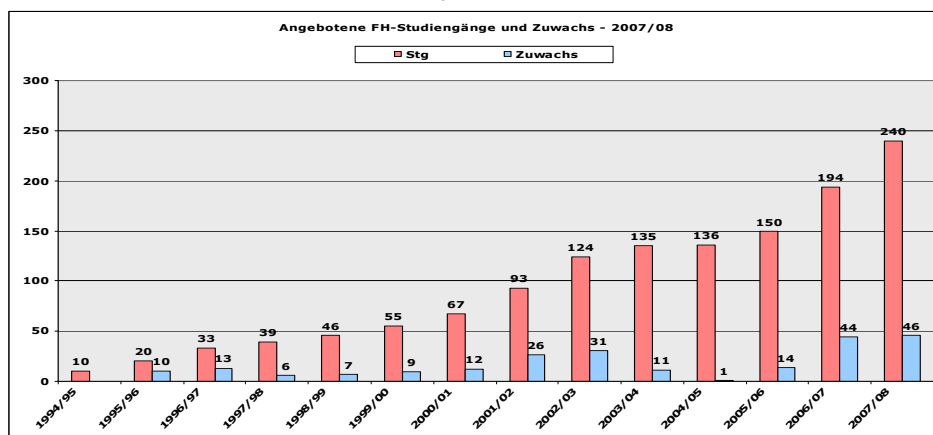
- to boost innovation in the educational sector
- to diversify higher education and to increase flexibility vis-à-vis the employment sector and integrate the labor market to a higher extent into higher education
- to harmonise the Austrian education system with the systems existing in other EU member states
- to educate specialists for specific fields (niche markets)
- realise practical oriented education by achieving high employability of students

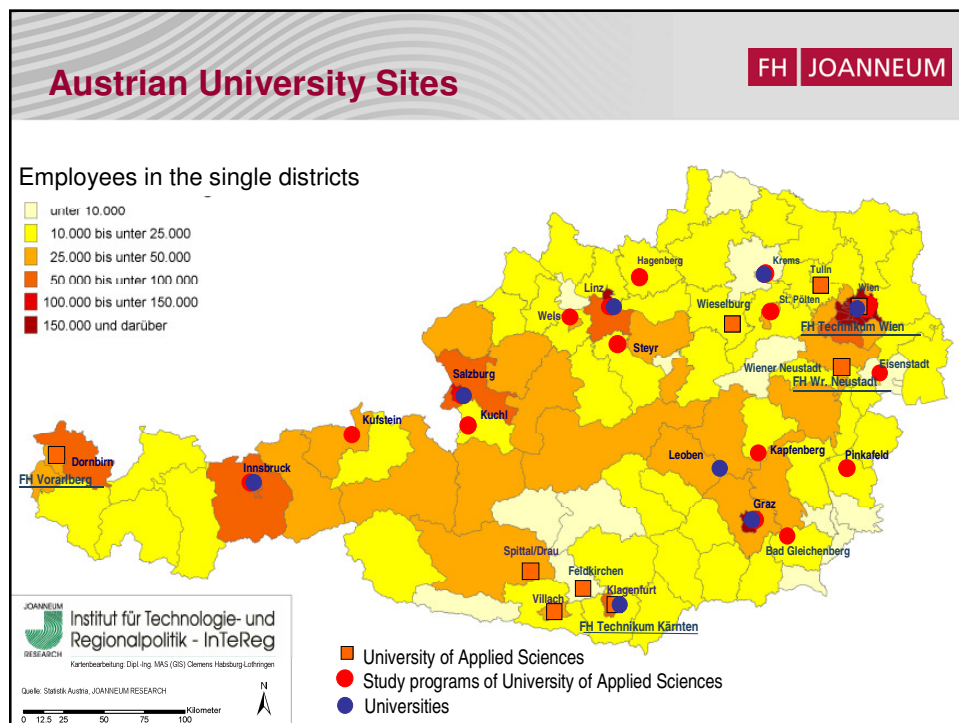
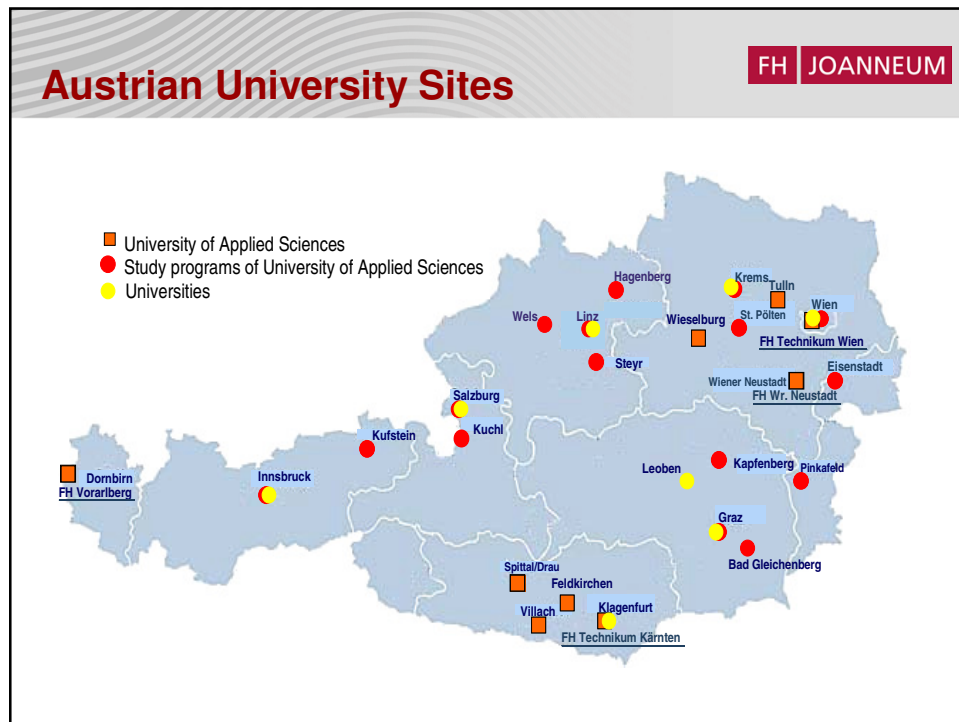
## Present situation

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20 Institutions in all Austrian provinces offer 150 programs with

- App. 31.000 students (2/3 full time, 1/3 part time),
- 240 Bachelor and 100 Master Programs





## Management Structure

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- According to the Austrian law the owner is responsible for the overall management of the institution (organised as associations, limited liability companies or foundations/trusts). Their executive bodies report to supervisory boards representing the funding institutions.
- Academic matters within the institution are dealt with by the „FH Collegium“ whose chairman may be given the title of „Rector“.
- Every degree program is under the responsibility of a department head.

## Developing the study program

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- New degree programs need to apply for accreditation (§12 FH Studies Act)
  - Program design
  - Course providing bodies commissions a „Development team“
- First Accreditation (based on quality standards) granted for a maximum of 5 years (FH Council)
- Evaluation of quality standards (Possibility to revoke accreditation §14)
  - institutional evaluation and evaluation of degree programs
- Re-accreditation before the end of the approval period by FH Council

## Who invents new study programs?

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- Business:
    - Representatives in the supervising committee
    - External board of experts
    - Cooperation partners
  - Owner of the organisation
  - Employees at the institution / (Managing) Directors, Individuals
  - Scientific Board (elected professors, department heads, students)
  - Other institutions of Higher Education (Joint programs)
- Bottom Up Process** in design and application of new programs

## Development team

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- At least 2 members: Habilitation
- At least 2 members: relevant practical experience in the corresponding vocational field
- In case of Accreditation: at least 4 members of the team must be integrated in teaching
- The development team is usually formed out by the head of department or the person in charge for writing the application for FH council.



## Requirements for Application

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- Severe analysis of the needs of the labor market (demand, acceptance, coherence..)
  - Detailed and consistent description of the vocational fields of activity the program aims at
  - A qualification profile of the future graduates; they shall be able to fulfill the tasks of the professional field in a manner which is adequate for higher education level
- Formal Requirements (curriculum, examinations regulations, didactic concept)
  - A curriculum; i.e. the required qualification profile must be reflected in the curriculum
  - Duration of study: Bachelor: 3 years ( = 180 credits); Master: 1 to 2 years ( = 60 to 120 credits); Diploma: 4 to 5 years ( = 240 to 300 credits)
- Commitments concerning resources and financing

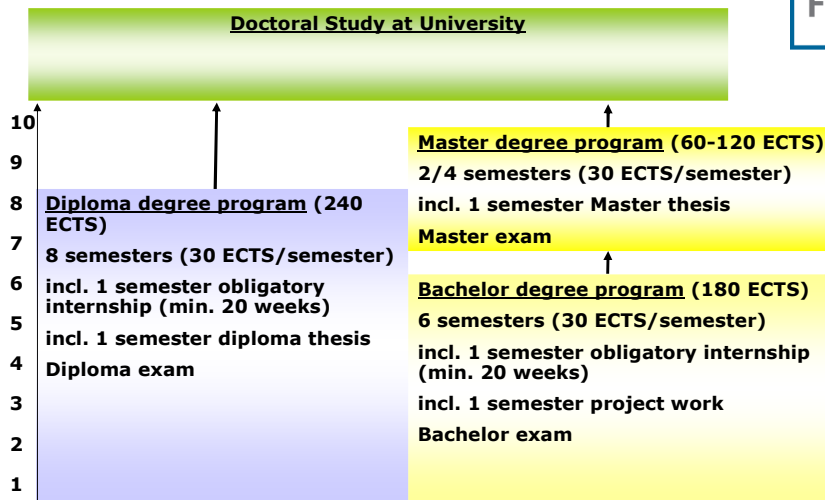
## Outline of the Proposals

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1	<b>Applicant</b>
2	<b>Name and type of degree program</b>
3	<b>Number of university places</b>
4	<b>Form of organisation</b>
5	<b>Planned beginning of the term and site</b>
6	<b>Thematic orientation and assessment of the program's innovative character</b>
7	<b>Description of the vocational field &amp; rating of its relevance to labour market</b>
8	<b>Qualification profile of the future graduates</b>
9	<b>Embedding of the program in the given educational portfolio and strategy for the further expansion of activities at the UAS</b>
10	<b>Description of the planned applied R&amp;D-Activities</b>
11	<b>Planned members of the development team</b>
12	<b>Authors and signature</b>

## Types of Degree Programs

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At present almost all accredited programs are offered in the BaMa-System

## Accreditation

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- Ex-ante evaluation of the quality of the degree program by the FH Council
  - Acceptance of proposal -> accreditation for a duration of max 5 years (than reaccreditation executed by the head of program)
- Funding differs substantially from the usual form
  - financing concept of study place management:  
*federal government does not pay a lump sum for total costs but covers costs of an agreed number of study places:*
    - € 6.904 per student p.a. (technical programs)
    - € 5.814 per student p.a. (business / non-technical programs)
    - additional costs have to be covered by provincial government, municipalities + tuition fees (€ 363,18 p.semester – some universities don't request tuition fees)



## Evaluation

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- To guarantee the fulfillment of the educational mission and to ensure the quality of the vocational training evaluations are made (evaluation regulations EvalVO 5/2004).
- standardized process
  - Internal evaluation (internal report) basis for ->
  - External evaluation by a review team
  - Final inspection and assessment by the FH Council
  - Two types of evaluation
    - Institutional evaluation: strategy & organisation; quality management; program portfolio, R&D, resources, infrastructure..., internationalization, cooperations..
    - Degree program related evaluation: educational goals, students, organisation and Q-assurance, personal, infrastructure, R&D

## Topics of Evaluation

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- Development status of the evaluated unit
- Most relevant results per evaluated unit concerning strengths, weaknesses and future perspectives
- Overall picture and characteristic features of the evaluated unit
- Assessment of future developments
- Mandatory cooperation with an independent, internationally accepted Quality assurance agency.

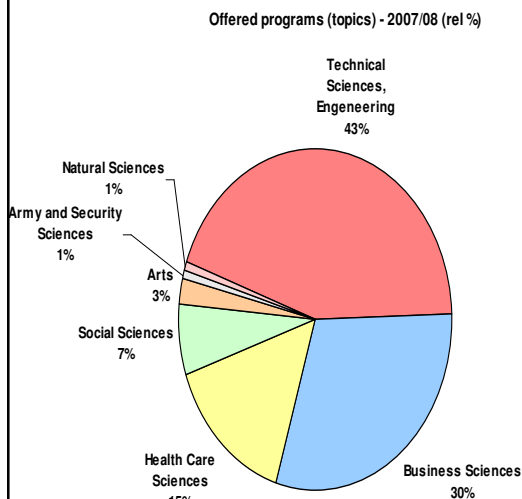
## Adaptation

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- If the interest in certain study programs is decreasing, a reduction of offered study places can be executed.
  - This decision is usually taken within the structure of an institution
  - If the interest of students increases after a certain amount of time, the original number of places can be offered again.
  - Finance of study places plays a crucial role
  - Some programs are of interest at a certain point of time and the location is also very important

## UAS: Programs per Sector\* (in %)

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\* Source: FHR annual report 2008

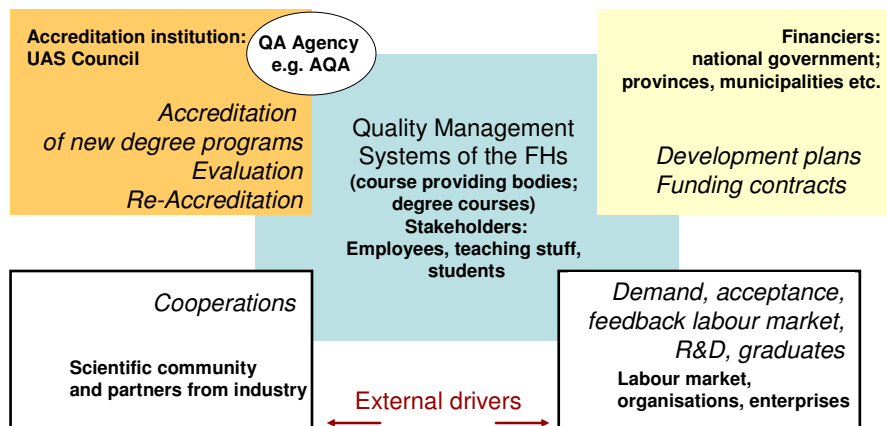
Students m/f according to areas (relativ %)

Areas	2007/08		
	Stud F	Stud M	Stud
Health Care Sciences	82.8	17.2	4.8
Social Sciences	71.7	28.3	9.0
Natural Sciences	68.3	31.7	0.6
Business Sciences	57.6	42.4	43.7
Arts	46.0	54.0	2.1
Technical Sciences, Engineering	19.4	80.6	38.6
Army and Security Sciences	3.9	96.1	1.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>44.5</b>	<b>55.5</b>	<b>100.0</b>

## Consequences

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- Quality control is a vital element of this type of tertiary education – multiple system of quality assurance



Source: Schwab-Matkovits, FH Conference 2005)

## Indicators of Success

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Review by Institute of Higher Studies and Education Monitoring by Federal Ministry for education, Science and Culture :

- UAS sector could successfully gain ground in the Austrian educational landscape
- Graduates **ARE** largely accepted by Austrian employers
- Demand for places significantly exceeded offer: Average number of applicants (per place): 2,3
- Low drop-out rate: 10 – 15 per cent
- 90 per cent of graduates got employed within a very short period of time (no numbers available since the financial crisis broke out)
- 50 per cent of students received a job offer before graduation 74 per cent of surveyed consider the quality of FH sector as “very good or good”
- 74 per cent of surveyed think that “the transportation of professional competences is very good”

## Summary

- Market needs are the trigger for new study programs
- Involve people from inside the institution, from other Institutions from Higher Education but with focus of involving people from the industry sector (ideally with international involvement, big companies, SME and Non Profit Organisations)
- R&D is an important trigger for the long lasting success of a study program
- Try to implement from the beginning a system for quality management and quality assurance

**Thank you for your attention!**

In case of questions, feedback, and ideas  
please contact:

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