

The Province of Lower Austria participates in FernFH

The Ferdinand Porsche FernFH strengthens its role as a competence centre in the field of distance learning

"We have known for quite some time how important digitisation is in the higher education sector, which is why we welcome such forward-looking developments in Lower Austria", says Governor Johanna Mikl-Leitner. She is referring here to the participation of the Province of Lower Austria in the Ferdinand Porsche FernFH with 26 percent, which was approved by the provincial government on 12 May. "Since 2007 we have been successfully conducting blended learning at the FernFH. With the participation of the Province of Lower Austria, we are jointly consolidating and expanding this expert role", Axel Jungwirth is pleased to report. "We are focusing here on the areas of technology, didactics, scientific development of the distance learning method and digital transformation," emphasises the CEO.

Since its foundation in 2006, the Ferdinand Porsche FernFH has been the first and so far only Distance-Learning University of Applied Sciences in Austria. For almost 14 years now, people have been studying here for whom classical full-time study programmes are out of the question, e.g. working people or parents with childcare obligations. The degree and certificate programmes are structured according to the blended learning principle: Self-study weeks are usually combined with a few days of on-campus sessions. The lynchpin for students and teachers is the Online Campus: here you will find all the learning materials and records, and there is also a lively exchange between students and lecturers in the forums.

The needs of the students and the quality of the degree and certificate programmes are the top priority at the FernFH. During the self-study weeks, each student can largely divide up the learning workload themselves, and students and lecturers come to the FernFH to the on-campus sessions. The continuous supervision by the lecturers is a matter of course.

Innovative methods

E-learning does not mean simply transferring a lecture one to one to the web, innovative and creative methods are needed. At the FernFH, the team of the E-Learning & Web Support Center is constantly developing the concept of distance learning together with the academic staff of the degree and certificate programmes. Currently, the team is working on a research project funded by the Province of Lower Austria on the use of virtual reality and augmented reality for distance learning. With the help of these technologies and methods, students can immerse themselves in content in a special way and understand it even better, e.g. by using 360-degree videos.

About the Ferdinand Porsche FernFH

The Ferdinand Porsche FernFH is Austria's first Distance-Learning University of Applied Sciences. It was founded in 2006. Through innovative forms of learning and teaching in the field of distance learning, the FernFH takes on a pioneering role in distance learning in Austria. All five federally funded study programmes are accredited by AQ Austria, the Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation Austria. In 2016 the FernFH was certified according to international standards by the evaluation agency evalag Baden-Württemberg. The Ferdinand Porsche FernFH collects the statutory tuition fees of 363.36 Euros per semester plus student union fee for the accredited distance learning programmes. In addition, the FernFH offers master programmes, diploma and certificate programmes. Preparations for further degree programmes and executive education programmes are currently underway. The FernFH is a subsidiary organisation of the FernFH Management & Service GmbH. Since 2020, the Province of Lower Austria has also been involved in the FernFH. More information is available at www.fernfh.ac.at/en.

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