University-industry cooperation: Cooperation models, examples of good practice and lessons learned
Structure of presentation

• University Industry/Business Cooperation: Typology

• Examples of good practice

• Conclusion
University Industry/Business Cooperation - Typology

• Research cooperation, including basic and applied research
• Joint development of initiatives to strengthen the employability of graduates
• Curricular cooperation through joint study programmes
• Internships in companies and trainee programmes during and after graduation
• Funding of chairs/professorships by industry
• Private universities funded by industry and the public sector
• Common activities to raise students‘ interest in more applied and/or technology-orientated HE programmes
University Industry/Business Cooperation - Context

• Traditional understanding of universities as sites of „pure“ research and education (strong in most European countries) – Humboldt’s ideal of „human education“ leaving aside „special education“

• Differences between disciplines, faculties, courses in the way they establish links to industry and the business sector

• Employability expectations/outcomes also dependent on different institutions in HE – one example: Germany with its 3-tier HE system

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University Industry/Business Cooperation - Context

- Traditional understanding of universities as sites of „pure“ research

- **Corresponding/materialising principles:**
  - the principle of self-administration
  - the freedom of teaching and research
  - university qualifications rather “preparatory” than “portable qualifications”
  - nevertheless, university courses partly traditionally linked to specific labour markets: medicine, law, theology, engineering, teacher training

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University Industry/Business Cooperation – Examples from the German context

- (1) Vocational Academies (Dual Universities)
- (2) Enabling students to gain additional qualifications
- (3) Preparing students for employability
University Industry/Business Cooperation – Examples from the German context

• (1) Vocational Academies (Cooperative State University Baden-Wuerttemberg)

… are HE institutions integrating academic studies and work experience using the participation of training companies and the dual learning principle

…. eight main locations and three branch campuses networking with the regional economy

….1,300 companies involved as partners and contractors
University Industry/Business Cooperation – Examples from the German context

Characteristics of vocational academies (I)

- „premium apprenticeship“ coupled with academic studies
- „academic dual system“ (half/half)
- training contract required for admission
- attractive training allowances for students
- three-year courses leading to Bachelor degree
University Industry/Business Cooperation – Examples from the German context

Characteristics of vocational academies (II):

- Joint committees of lecturers of the (state-funded) academy and employers representatives
- Common curriculum development
- Lecturers also come from companies on a part-time basis
- Possibility for students to enter a Master course at universities or to gain additional qualifications, e.g., a company trainer qualification
- New feature: joint research activities between academies and companies
University Industry/Business Cooperation – Examples from the German context

Vocational Academies - **Main objectives:**

- Uniting resources of state institutions and professional training facilities in a joint effort
- Responding more directly to employers’ expectations for a more work-oriented approach in HE
- School leavers get an attractive alternative offer in HE
- Shorter course duration (though no longer in the Bologna system)
- Cost of HE is shared between employers and the state
University Industry/Business Cooperation – Examples from the German context

Vocational Academies - Lessons learnt:

• graduates are highly regarded by employers
• students attain a good balance of academic and practical achievement
• programmes are mostly specialised and innovative
• there is active cooperation between the academy and training companies

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References on Vocational Academies:


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• (2) Enabling students to gain additional qualifications

   One specific example from our course in Business Education at the University of Konstanz

   ❖ students who obtain a Master‘s degree can apply for a company trainer‘s qualification with the regional Chamber of Industry and Commerce upon specific achievement of additional credits during their Master course
   ❖ strengthens and widens their employability in firms beyond becoming teachers in vocational schools

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• (3) Preparing students for employability

Another specific example from our local context in Konstanz

✓ Undergraduate students (above all in the humanities) can undertake work placements in companies which have the character of a trainee programme and which are continued after graduation.

✓ During their first two years in the company after graduation students receive a guaranteed salary from the local Labour Office.

✓ Companies have a low-risk chance to observe their future potential employees while bearing only a low cost contribution to the project.
Conclusion: Projects are possible through the political will to cooperation and through good communication on a win-win basis with positive outcomes for all actors.

- One problem remains:
- Universities tend to lose their purely scientific profile once pressed in too many constraints from the labour market
- HE institutions in general become „servants“ of industry
- Differentiation in HE is one possible political solution to tackle this problem
Further importance of the topic fostered by

**The modernisation agenda for universities as part of the (EU) Lisbon Strategy for Growth and Jobs.**

- **Curricular reform:** The three cycle system (bachelor-master-doctorate), competence based learning, **flexible learning paths**, recognition, mobility.
- **Governance reform:** University autonomy, strategic partnerships, including with enterprises, quality assurance.
- **Funding reform:** Diversified sources of university income **better linked to performance**, promoting equity, access and **efficiency**, including the possible role of tuition fees, grants and loans.

promoted through the **Bologna Process**, in which 46 countries in the wider Europe are working towards establishing the European Higher Education Area by 2010.

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• University-Business Dialogue initiative
• launched by the European Commission to improve the cooperation between Higher Education and Business and to provide on a European level a platform for lasting dialogue between the relevant stakeholders

Conclusion and perspectives

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• Conference on “From the Crisis to Recovery - the Role of Higher Education Institutions and Business Co-operation”

• Brno, Czech Republic, February 2010.

• Discussion of three aspects:

  ➢ Upskilling the workforce and building new partnerships
  ➢ Making graduates fit for the future
  ➢ Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)
Making graduates fit for the future

• internships – important tool for starting a career
• generic skills have to be assured
• curricular development (new courses)
• Career Centres as intermediaries
• role of Alumni can be of benefit
• experts from industry as “guest” lecturers
Thank you for your attention!