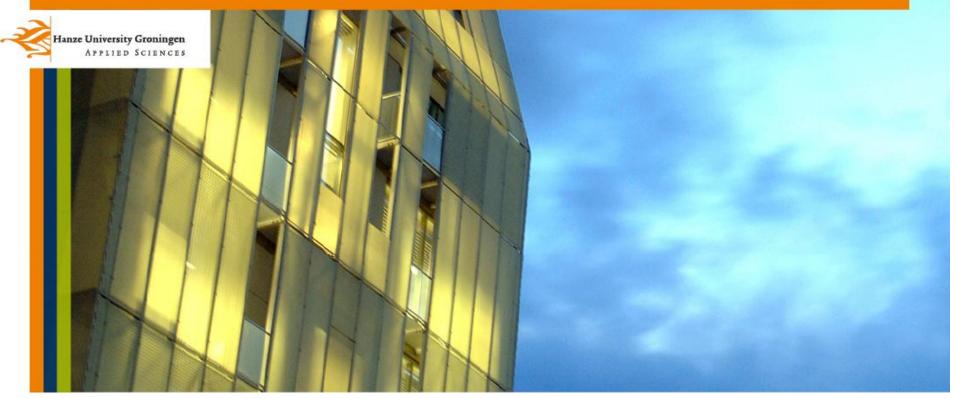
**Preparing Bachelors for the labour market** 





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Employability of undergraduates (Bachelor (\$): a key element of the Bologna Process

% he degree awarded after the first cycle shall also be relevant to the European labour market as an appropriate level of qualification.+

For universities which traditionally of fered ±ndividedq Master degrees: a dilemma

For Universities of Applied Sciences: core business



#### **Dutch higher education**

Characterized by a binary system

Co-existence of

- " 14 research universities (212,000 students)
  - 3-year Bachelor programmes
- " 41 universities of applied sciences (374,000 students)
  - 4-year Bachelor programmes



#### **Universities of Applied Sciences**

- professional profile = clearly related to particular
  jobs/careers
- " curriculum focuses on professional development
- main emphasis on undergraduate education
- growing number of Master programmes
- " emphasis on applied research



# Professional focus in Bachelor programmes

- emphasis on practical application of knowledge throughout the curriculum (project work; problem-based learning)
- " participation in applied research
- key element: mandatory work placement of at least 6 months (30 ECTS credits)



Mandatory work placements: an organisational challenge!

Institute of 20.000 studenten . every year roughly 3,500 students on work placement

- " most of them in the Netherlands
- " ca. 700 abroad

#### Issues of

- finding companies/organisations
- matching students with placements
- " preparation and supervison of students
- quality assurance (placement assignment, assessment)



#### **Employability of UAS Bachelor graduates**

Based on research by Netherlands Association of USA over 2007 Target group: graduates - 18 months after graduation

Annual transfer to labour market: 64,000 UAS students

- " 92% of graduates of UAS find a job within 3 months
- 85% have a job at the ±ightqlevel (Bachelor)
- 84% have a job in the prof essional field for which they were trained



#### **Competencies of UAS Bachelors**

- 60% study programme is good basis for start on the labour market
- 70% study programme is good basis for further development of skills and knowledge
- programme as preparation for professional practice -6.6 (on a scale of 1-10)



#### **Self-evaluation of competence levels**

	too low	just right	too high
Knowledge	35%	49%	17%
Practical skills	27%	58%	15%
Working together	17%	64%	19%
Independence	19%	67%	14%
Decision making	28%	52%	21%
Communication	33%	57%	11%
Assertiveness	25%	53%	22%



#### Further professional development

- " 33% continue their formal education
  - " 1% lower level
  - " 31% at Bachelors level
  - " 68% at Masters level
- 45% take part in courses or company training



#### **Tentative conclusions:**

- clear professional profile of Bachelor, in combination with work experience, appears to have positive impact on employability
- employers like ±ailor-madeqBachelors
- " interest in Master programmes is significant:
  - " postponement of start working life?
  - " further development alongside paid work?

