

# Labour Market Oriented Curricula – An Austrian Case Study

Higher Education and Labour Market – EU experiences

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# Universities of Applied Sciences (UAS)



- Established in 1994
- 20 providers in Austria
- 270 degree programmes
- **34.000 students** (compared to 236.000 students in traditional universities)
- 80% in the field of business and engineering sciences
- Unemployment rate: 0,4%

# UAS as Agents of...



- **Education policy (competitors to traditional universities)**
- **Regional policy (reduction of regional disparities)**
- **Social policy (flexible admission to higher education)**
- **Economic policy (close collaboration with and contact to companies)**

# Difference Between Traditional Universities and UAS



- **NOT:**

- Theory versus praxis
- Generalization versus specialization
- Input- versus output orientation
- Length of study
- Degree of freedom of students

- **BUT:**

- **Concreteness of occupational fields and images**

# Main question



- ???
  - How can the academic staff bring into focus the „right“ vocational field?
- !!!
  - Close and many-sided collaboration between UAS and labour market
- Challenge
  - Dynamic factors influencing curricula development

# Labour Market Oriented Curricula



- **Practical Example 1: Accrediation procedure**
- **Practical Example 2: Competence assessment and monitoring**

# Practical Example 1: Accrediation Procedure



- A new FH degree programme needs to be
  1. **Accredited** by the FH Council, with the accreditation granted in each case for a maximum of five years.
  2. After this approval period a **re-accreditation** is required, which follows an evaluation and a formal follow-up procedure.

# Practical Example 1: Accrediation Procedure



- **1. The IDEA – A BUTTOM UP approach**
  - **Course-providing bodies or applicants** take the initiative to set up new FH degree programmes



# Practical Example 1: Accrediation Procedure



- **2. The DEVELOPMENT TEAM and its central role in labour market based curricula design**

**min. 2 professionals**  
with work proof in the  
relevant vocational field

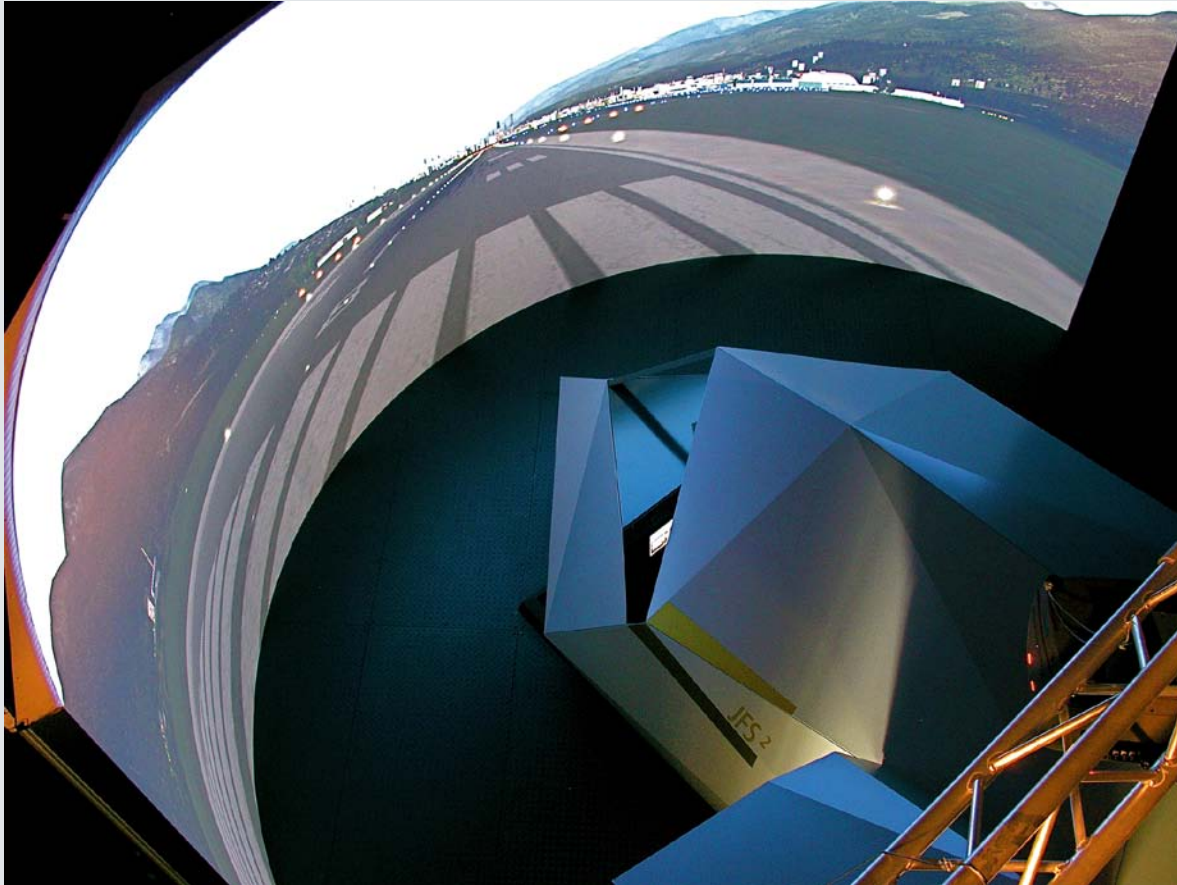
**min. 2 academic team**  
**members** with  
habilitation



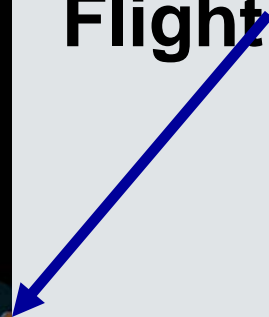
# Practical Example 1: Accrediation Procedure



- **3. Submission to the FH Council**
  - Obligatory internship of 3-6 months
  - Obligatory practical projects with companies
  - Study abroad term
  - Practical thesis in collaboration with firms



**Technology:  
Aviation –  
Flight simulator**



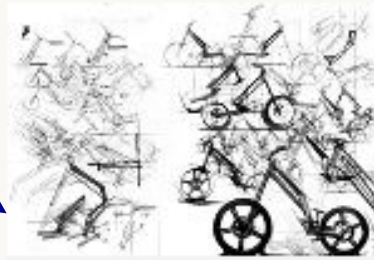
# Internships and Student Projects

Technology:

Vehicle technology – Formula SAE Michigan



Designer in Aktion  
© FH-Joanneum



Entwurfszeichnungen  
© FH-Joanneum



"einkaufswagen!"  
© FH Joanneum

Art:  
Industrial design –  
Federal design  
contest

# Practical Example 1: Accrediation Procedure



- **3. Submission to the FH Council**
  - Obligatory internship of 3-6 months
  - Obligatory practical projects with companies
  - Study abroad term
  - Practical thesis in collaboration with firms
  
- **4. Independent decision by FH Council**  

  
- **5. Re-accrediation**
  - Institutional evaluation
  - Degree programme evaluation

# Labour Market Oriented Curricula



- **Practical Example 1: Accrediation procedure**
- **Practical Example 2: Competence assessment and monitoring**

# Practical Example 2: Competence Assessment and Monitoring

**Dynamic and complex demand of the labour market**

**rapid expansion of HE over the past two decades**

a. universities are increasingly required to produce highly skilled graduates who are capable to **respond to changing demands**

b. concerns an increasingly wide **'gap'** between the skills and capabilities of graduates, and the requirements and demands of industry

a. discussions about the **quality of the graduate labour market** and the ability of graduates to meet the needs of employers

b. 1980: criticism against MBA: perceived insufficiently relevant and accountable for market needs

# Practical Example 2: Competence Assessment and Monitoring



- EU Research by FHJ (MISLEM study) suggests that transferable competences are more demanded by the labour market than specific competences

	Graduates Business Knowledge	Graduates Business Competencies	Employers Business Knowledge	Employers Business Competencies
Indicator (valuable)	41.56	70.50	41.32	78.09
Indicator (relevant)	48.72	82.11	51.16	82.15
Indicator (capable)	54.83	63.40	38.63	53.03
Indicator (gap)	15.05	20.69	18.94	17.00



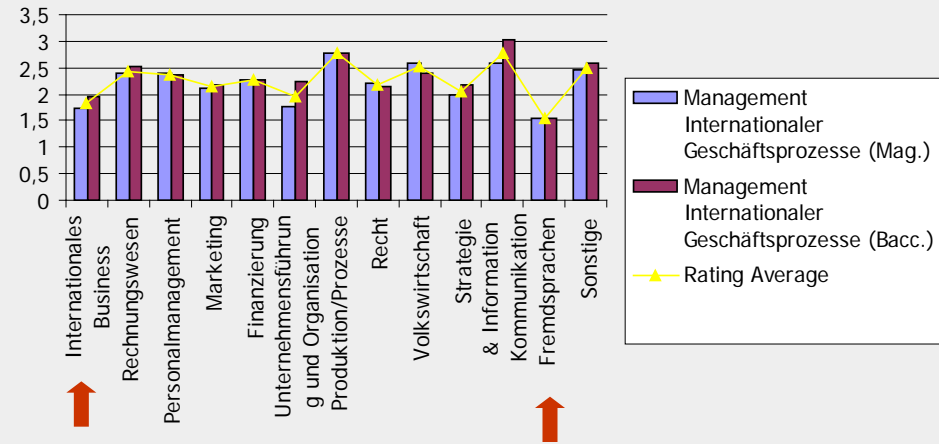
# Alumni satisfaction surveys

(1= very relevant / sufficiently acquired during studies)

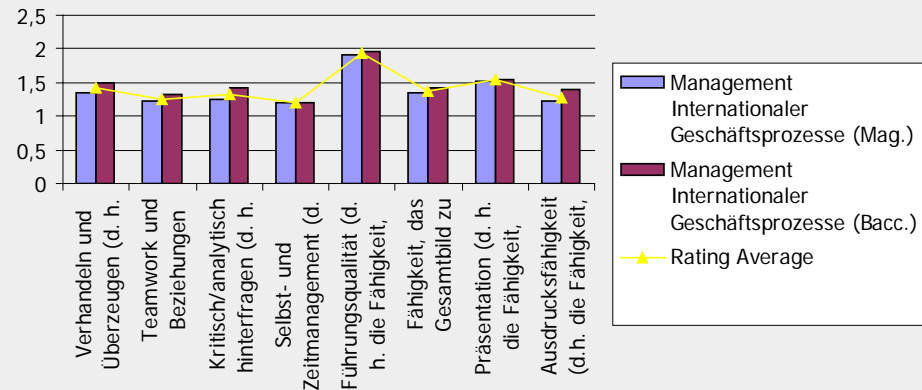
5 = not relevant at all / insufficiently acquired during studies)



Wie nützlich sind die folgenden Wissensgebiete für die Leistung, die Sie in Ihrer derzeitigen Beschäftigung ausführen?



Wie nützlich sind folgende Kompetenzen für die Leistung, die Sie in Ihrer derzeitigen Beschäftigung ausführen?



# Practical Example 2: Competence Assessment and Monitoring

## FOCUS GROUPS FOR 360 DEGREE FEED-BACK



- Employers
- Alumni
- Students
- Professors
- Decision-making body



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