

AUGENBLICK

Issue 03 / 2021

Magazine for alumni, students, staff, friends and supporters
of Harz University of Applied Sciences

In focus:

Online lectures

ViSit HS Harz

Blog 2020



▲ Hochschule Harz

Harz University of Applied Sciences

Dear readers,

The year 2020 was unlike any other. The Covid-19 pandemic brought unprecedented challenges for each and every higher education institution. At Harz University, we conducted the summer semester online and then started the winter semester in “hybrid” mode with a combination of in-person, online and streamed lectures. By November, however, the University had reverted to digital delivery in response to the increasing rate of infection nationwide. Although it wasn’t an easy situation for anyone, a survey by the Student Union showed that most students were satisfied. This issue of our magazine focuses on how a provider of on-campus higher education programmes can take the fast track to becoming a “distance university” and what that entails. Almost all aspects of University life were affected. But that doesn’t mean you’re looking at a heavy read – despite all the challenges, the Harz University community displayed an amazing ability to modernise quickly, demonstrate resilience and come up with new ideas.

In this issue, we report on the “Teaching Lab”, which supported lecturers as they made the transition to online courses (p. 10), and hear from an expert on the motives behind panic buying (p. 13). There are also features on the first virtual open days (p. 14), which were broadcast live on YouTube in June, as well as the first Sponsors’ Gala Evening to take place against the awe-inspiring backdrop of the Feuerstein Arena (p. 16).

As is the tradition with this magazine, there are also articles on University milestones, such as the expansion of the Walk of Fame, and alumni who have impressive life or career stories to tell. Finally, the hellos and goodbyes, new and updated programmes and creative student projects illustrate the dynamic nature of Harz University.

We look forward to a successful 2021 and hope it will again be a year full of variety, shared experiences and exciting journeys.

Happy reading!



Prof. Folker Roland

President of Harz University of Applied Sciences

Cover picture: This year, the Covid crisis literally “moved” the entire University, triggering various effects, including positive impacts in terms of flexibility and innovative spirit. To reflect this, the cover shows the motif of the 30th “Walk of Fame” stone against a two-tone background. The latter is intended as a symbol of new opportunities and possibilities and illustrates that where there is darkness, there is also light.

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Lectures in the "Covid year"

The Covid pandemic gave online lectures an unexpected boost. But how does a provider of on-campus higher education programmes take the fast track to becoming a “distance university”? It would have been practically impossible for everything to move online so quickly without the help of the “Teaching Lab” and its team. Essentially, they run a “customer service” for lecturers, advising them on digital issues, software, tools and applications. When lectures had to go digital, the “Teaching Lab” turned students into equal partners with a say in methods and content.

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Meeting at a distance

The orientation days for our new students in September were something quite special. Thanks to a great deal of hard work and creative ideas, we managed to welcome the highest ever number of participants to student and campus life. Everything that was allowed at a distance of at least 1.5 metres or with a face covering was included in the programme of events. As well as the usual activities, there were tips on hybrid studies, such as “Good manners in online lectures”.

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Virtual open days

Sad as it was, our annual highlight, “Campus Fever”, had to be cancelled in 2020 due to the pandemic. None of the usual activities – the picnic on the campus green, live music, alumni reunions, campus tours – were possible. But the University didn’t let that stop it! A new digital format was launched, “ViSit HS Harz”, with information about studying at Harz University, the campus and much more broadcast over two days on our YouTube channel.

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An evening of premieres

September saw 22 sponsors award a total of 31 “Deutschlandstipendium” scholarships to particularly talented students at the University. Guests from the realms of research, business, government and culture attended the 17th Sponsors’ Gala Evening at the Feuerstein Arena in Schierke. It was a triple-premiere night with this being the first time the event wasn’t held on campus (due to the pandemic), the first time there was a live stream for guests who were unable to attend in person and the first time the gala evening was staged jointly with Wirtschaftsclub Wernigerode (the town’s business club).

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Studying abroad in 2020

It wasn’t just Harz University that started its first virtual semester in the summer of 2020 – our outgoing students embarked on “virtual and hybrid mobility” journeys too. They became experts on the latest travel alerts, entry regulations and Erasmus funding rules. Despite everything, students at Harz University are showing an increased interest in studying abroad. Their yearning to travel is growing. And they haven’t given up hope that everything will be possible again some day.

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Blog 2020 project

In September, Harz University launched its own blog. More than 35 articles have been posted so far, including an interview with Prof. André Niedostadek, in which he discusses his latest book project, “Kurvengeflüster”. The blog opens up new possibilities for tie-ins between our digital formats and social media channels. Definitely worth a click!

Impressum

augenblick

Magazine for alumni, students, staff, friends and supporters of Harz University of Applied Sciences

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Bachelor and Master programmes at Harz University of Applied Sciences

Faculty of Automation and Computer Science

Bachelor: Computer Science (B.Sc.), also available as a dual study programme ▲ Digitalisation and Computer Science for Public Administration (B.Sc.), also available as a dual study programme ▲ Engineering Education (B.Eng.) ▲ Media Informatics (B.Sc.) ▲ Smart Automation (B.Eng.), also available as a dual study programme ▲ Business Informatics (B.Sc.), also available as a dual study programme ▲ Business Administration and Engineering (B.Eng.), available as a dual study programme or part-time programme for professionals ▲ **Master:** Data Science (M.Sc.), also available as a part-time programme for professionals ▲ Media and Games Concept Development (M.A.) ▲ Technology and Innovation Management (M.Eng.)

Faculty of Administrative Sciences

Bachelor: European Administrative Management (B.A.) ▲ Digital Administration/Public Sector IT-Management (B.A.) (only available as a dual study programme) ▲ Public Administration (B.A.), also available as dual study programme ▲ Administrative Economics (B.A.), also available as dual study programme ▲ **Master:** Public Management (M.A.), also available as a part-time programme for professionals

Faculty of Business Studies

Bachelor: Business Administration (B.A.), also available as a dual study programme or part-time programme for professionals ▲ International Business Studies (B.A.), English track ▲ International Tourism Studies (B.A.), English/French/Spanish track ▲ Marketing Management (B.A.) ▲ Sustainable Management and Entrepreneurship (B.Sc.) ▲ Tourism Management (B.A.), also available as a dual study programme ▲ Business Psychology (B.Sc.) ▲ **Master:** Master of Business Administration (MBA), part-time programme for professionals ▲ Business Consulting (M.A.) ▲ FACT – Finance, Accounting, Controlling, Taxation & Law (M.A.) ▲ Consumer Psychology and Market Research (M.Sc.) ▲ Tourism and Destination Management (M.A.)

Courses for exchange students

▲ A variety of courses taught in English for exchange students from partner universities



The president and the pandemic

* Eileen Demangé



Although Covid has caused its fair share of mayhem, it has also given rise to incredible flexibility and variety on a previously almost inconceivable scale. The 2020 summer semester started off in digital mode, the winter one in “hybrid” – a term that, just like “face covering”, “lockdown” and “hygiene measures”, was part of everyone’s vocabulary by autumn. For the first time since its establishment, Harz University reduced on-site activities to the very basics. Access to the campus was subject to strict restrictions; there was hardly a soul to be

seen. With no chance to trial online lectures, students and lecturers suddenly found themselves having to work together without the normal contact.

Prof. Folker Roland, President of the University, talks to Eileen Demangé about how things have gone in this pandemic-plagued year, what worked well, where there’s still room for improvement and how the University overcame the consequences of the Covid crisis.

#WirbleibenZuhause

For the first time ever, the enrolment ceremony for the 2020 summer semester had to take place in digital format. The winter semester ceremony took the form of an open-air event. How have the past few months been for you as President of the University?

I have various mental images and feelings that don't really tally. There's the eerie emptiness of parts of our campus and the special challenges facing all of our students, lecturers and administrative staff as a result of online and hybrid delivery, working from home, etc. And then there's my own situation - I'm healthy and don't feel particularly limited personally compared to many others.

What impact did the Covid restrictions have on the University?

Our university thrives on personal contact between the different members of our community, on the numerous activities of our student associations and events such as "Campusfest". Even though I would say online lectures and remote work have been successful in technical terms, there is a risk of us losing our DNA as a university due to the contact restrictions.

The biggest event in the University's calendar – "Campus Fever" – had to be cancelled this year. What did that mean for the University? What alternatives were created?

The fact that the alumni reunion and Campusfest – two key parts of Campus Fever – had to be cancelled was really painful for us. They're events that bring together students, alumni, lecturers, administrative staff and local residents in a format that has its very own flair. The open day was turned into an online event, "ViSit HS Harz", and actually reached considerably more prospective students than the conventional open days have done in recent years.

So we should keep this new format, which was born of necessity but has inspired many others in the meantime.

If we were to venture an assessment of the situation so far, would you say the restrictions caused by the pandemic had a positive impact too?

Yes. ViSit HS Harz was definitely one of the positive consequences. As was the speed with which the online and hybrid formats were set up. As we were forced to take the plunge, we've made much more progress in this respect than would have been possible without the pandemic. Another positive impact was that many students, lecturers and administrative staff from the different faculties joined forces and devised unconventional solutions, including, of course, the outdoor meeting points that were organised at the end of September and in October.

This year, a number of videos in which you answered FAQs were published to ensure that information was distributed quickly, clearly and as extensively as possible. Shortly after the first interview, the hashtag #EineKonstanteMussEsGeben popped up in the social media. Would you ever have thought that your answer about the future of the Käseschnitzel would go so viral?

It was really interesting that a simple dish like cheese in breadcrumbs became a symbol of the normality that continued for a while but was taken away again by the partial lockdown in November.

The #WirbleibenZuhause campaign on social media was also very well received. A lot of students and staff members followed your call to stay at home and tagged us on Instagram with the hashtag. What does this role-model function mean to you?

#EineKonstanteMussEsGeben

I'm working from home again a lot and most of my meetings are online again now. To me, it goes without saying that the University management should also behave in the way that is currently expected of our students, lecturers and administrative staff – and everybody else – in their day-to-day lives.

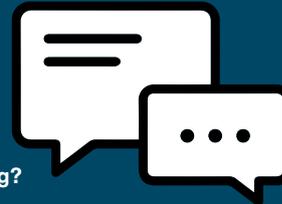
What do you personally miss most about normal university life?

Life on campus in Wernigerode and Halberstadt. And by that I also mean the informal communication with all members of the University community from the lecture hall to the canteen and an impromptu beer at the BBQ area at the end of the day.

We're sitting here in an empty lecture hall. What are your concerns with regard to the next few weeks?

I hope the restrictions on social contact can soon be relaxed and we can finish the winter semester (including the examinations phase) more or less properly. Having said that, I think the post-Covid world will be different to the pre-Covid one. And then we at Harz University will also have to reinvent ourselves, drawing on our experiences in the last few months but also our very special "HS Harz spirit". ▲





Who's missing?

Please don't all talk at once!



Hello? Can you all hear me?



I can't get it to work!



can't see you!

As Prof. Jens Weiß, Vice President for University Development since 2017, explains: "Our e-learning strategy states that we're a small, close-knit university and that we want to stay that way. Personal contact and good support for our students are key to that strategy, as is the expansion of digital elements that can help improve the quality of our teaching even further."

The Covid pandemic provided an unexpected boost. "It would have been impossible to move lectures online so quickly without the help of the 'Teaching Lab'. We spent a long time looking for suitable staff and were lucky enough to fill two part-time posts starting from 1 March and 1 April respectively," says Weiß. In addition, the way in which students are integrated is a major strength of Harz University: "They're equal partners with a say in the methods and content used in digital lectures." Even the Hochschulforum Digitalisierung (a forum on higher education in the digital age) was impressed – Weiß became a member of its exclusive "Educational Experts" group in 2018 and has since travelled to various institutions, including Harvard University, to share ideas and knowledge.

Back at Harz University, the "Teaching Lab" essentially runs a "customer service" for lecturers, advising them on digital issues, software, tools and applications. "Now that the strategy phase is over, we're looking at teaching methods and developing ideas such as learning scenarios as a source of inspiration," explains Thomas Schatz. The 47-year-old research assistant has been working in the field of technical advice for senior citizens for many years: "I'm experienced in working with digital tools and particularly how to explain them." Plus, having graduated in humanities, not in a technical field, he still remembers what it's like not having the necessary expertise.

Dynamic digitalisation

35-year-old Sabrina Becker joined the team in April. She returned to her home town of Halberstadt after studying Educational Science in Rostock, where she later managed a distance-learning programme. 30-year-old Media Informatics graduate



Sabrina Becker in an online meeting with the other members of the "Teaching Lab" team: Roksolana Pleshkanovska, Thomas Schatz and Prof. Jens Weiß.

Could you say that again please?



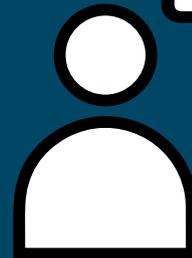
Lectures in the “Covid year”: Harz Distance University?

“Teaching Lab” helps lecturers go digital

* Janet Anders

How does a provider of on-campus higher education programmes take the fast track to becoming a “distance university”? In Wernigerode and Halberstadt, the “Teaching Lab” helped ensure a smooth transition.

Cool bookcase
... IKEA?



Roksolana Pleshkanovska joined the “Teaching Lab” in early summer when her parental leave came to an end. She loves the fact that Harz University is so “terrifically dynamic” and that “problems are tackled straight away and lots of things are tried out in order to achieve the best result possible.” The speed of the digitalisation process came as a positive surprise to her too. “Suitable rooms were equipped to high technical standards very swiftly to handle the hybrid lecture formats,” she explains. Now, one of the main challenges she sees is how to ensure an optimum level of student involvement in the University’s day-to-day digital activities.

The professor perspective

Prof. Can Adam Albayrak takes a similar view. He’s been lecturing in Business Informatics for almost 15 years and is the coordi-

nator for the Business Informatics programme. As he emphasises: “The switch to online lectures worked superbly in technical terms. I was pleasantly surprised by how quickly we were able to change over with the support of the ‘Teaching Lab’”. Now, he feels, it’s time to work on the teaching methods. In his opinion though, online delivery is no long-term substitute for in-person lectures. Raising a point that causes difficulties for many of his colleagues too, he explains: “You can’t see people’s facial expressions or other things. Most of them keep their cameras off and the young ones in particular are too scared to say anything.” And another aspect that’s crucial for a really good lecture is missing too: “the non-verbal feedback from students.”

The student perspective

Berlin-born Business Psychology student Paul Sterzik had it all planned. As well as concentrating on his degree, he was going to spend the last two semesters of his bachelor programme enjoying “nice evenings on the campus green and the occasional student party”. In the end, that was only possible for a short time in the summer. But the 22-year-old member of the Student Union is still happy and confident about his work placement and the master programme he intends to follow it up with. “I’m going to take it at Harz University too,” he tells me.



Member of the Student Union Paul Sterzik

One of the reasons for this decision is the way the University has dealt with the pandemic. Summing up his experience, he says: “Even presentations, training sessions and projects were implemented amazingly well thanks to the technology. The high degree of flexibility displayed by all sides played a major role in that.” ▲



Just going to get another coffee!

New York – a city grinds to a halt and reinvents itself

Living and working in NYC in the face of Covid

* Eileen Demangé

Taller, faster, further – and then a sudden silence. That’s how Jana and Wolfgang Enders describe life in New York in times of Corona. The two Harz University alumni moved to the Big Apple two years ago.

From the 31st floor of their building in West Chelsea, Manhattan, Jana and Wolfgang Enders have a sensational view of New York’s streets. You can even see the Empire State Building. As well as being one of the city’s tallest structures (along with the One World Trade Center), the gigantic skyscraper is also where Jana Enders works. The couple say the city’s “beat” has changed perceptibly: “We always saw New York as a huge toyshop. There was so much variety – from food to culture to supersized ball pits!” they explain. And then, overnight, it all stopped. Life ground to a halt. “The city is heavily traumatised. There have been moments that have shocked us too. Seeing the refrigerated trucks on the streets, for example, or the hospital boat on the Hudson River.”

Carving out a career in NYC

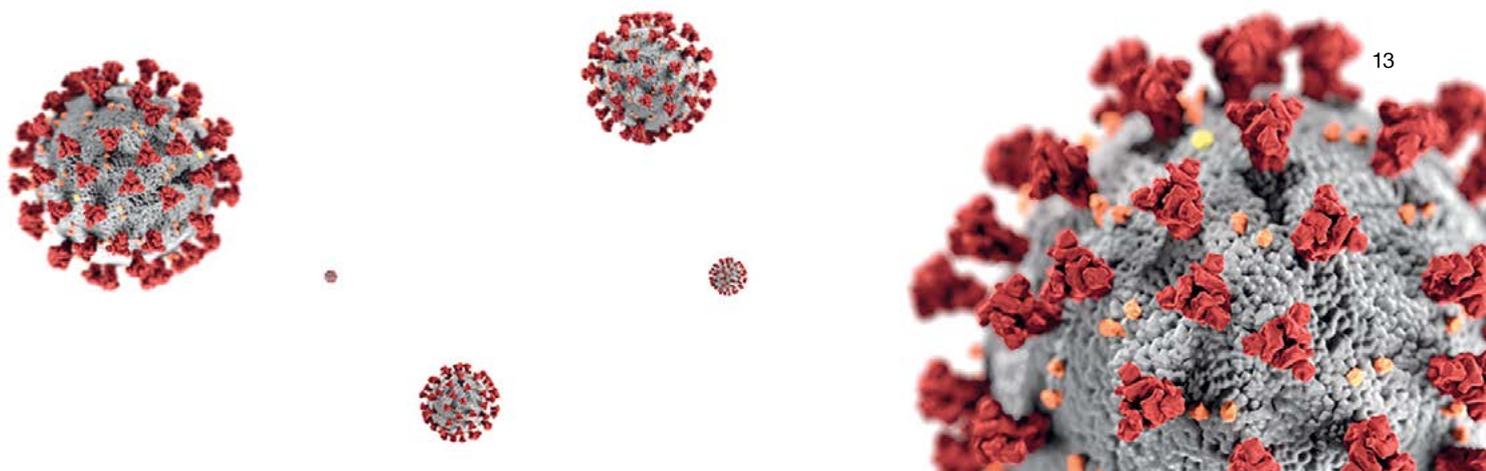
The two alumni have seen a lot of change on the job front too with both of them permanently working from home since March. Jana Enders is the Global Trade Marketing Manager for the Tiffany brand of international fragrance and cosmetics group COTY. After graduating in Business Administration, she moved to Mainz and has been working for COTY for more than 14 years, in various roles. “It was always important to me to keep on developing and not stand still. Now I’m helping to manage a global brand,” the 37-year-old says. Wolfgang Enders, also a Business Administration graduate, first moved to Stuttgart after his studies. A few years later, he and Jana, whom he had met and fallen in love with whilst still a student, moved into their first flat in Mainz. In 2018 came the decision to relocate to New York. As a senior director at consulting firm Capgemini Invent, the Thuringia-born 39-year-old supports global businesses’ digital transformation processes, focusing on artificial intelligence, data analytics and robotics. His office is on 5th Avenue too. “It’s quite ironic that we can always have our lunchbreak together here in NYC. We never managed to back in Germany,” he chuckles.



New York in crisis mode

Covid had its positive sides for the couple too though in that it enabled them to rediscover the city. Public transport was only available to key workers so they reverted to pedal power. “Somehow, not being so hectic suits the city. We’ve paid more attention to the architecture and can now tell you where the smallest and narrowest buildings are. We’ve also discovered Madonna’s Bench in Central Park. Things we’d never bothered with previously. And suddenly Battery Park with its view of the Statue of Liberty, usually full of tourists, becomes your favourite place to go.” The end of June saw the first relaxations that everyone had been waiting for. At the same time, the Black Lives Matter movement started. “Unfortunately, apart from the important and mostly very peaceful protests and rallies, there was also plundering and violence. From our windows, we could see the NYPD helicopters circling above the city. There were surveillance drones and lots of undercover police officers.” In the meantime, the situation has calmed down, thanks in part to the outcome of the November election, and New York’s streets are becoming livelier again. “There are workout classes on Broadway and lots of new beer gardens where people sit wrapped up in thick winter jackets. They’re images that give us hope for the future even though it will take some time for the city to return to normality.” ▲





Don't panic! Show solidarity!

Consumer psychologist explains why people panic-buy

* Eileen Demangé

Empty shelves, full trolleys and a lot of people wondering where the pasta and flour have gone. Not to mention toilet rolls! Prof. Georg Felser, a consumer psychologist at Harz University, gives us the low-down on panic buying.

Why do people stockpile goods even when there are no shortages?

Stockpiling is a way of exercising – or perhaps even regaining – control. For months now, we've been living in a situation in which control has been slipping away from us and we no longer have any influence over certain things. Our household supplies are something we do still control. There's a difference between how we feel if we get the pack of pasta for dinner from our own cupboard shelf or from a supermarket shelf.

But why did toilet rolls become such a precious commodity?

Toilet tissue is a hygiene product and hygiene is essential at the moment, as we all know. So toilet tissue is a means of having more control over cleanliness. People want to protect themselves and the idea that we can take action ourselves is important in this respect too. Moreover, toilet tissue packs are so big that the shelves look vast when they're empty. That's why the effect is more dramatic than it is with, for example, sanitiser, which is a hygiene product as well of course but doesn't create such a strong visual impact when the shelves are bare.

How can we promote solidarity in these times?

On the one hand, it's important to realise that you're not alone if you don't actively panic-buy food products and that there are others who are behaving rationally too. On the other, we have to be able to see a good reason for not acting selfishly.

That's a form of peer pressure really. In the current situation, social media are both a blessing and a curse. People are showing a lot of solidarity but they're also spreading photos of empty shelves and conspiracy theories. Why do some people favour these sources over reliable information from official sources?

You can't make sweeping statements about that either. Yes, there are people who spread those theories and completely believe them. But what we really have to be careful about is the dynamics that evolve when, for example, people think they have to buy far more toilet tissue than they actually need. Empty shelves alarm us – we're programmed to have a



Prof. Georg Felser

strong desire for resources that are no longer accessible to us. It doesn't matter whether it's toilet tissue, flour or something else.

The Covid crisis has made many consumers more aware of sustainability and health issues. How has this changed consumer behaviour and what positive outcome could there be when everything's over?

The crisis will have both positive and negative consequences in the long run. If you only want me to comment on the positive changes, I'd say we're seeing that self-centredness can have grave consequences in this and other respects and that should motivate us to prevent those consequences. We're also learning where "less can be more", in other words, how we can cope with less without being worse off for it. That can encourage sustainable consumption. Having said that, we shouldn't overdo it when it comes to reducing consumption either. Going to restaurants, gyms and hairdressers less often even when Covid is over is no help to anyone. ▲

Going live in 3... 2... 1

Harz University's first virtual open days

* Eileen Demangé



If you missed the virtual open days and would like to find out about the programmes Harz University offers, you can still watch the live streams on the University's YouTube channel or the website: www.hs-harz.de/visit.

Sad as it was, our annual highlight, "Campus Fever", had to be cancelled in 2020 due to the pandemic. None of the usual activities – the picnic on the campus green, live music, alumni reunions, campus tours – were possible. But the University didn't let that stop it! A digital programme of events was rapidly put together so that prospective students still had the opportunity to find out about Harz University – from the comfort of their sofa. After seemingly endless days in the studio and thanks to the collaboration of all the faculties, a new information format was born – "ViSit HS Harz", the University's first virtual open days, which took place on 12 and 13 June.

Two days of hosting, two days of discovering

To give equal "air time" to the bachelor and the master programmes, the University broadcasted from its YouTube channel twice – live

and from outdoors. No easy task for the lecturers or the host, student counsellor Cornelius Hupe. "When the words, 'Rolling; going live in 3... 2... 1' came, everyone was as nervous as it gets. But it only took a few seconds to realise there was no reason to be. Even the weather, which had been very changeable up to then, brightened up for us", he explains. So he was able to host the events as planned – with bags of charm and humour. Each programme was presented in a pre-produced, three-minute video clip that told viewers what the programme was all about, what was special about it, what students would learn and what areas they could work in after graduation. Afterwards, the coordinator for each programme and alumni were patched in live via video. Viewers could ask questions in the chat and they were then put to the person best-placed to answer them.



“ViSit” was a truly professional production – thanks to Prof. Martin Kreyßig and his Media Informatics students

Top streaming videos

With over 6,000 clicks, the two live streams are the top videos on Harz University’s YouTube channel. “Our open days were the ideal moment for people to ask whatever they wanted to know. Apart from information on the academic programmes, the short videos included fascinating insights into student life, with tours of the Halberstadt and Wernigerode campuses, lab and faculty presentations and a chance to hear from the student associations that play such an important role in University life,” says Cornelius Hupe, explaining why the live streams attracted such an impressive number of viewers. The host welcomed a number of guests during the broadcasts, among them Prof. Louisa Klemmer, Vice President for Academic and International Affairs, known to many from the traditional barrel-tapping ceremony at Campus Fever 2019. “I would have

loved to welcome our prospective students to our small and close-knit campus this year too but the overall Covid situation made that impossible. It is thanks to the dedication of our lecturers that we’ve been able to run online lectures and events like these virtual open days. The format has been very well received and it would definitely be a good idea to combine the digital offering with an in-person event on campus in future,” the professor said. ▲

2021

ViSit – Virtual open days: 28 and 29 May



Harz University holds 17th Sponsors' Gala Evening Three premieres on one night

* Moritz Peters

An evening of premieres at the Feuerstein Arena

At the end of September, around 140 guests from the realms of research, business, government and culture made their way to the Feuerstein Arena in Schierke for the 17th Sponsors' Gala Evening. "It's like going to a classical music festival," said the University's President, Prof. Folker Roland, describing the mood at the opening of the event in the airy arena. It was a triple-premiere night with this being the first time the event wasn't held on campus (due to the pandemic), the first time there

was a live stream for guests who were unable to attend in person and the first time the gala evening was staged jointly with Wirtschaftsclub Wernigerode (the town's business club).

A total of 31 Deutschlandstipendium scholarships, part of a programme for particularly talented students, were awarded by 22 sponsors. Ludwig Hoffmann, a former mayor of Wernigerode, was one of them. Explaining what motivated him to get involved, Mr Hoffmann said: "I'd like to set an example and show that, as well as being experts in their field, Harz University graduates should think and act in a way that benefits the common good."



Professor Armin Willingmann, Saxony-Anhalt's Minister for Economy, Science and Digitalisation and a former president of Harz University, was among those to welcome the guests, using the opportunity for a look back and a look forward to the situation in Saxony-Anhalt. "I'm delighted to hear that, despite the pandemic, the University only had to cancel or postpone three courses in the summer semester. That's a great result."

At the invitation of Wirtschaftsclub Wernigerode, Prof. Nils Ole Oermann, a lecturer in Ethics at Leuphana University of Lüneburg,



"I think it's great how higher education institutions in Saxony-Anhalt have responded to this extraordinary pandemic situation."

Professor Armin Willingmann, Minister for Economy, Science and Digitalisation of the State of Saxony-Anhalt



gave the evening's keynote speech. The specialist in sustainability and sustainable management praised the idea of the Deutschlandstipendium scholarship. "If you want the best people, you have to support the ones who perform best, not the ones with the best-sounding names," said the sought-after expert on ethics on business. Moving from the scholarships at Harz University to the bigger picture, his speech was entitled "Of right and wrong elites – Reflections on business ethics in the light of German reunification". The best way to do something for the common good, he said, was to identify and champion young people who are able to solve the problems currently facing us. "That's what generates the highest return", he said in summary.

Piano and song in a special setting

Background music for the late summer's evening (which felt more like an autumn evening!) was provided by singer and pianist Ricarda Erbe. Ricarda is a student on the Master programme in Tourism and Destination Management as well as working part-time as an event manager for Harz University. The event was followed by a reception, at which guests soaked up the special atmosphere while chatting and networking – in accordance with the hygiene rules. ▲

“The scholarship meant I had more time to carry on my voluntary work as a swimming teacher for pre-school and primary school children.”

Alexandra Bonk, student of Administrative Economics



10 years of certified sustainability

Recycled paper, solar energy and campus bees

* Janet Anders

Sustainability and environmental protection have been a constant focus at Harz University for more than 10 years, with a committed working group in place to promote this work. In the summer semester of 2020, the working group was made an Academic Senate commission, on which elected representatives of all parts of the University community – lecturers, administrative staff and students – discuss and decide on sustainability management activities together. And there are also student associations that help implement climate protection projects plus research and student projects related to sustainability in all of the University's faculties.

Flying the sustainability flag

In 2011, the University made sustainability a fixed part of its agenda and obtained certification in the form of the European Union's EMAS logo (Eco-Management and Audit Scheme), which is aimed at organisations seeking to improve their environmental performance. "We've achieved a great deal since 2011," explains Prof. Andrea Heilmann, Dean of the Faculty of Automation and Computer Science. A qualified engineer and lecturer in Environmental Technology and Management, she was head of the "Sustainable Harz University" working group for many years and now chairs the newly established Academic Senate commission.



President of the University, Prof. Folker Roland, with Friederike Herrmann at the "Papieratlas" award ceremony in Berlin. Photo: Kirsch



Members of the Environmental Management Team: Friederike Herrmann, Jeannette Israel-Schart, student Lea Grimm and Prof. Andrea Heilmann

Award-winning utilisation rate for recycled paper

The professor is particularly proud – along with staff members Friederike Herrmann and Jeannette Israel-Schart – of the University's 100% utilisation rate for recycled paper, for which it was honoured by Germany's Federal Environment Ministry at a ceremony in Berlin. "We came third in the 'Papieratlas' competition for higher education institutions, which is organised by the 'Pro Recyclingpapier' initiative. It takes far fewer resources to produce recycled paper compared to virgin fibre paper. In 2019, we managed to save more than 152,000 litres of water and over 31,000 kilowatt hours of energy by using recycled paper," says Professor Heilmann.

In fact, the University has gone one step further and actually generates its own power. The HS Harz Solar association installed a photovoltaic system on the roof of the Papierfabrik (a former paper mill) ten years ago. With an area of 450m², it has generated 232 megawatt hours of electricity to date, reducing carbon emissions by around 162 tonnes. In addition, energy-saving measures and sustainable construction methods are now a priority in all conversion and new-build work on the campuses. ▲

Did you know?

The paper used in Harz University's offices is 100% recycled paper. Furthermore, per capita consumption has been decreased from 706 sheets of paper (2011) to 294 (2019) by raising staff awareness of the issue. This has led to an incredible paper saving of six million sheets, equating to 26.5 tonnes of carbon.



News from the busy bees

First digital workshop on beekeeping

* Eileen Demangé

In a digital workshop organised by three Business Psychology students, beekeeper Enrico Kretschmar presented Harz University's campus bees live via his mobile phone for the first time. The original plan was different though, explains Kathrin Krambo, who helped organise the online seminar from her home in Bavaria: "We'd almost finished the preparations. It was all supposed to take place on the flower strip behind the Papierfabrik, where the beehives are located. But we had to cancel because of Covid."

Up close with the university bees

Despite the alternative set-up and a few initial concerns, 15 participants signed up to find out more about bees and see the students' interactive presentations. "Even I learnt a lot of new things in the workshop," says Kretschmar, who was responsible for the practical part, along with University staff member Jeannette Israel-Schart. Using their camera, the two bee enthusiasts provided up-close views of the queen, workers and drones as they busied themselves in the hives. Instead of having to keep a safe distance and wear the usually necessary protective clothing, the participants were able to see everything from the comfort of their own sofa.

And as soon as the beehives were opened, they got to witness their first virtual sting. In a live demonstration of what had just been covered in the theoretical part of the seminar, the guard bee used its sting to defend the valuable honey and fend off the "thieves". But it didn't really manage to stop the "thieving" – almost 84 kilograms of liquid gold was harvested this year.

Three bee colonies on campus

"Organising the seminar enabled me to see our bees, which we definitely need to protect, in a completely different light. It's great the University even has its own bee colonies on campus because it gives us students the chance to see the animals up close without having to run away from them or shoo them away when we're eating," explains Leandra Knieling. The 22-year-old actually ran the workshop from Frankfurt! The feedback from this first virtual bee seminar was positive all round. "We were surprised there was such a lot of good discussion with lots of questions about bees and their co-existence with humans. We would definitely run the project with this format again," says Krambo, who herself grew fond of the bees during the organisation of the workshop. ▲



Beekeeper Enrico Kretschmar presented his university bees in an online workshop for the first time.



Student life goes digital

Active students make for an active community

* Anna-Lena Schou

Student Niko Jaskowiak alias DJ J-KO

With events and teaching no longer allowed on campus, the place is completely empty but there's no stopping the unique spirit of campus life at Harz University. Students from the Business Administration/Service Management programme have joined forces with the University's student associations to stage active projects to bring a splash of life to the semester – despite lectures being online now.

DJ contest to fill the party gap

Over a seven-week period, 8.15 on Wednesday evenings was time not to get ready for the usual party but to tune in instead to Twitch to cheer on the “Musikfreunde” DJs, Prof. Patrick Hehn and lecturer Luis Noschang in a DJ battle.

“Our aim was to bring the party mood back to people's living rooms,” explains Marcel Wensel, co-organiser of the DJ contest. “The contest consisted of four qualifying rounds, in which each ‘DJ’ had a 30-minute set. Students voted at home to put their favourites through to the semi-final. Then, in the last week, the two top contestants battled it out in the AudiMax lecture hall, where they each had a 40-minute set”, the 22-year-old adds.

The event was broadcast live, meaning that all the viewers could become part of it, irrespective of their location, and post feedback directly in the chat. It got pretty close to the signs people usually hold up at the sorely missed “Your Prof is your DJ” parties. But there was one major difference – this time, the lecturers were up against their own students. The final saw student Niko Jaskowiak, alias DJ J-KO, do battle with Luis Noschang, who has taught him for several years and is also the first examiner for his bachelor's thesis. “It was an incredible honour for me as a DJ,” enthuses J-KO, who went on to win the contest.

Over 600 viewers joined in the fun on Twitch – the same amount as at the much-loved canteen parties. ▲



Lecturer Luis Noschang

Doing good for body and soul – and for others

The fitness room is closed, only a few sports classes are taking place online and there won't be a Zumba Charity Party this year either. At Harz University, usually such an active place, there was hardly any sporting action at all in the 2020 summer semester due to the Covid pandemic.

"We'll see about that!" thought a group of four students from the Business Administration/Service Management programme. In collaboration with the "Sportfreunde" student association, Charlotte Sanchez, Lena Neuber, Annemarie Dame and Marlen Fischer organised a sponsored run with the slogan "Be active for yourself, for us, for everyone in the Covid crisis!". "The aim was to get people active, have fun and do good in the process," the project team explain. And the doing good bit was really simple. Participants could run, hike, cycle or – like Lea Becker, a member of

the Sportfreunde Executive Committee – walk 12 kilometres while waitressing. Whatever they did, a donation was made for each kilometre. The money went to an organisation called "Chance für Kinder e.V.", where it was used specifically for a project that provides direct support to deprived families with children.

A total of 34 sport-loving students and lecturers took part and raised a respectable 709.92 euros. "We're overwhelmed!" was the response from the "Chance for Kinder e.V." organisation. ▲



Online whodunnit dinner

Always a favourite, the "Kulturschock" arts club's play was unable to go ahead this year. But, again, the students came up with a solution and organised an alternative digital event – their first online whodunnit dinner, which was held in the summer semester and drew an audience of 36 students and lecturers.

The participants were split into five groups that had to work out who was behind a murder at a vineyard in the small town of Hasserode.

Lecturer Wilhelm Dietze, alias Jacques Bourdon, was among those who raised the investigators' suspicions. "It was very strange not having any contact with the students because of Covid. So I was delighted to be able to take part in this event. The heated debates to prove my innocence were great fun and the rest of them almost locked me up unjustly! The organisers really put together a suspense-packed concept."

Nino Fahnders, spokesman for the project team, describes the evening: "Some of them even dressed up, made whodunnit drinks, modified their background accordingly and did a bit of acting. It really was like at a whodunnit dinner even though we weren't able to dine together by video call. We also tailored the game to Harz University to deliver a Covid entertainment format students could relate to."

The "for students, by students" projects played a key role in University leisure activities in the "Covid semester". Lecturer Luis Noschang was among those impressed by what the students achieved without time to prepare properly and in extraordinary circumstances: "Well done to all students who lent some variety to this semester." ▲



Getting to know each other – at a distance

Orientation days give first-semester students a safe start

* Katharina Reif

Starting out is never easy – all the more so in the Covid pandemic. Anyone currently embarking on a new phase of their life is often unable to enjoy the festivities that usually mark such new beginnings. There are no big ceremonies, no welcoming handshakes, no close social interaction. But, despite all that, we wanted to make sure the new arrivals in our three faculties felt welcome.

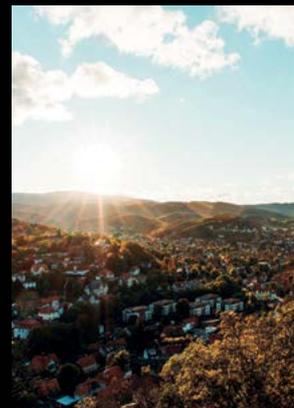
Sanitisers, open windows, social distancing and attendee-tracking – the orientation days in the winter semester were only possible due to everyone adhering to the Covid rules the University had specified in these four areas. Filling the AudiMax lecture hall to full capacity or allowing hundreds of first-semester students to randomly wander into the canteen was out of the question this year. Instead, groups had to be formed. Groups based on programme, groups based on room, groups based on day. Not good for anyone who likes to disappear in the crowd when confronted by strangers. Every time a student signed up for the orientation event, it was clear they couldn't wait to see the campus in the flesh – and that the University was right in its decision to try to give them an opportunity to get to know each other.

People behind squares

Even though it was supposed to be a “hybrid” semester (i.e. a mixture of in-person and online lectures), it was likely that most of the content would be delivered digitally. With this in mind, our mentors added a topic to the information part of the orientation days – a topic that would probably not have interested anyone a year ago: “Online netiquette: Good manners in online lectures”. It can be very tempting to turn off the camera and hide and very intimidating to switch on the microphone to ask a question. Especially if you've never met the people behind those black squares in person. The University wanted to avoid all that so everything that was allowed at a distance of at least 1.5 metres or with a face covering was included in the programme of events.

A multi-branch flow of information

The new students toured the campus, strolled through the town centres, explored the surrounding area and, of course, received all the information they needed as newbies. The information flow, however, was slightly different than usual. Normally, one person briefs as many other people as possible but this time lots of people had to branch off and brief as few other people as possible. Or lots of people had to brief small groups, one after the other. Or a few people briefed lots of people in an online stream. To sum up: slides were sent back and forth, people given instructions and videos made. After three to five days, all the first-semester students knew everything they needed to know. And we broke a record in the process! More new students participated in the 2020 orientation days than ever before! ▲





Studying abroad in times of Covid-19

“Studying online worked superbly!”

* Ellen Rabe

In March 2020, when Germany’s schools closed and many people’s everyday lives almost came to a complete halt at startling speed, most of Harz University’s International Office staff were working from home as an emergency measure too.

More and more partner universities stopped in-person lectures or called off student exchanges. Those students who had been lucky enough to get to know their host country in a “normal state” decided to stay put for the time being. Others cancelled their stay completely. The outgoing students of the 2020/21 winter semester had an uncertain start too though a certain routine was already in place by then.

Despite – or perhaps because of – everything, interest in studying abroad increased. A virtual information event was followed by more applications for a semester abroad in the 2021 summer semester than the University had received in years. Even with the knowledge that the student may only be able to spend the semester studying online from home, it remains an interesting and thoroughly positive experience. ▲

Pioneers of virtual Erasmus mobility

“Sadly, the Covid situation meant I couldn’t travel to Slovakia. It’s a real shame, of course, because I would have liked to experience the country in person. Having said that, I think it’s a big advantage that I can be with my family during this time. I think the actual online programme is doable. The timetables and lecture times are very good.”
Oliver Wedler, student of European Administrative Management, Univerzita Mateja Bela, Slovakia

“Even without being physically present, you still discover some of the special aspects of Spanish culture. At the University of Deusto, they’re very keen to offer virtual dance classes and they like to give people a better idea of the culture. Of course, you can’t learn the language in the country but they do provide Spanish classes. As for the timetable – the lectures in Spain don’t start until 1.30 pm at the earliest because of the large number of students from South America. That’s nice if you like a lie-in but it does sometimes take away what would otherwise be a free afternoon.” Alfred Hanus, student of Business Administration and Engineering, Universidad de Deusto, Spain

“Keeping a safe distance means being a flag apart! We decided not to go back to Germany. It was a great, once-in-a-lifetime experience. Obviously, there were restrictions due to Covid but, all in all, it was a time that people should definitely try.” Maike Robinsky (left) and Anika Renner, students of International Tourism Studies, INN Lillehammer, Norway



“Although I knew all the lectures and exams would be online, I wanted to spend this time in Hungary. Lots of things were still possible at the start of my semester abroad. For instance, there were lots of weekend trips and activities for Erasmus students – without the usual crowds. So we had Budapest almost completely to ourselves.”

Ines Koch, student of Tourism Management, Kodolanyi, Budapest, Hungary



“It was a fantastic time and I enjoyed it thoroughly despite Covid. I can only recommend a semester in Norway. It gives you the perfect mix. They tend to have fewer courses, which meant we had enough spare time to explore the country and spend lots of time in the countryside.”

Lea Sophie Brösdorf, student of Business Psychology, INN Lillehammer, Norway



“My stay started out great but then they introduced drastic measures in response to Covid. But studying online from Germany worked superbly.”

Ricarda Jakob, student of Tourism Management, Johnson and Wales, United States

“Despite some teething problems with the switch to online lectures, everything worked well. It was a real shame not to be able to discover campus life properly but I would recommend it to anyone nonetheless.”

Felicia Kühn, student of Tourism Management, Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, Seoul, South Korea

La odisea de las cuatro maletas

The odyssey of the four suitcases

* Moritz Peters



It was the end of January 2020. The written examinations were over, the end-of-semester party had been and gone and three Spanish exchange students set off to spend the holidays in warmer climes – in their home of Tenerife. They had only packed the bare essentials and were already looking forward to the summer term at Harz University. But the borders in Europe closed in March, making it impossible for them to return to Wernigerode to finish their double degree programme in International Tourism Studies. As a result, Nancy, Andrea and Adriana, students from our partner university of Universidad de La Laguna, spent the semester just like all other students - on Zoom.

Help from the buddy programme

It was no problem to send them all the data they needed – online – but other resources were required to reunite the students with their possessions. “They were allowed to take all the second-semester exams remotely so, once it became clear they wouldn’t be returning to Wernigerode, they asked us to deal with their rooms in the Finkenborn student hall for them,” explains Felicitas Reinhardt, the Student Advisor for Incoming Exchange Students at Harz University’s International Office. As she adds: “Luckily, there’s a procedure in place to help in situations like this. Two students from our





buddy programme volunteered to clear out the rooms once we got authorisation and the keys from Spain.”

The missing suitcase

Once they were finished, the two “buddies” brought four suitcases and loads of bags to the International Office, where the contents of the bags were sorted by owner, put into packing boxes and sent off to Tenerife. A fortnight later, only the packing boxes had made it to their destination. Of the four suitcases, one came back, two had already got to the Spanish mainland and one was missing. The contents of the returned suitcase were placed in another packing box

and sent on another trip to Southern Europe. The empty suitcase was donated to the Diakonie Halberstadt social welfare organisation.

The final outcome: eight out of nine boxes and cases got to where they were going in Spain, spreading joy after six months’ absence. The International Office went through a great deal of stress but learned a great deal about international shipping in the process. And things would have been a lot different if it weren’t for the close-knit spirit at Harz University, the caretakers and their strong muscles and the students from the buddy programme. ▲





Wir schicken euch als kleine Aufheiterung virtuelle #Frühlingsgrüße 🌸



Eine kleine #Entenfamilie auf unserem #Campusteich 🐣👨👩👧👦



Viel Erfolg für den anstehenden Semesterendspurt und die Prüfungszeit! ❤️



#EineKonstanteMussEsGeben



Instagram 2020

#WirbleibenZuhause #HSHarz

* Eileen Demangé

Wir wünschen euch einen wunderbaren Tag! 🌻
#poppyflower #nature #visithsharz ❤️



Schön, dass Du wieder da bist! Endlich hat das #Wintersemester 2020/21 begonnen 🎓



Wir lieben unseren #Herbstcampus ❤️👉
🌻🍂❤️



Auch auf dem Campus #Halberstadt hat der #Herbst Einzug gehalten 🍂👉



#EineKonstanteMussEsGeben

Käseschnitzel special



Lena Schulz



Tim Hermann



Victoria Pletz

To make sure people didn't have to go without what is probably the most popular dish on the canteen's Friday menu, we posted the recipe for Käseschnitzel on all of our channels. Loads of people followed the quick and easy instructions and sent us photos of the results. A big shout out to our kitchen staff!

Blog 2020 project

Harz University launches its own blog

#1 The heading

“University blog launched”... or perhaps

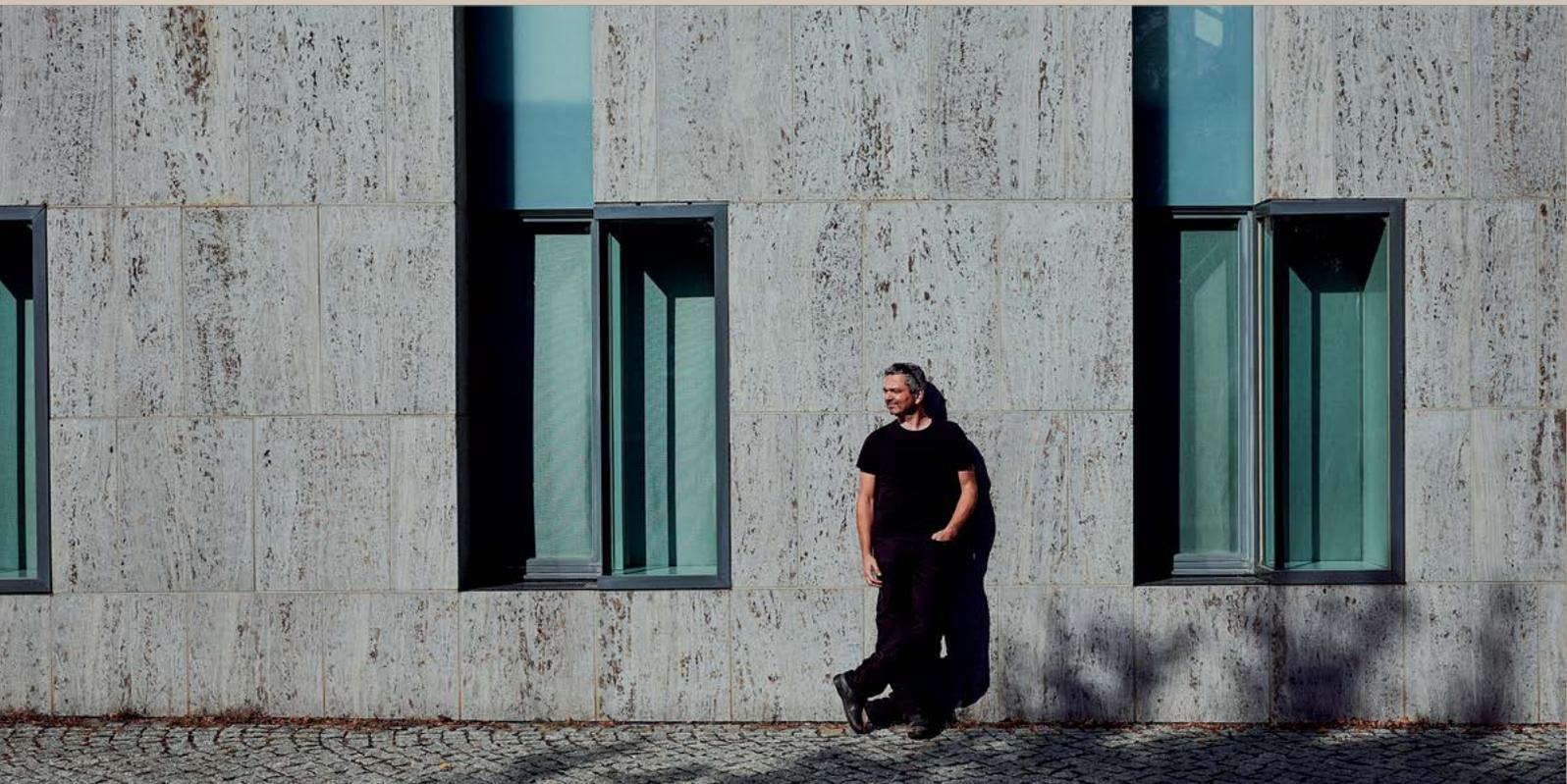
“Welcome to Harz University’s blog universe” would be better?

Ok, ok, we’ll just decide on the heading later!

#2 The opening sentence

As every good blog guide will tell you, the first few sentences are crucial. So, still want to read on?

#3 A picture that takes up half a page



That was lucky! Thanks to this quirky picture of Prof. André Niedostadek, you’re still reading. He tells us about his latest book project, “Kurvengeflüster”, in one of our blog articles.



How to write a blog article

* Eileen Demangé

#4 Content

This is where it gets difficult but let's give it a go! The first ever blog was published by Justin Hall 26 years ago on 27 January 1994. Then came Xanga, an American blog hosting service founded in 1998. Over the next ten years, the blogosphere went from the realm of a select few to a network of millions. And now, another 12 years later? It's estimated there are more than 600 million blogs. Over 5,760,000 posts are published every day. Young readers in particular (between the ages of 14 and 19) tend to follow one or more bloggers in social networks (38%). But older readers enjoy reading blogs too, with 22% of 50 to 59-year-olds following a particular blogger or bloggers. And now, Harz University has started its very own blog on its website. Since the launch in September 2020, there have been more than 35 posts.

Worth a click

Lots of bloggers have at least one post in their portfolio in which they explain how to structure the perfect blog article. Well, we haven't got anything like that but we do have lots of other topics that are definitely worth a click. They range from our close-knit campus community to innovative research projects to spectacular trips abroad. What's important to us is that contributors are experts who know what they're talking about. And we've certainly got plenty of them at Harz University! That's why we felt it was high time to give them a platform. There are lots of editors from all the University's faculties, working on a diverse range of topics for which there was previously no place on the website or in other media. As a result, nothing goes uncovered – and if you think there is something missing, we'd love to know!

The perfect blog post

So, what does the perfect blog article look like? To be honest, we don't know yet. But we've got lots of time in 2021 to work it out with your help. We'd greatly appreciate any suggestions, ideas or criticism you have.

Just send us an email: onlineredaktion@hs-harz.de

www.hs-harz.de/blog

Accessibility at Harz University

Wernigerode campus awarded “Tourism for All” certificate

* Claudia Kepke

“Accessibility is vital for 10% of the population and useful for 40% but it makes life easier for 100%” – that’s the idea behind the “Tourism for All” campaign. Developed by the German Tourism Academy, the campaign has created a Germany-wide, standardised information system.

The certificate has been recognised by all of Germany’s federal states since March 2020 and is supported by the Federal Economics Ministry. An increasing number of (tourism-related) organisations use the “Tourism for All” label to highlight their accessible facilities. Although Harz University isn’t actually a tourism-related organisation, it is regularly used for recreational purposes and conferences, which is why three areas most frequently used by the public have been certified. They are: the Naturdenkmal campus, the AudiMax lecture hall, which is used for conferences and meetings (particularly the “Children’s University” and “Lifelong Learning Lectures” events), and the library, which also houses the Karl Oppermann Art Foundation. In the summer semester of 2020, students of the Tourism Management programme conducted an audit of the Harz University campus as part of a project on accessibility. Guided by the “Tourism for All” criteria, they measured and documented aspects such as path surfaces, lighting, widths of thoroughfares and availability of disabled parking.

More than just level access

Accessibility isn’t just about providing a lift or a disabled toilet. It also encompasses tonal contrast, a clearly structured website, plain language, low-vibration floor coverings and easy-to-reach wastebaskets. “Though there were positive aspects, our audit also identified some weak points in the University’s accessibility offering,” says Tourism Management student Klara Sawitzki. The University is now working on improvements, including, for example, consistent, high-contrast signage throughout the campus. ▲

Harz University is now listed in the “Tourism for All” database at www.reisen-fuer-alle.de (only available in German) and will be able to provide visitors with a better standard of information thanks to the inspection report.



Harz University has been awarded the “Accessibility certified” label for three years as a provider of partial accessibility for people with mobility disabilities and wheelchair users.

From the comfort of your own sofa!

“Children’s University” and “Lifelong Learning Lectures” make digital debut

* Eileen Demangé

A lot of things were different this year, including the “Children’s University” and “Lifelong Learning Lectures”. Originally planned for April, they couldn’t be held in the usual format because of the pandemic so a different solution had to be found. The result was a new, digital edition of the two popular lecture formats. Viewers were able to follow the speakers’ fascinating presentations on the Harz University YouTube channel – from the comfort of their own homes.

Eagerly awaiting meerkats and more

After the first, hugely popular digital “Children’s University” lecture in June, a virtual crowd of mini academics assembled in front of their screens in September, eagerly awaiting the next instalment.

What was it about?

David Neubert, manager of Halberstadt Zoo, talked about acrobatic parrots and cute meerkats as he and his loyal companion, Balu, took the junior students on a tour of the zoo. David explained the four aims of zoological organisations, using interesting examples to illustrate them: animal observation and research in the kangaroo compound, protection and preservation of species in the owl hang-out, education in the porcupine pen and fun and entertainment in the meerkat enclosure. Even during his own childhood, the animal-loving biologist couldn’t get enough: “I had lots of pets, including tarantulas, scorpions, geckos, chameleons, millipedes and praying mantises.” His dog, Balu, has been with him since 2013. “He’s my hunting companion and my friend.”

So, how was it?

“Fantastic! What I liked best was how David Neubert explained everything. He’s ever so funny,” says mini scholar Lilly Ebers, describing the digital lecture.



Photo: Tierfotografie Harz



Photo: José Luis Roca

How economic activity can be beneficial to the common good

September saw the popular “Lifelong Learning Lectures” start off the winter semester as a hybrid event. Due to the distancing rules, there was only space for just under 50 people in the AudiMax lecture hall in Wernigerode. As a result, the event was broadcast live on the web for the first time, via the “Offener Kanal” channel. But the technology wasn’t the only pioneering thing about this premiere: award-winning, best-selling author Christian Felber made a special trip from his home of Vienna to give a talk on “Re-thinking business – Money is not the (only) way to measure performance.”

An internationally acclaimed speaker and initiator of the “economy for the common good” model, Felber seeks to establish an ethical economic model as an alternative to existing systems such as capitalism and communism. “The aim is sustainability and social responsibility. The wellbeing of humanity and of the environment must become the supreme objective of economic activity,” the 47-year-old stresses. The lecture was held as part of the Zukunftsforum (future forum), a joint project with Wernigerode Council and Engagement Global (a German development education organisation). ▲

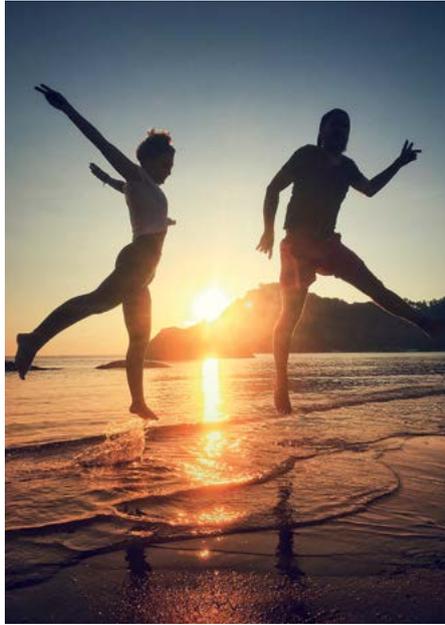
Make sure you tune in! The lectures can still be found online at:

www.hs-harz.de/khs and

www.generationenhochschule.de

Coach, trainer, podcaster A new career

* Maya Göttching and Eileen Demangé



Tourism Management graduate Doreen Kascha delivers podcasts to guide people through change

Doreen Kascha spent ten years at TUI, Germany's largest travel and tourism business. Having started out as part of an entertainment team during her tourism studies at Harz University, two and a half years after gaining her bachelor degree she was already an HR and organisational development manager at the TUI Group. "I felt right at home at TUI," the 31-year-old says, adding: "But there were some private challenges that showed me I had to change the way I lived. So I plucked up the courage to follow my dreams and, in 2018, I started documenting my journey in videos and sharing it with others on YouTube."

Time out in Southeast Asia

Doreen and her partner, Jan Werling, handed in their notice and spent six months travelling through Southeast Asia. They started off with the Buddhist country of Thailand, where they'd only booked two nights of accommodation. "I wouldn't say it was intentionally disorganised," says Doreen. "It was more a case of us consciously accepting the state of complete and utter freedom. During those six months, we thought about how we wanted to

live and work in the future and shared that journey with our YouTube audience – and later our podcast listeners."

Podcast with Dori and Jann

The couple's "empiremind" podcast has already chalked up over 100 episodes with just under 50,000 downloads. Every Monday morning, they inspire their listeners to recognise the potential that change offers, to believe in themselves again and to find the best

way forward for themselves. "People often tell me how much the podcast has helped them. They see themselves in us and start thinking about their own mentality, feelings and behaviour." Apart from being a podcaster, the Halberstadt native is also a freelance coach and trainer. "I love accompanying our podcast listeners on their journey to self-revival and reminding other people of everything they have inside. We have to stop believing we're not enough." ▲

"It's important to be open to your ideas, aspirations and dreams and to believe that they can be turned into reality!"

Doreen Kascha



From alumnus to mayor

“I knew from an early stage that I wanted to go into politics”

* Mandy Ebers

On 1 January 2021, a new mayor will take office in the town of Halberstadt – Daniel Szarata. A double-degree graduate of the Faculty of Administrative Sciences, Daniel discusses his time as a student, the importance of investing in clever minds and new challenges.

A European perspective

The fact that his curriculum focused on Europe turned out to be of great benefit to Daniel Szarata later on in his professional life too. After he graduated in 2007, he first worked in the legal department of what was then the Ministry of Economic and Labour Affairs of Saxony-Anhalt and later at the state investment bank's Förderservice GmbH company. “After that, I went back to the Economics Ministry and served as an EU project finance manager in the Department for European Cooperation, working with a range of countries, for example, Spain, the Czech Republic, Austria and Latvia. I was particularly struck by the different local government structures in Europe, which are often in a better position than they are in Saxony-Anhalt. One crucial aspect in that type of work is the language barrier. In my opinion, it's really important that governments have employees who can speak fluent English.”

Daniel received extensive language training during his European Administrative Management studies. Spanish was his chosen second foreign language. “During my six-month student

placement in Zaragoza, Spain, I was able to consolidate my knowledge of the language but my English was often a help too,” he reports.

A foresighted perspective

During his time as an international student, Daniel had some important experiences that helped shape him. Having worked for three years, he decided to return to his alma mater for a part-time master programme with the aim of developing a more advanced level of knowledge. As Prof. Thomas Schneidewind, Dean of the Faculty and Programme Coordinator for the Master in Public Management, explains: “People who choose the part-time Master of Public Management programme need a lot of stamina. It's an investment in their own education and it's one that pays off. The students explore economic and legal issues and use their (mental) flexibility to create targeted solutions for complex problems.”

Double alumnus Daniel can only underline that: “I found it fascinating to discuss these issues with my fellow students, who came from different professional backgrounds, as well as exploring the theories presented by our professors. I was particularly interested in the ‘new public management’ model, with its innovative approach to HR and process management.”

A new role

Important knowledge that will also be useful to

him in his new role as head of Halberstadt Town Council from January 2021 onwards. In fact, the young politician has already set his sights on two specific goals even before taking office: a state-of-the-art HR and process management structure and a stronger focus on Europe. A revival of the cathedral town's extensive twinning partnerships and school exchanges could also be on the cards. That would help young people expand their horizons at an early age and discover the “European spirit” – something the future mayor values greatly based on his own experience. He's also got some ideas concerning financial policy. As he explains: “There will soon be a decrease in the money available to us from the Structural Fund, which means we'll have to explore new avenues to obtain other forms of European support.” His plans include investing in clever minds and participating in EU projects.

Prof. Thomas Schneidewind, Dean of the Faculty of Administrative Sciences, wishes the future mayor every success in his new role. “Ever since the foundation of our faculty, we've considered it very important that the University is integrated into the region. In keeping with this tradition, we collaborate on numerous projects and in a range of joint activities. We would like to thank the current mayor and look forward to a continuation of our excellent working relationship with the office of mayor in the years to come.” ▲

Ushering in a new generation at the Faculty of Business Studies

New members join the Harz University staff

* **Claudia Kepke**

At the start of the 2020/21 winter semester, the Faculty of Business Studies said goodbye to two of its oldest-serving staff and hello to five new faces as the baton passed from one generation to the next. The faculty received a considerable boost from new staff members Theo Berger, Alena Bleicher, Andree Ehlert, Dirk Oberschachtsiek and Ansgar Wübker. They're all looking forward to embarking on their new roles together and the opportunity to showcase their specialist fields – especially in statistics, economics and scientific methodology.

We wish them all every success!



Prof. Theo Berger – Professor of Statistics and Data Analytics

Theo Berger ranks among the top 100 business administration researchers under the age of 40 in the German-speaking region. He hopes to use his knowledge “to build bridges between theory and practice and expose students to the thrill of statistics, software-based statistics and quantitative methods.”

Prof. Alena Bleicher – Professor of Communication and Social Sciences

A sociologist through and through, Alena Bleicher previously worked at the Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Research, conducting research on the combined impact of resource utilisation and environmental technology on society. “My long-term goal is to incorporate my expertise in qualitative social research and interdisciplinary work more into my teaching.” Photo: Charlotte Sattler



Prof. Andree Ehlert – Professor of Statistics and Empirical Social Research

Andree Ehlert's goal is to give modern statistics a firm footing in the faculty and focus on interdisciplinarity. “From their very first day in a new company, our graduates often have to be able to deliver statistics, use state-of-the-art software and communicate their quantitative results to teams and line managers. We can help them do that if we work with case studies and the latest teaching content.”

Prof. Dirk Oberschachtsiek – Professor of Economics

Dirk Oberschachtsiek will be seeking to step up dialogue with students – especially because he feels economics is often considered very inaccessible. He thinks health, education, HR and entrepreneurship offer potential as points of reference. “The fact that a number of us have joined the team at the same time presents a range of opportunities to incorporate the basic disciplines,” he says.



Prof. Ansgar Wübker – Professor of Economics

Basic Economics is a key component at the Faculty of Business Studies in Wernigerode. “I want to show that economics has a lot to do with reality. Specifically, we'll be discussing how, for example, rent caps or oil prices affect us as individuals.”

Faculty of Automation and Computer Science appoints professors for Mixed Reality and Data Science

Fresh faces for fresh topics

* Katharina Reif

On the first floor of the Papierfabrik (a former paper mill), there's an assembly line where students learn to apply their knowledge about automation. The model system measures, drills and sorts workpieces. Soon the students will be able to work on the system from anywhere by donning a VR headset so that they see the line as a 3D model. All thanks to Fabian Transchel (left) and Simon Adler.

The two new professors joined the Faculty of Automation and Computer Science in March 2020. 40-year-old Dr. Adler had already worked as a contract lecturer at the University and now holds the professorship of Industrial Mixed Reality. He mixes the real world with a virtual one to provide digital 3-D visualisations of machinery and plant. "Virtual and enhanced reality make it possible to follow industrial machinery and plant from their inception right through to commissioning," he explains. Born in Schleswig-Holstein, Dr. Adler first worked in the gaming industry. Later he carried out research on and gained his doctorate in medical training simulation. Since 2012, he's been researching mobile assistance systems for technical plant at the Fraunhofer Institute for Factory Operation and Automation. "If you can see the machine virtually, right in front of you, you can work on it directly," he says. "There is no lon-

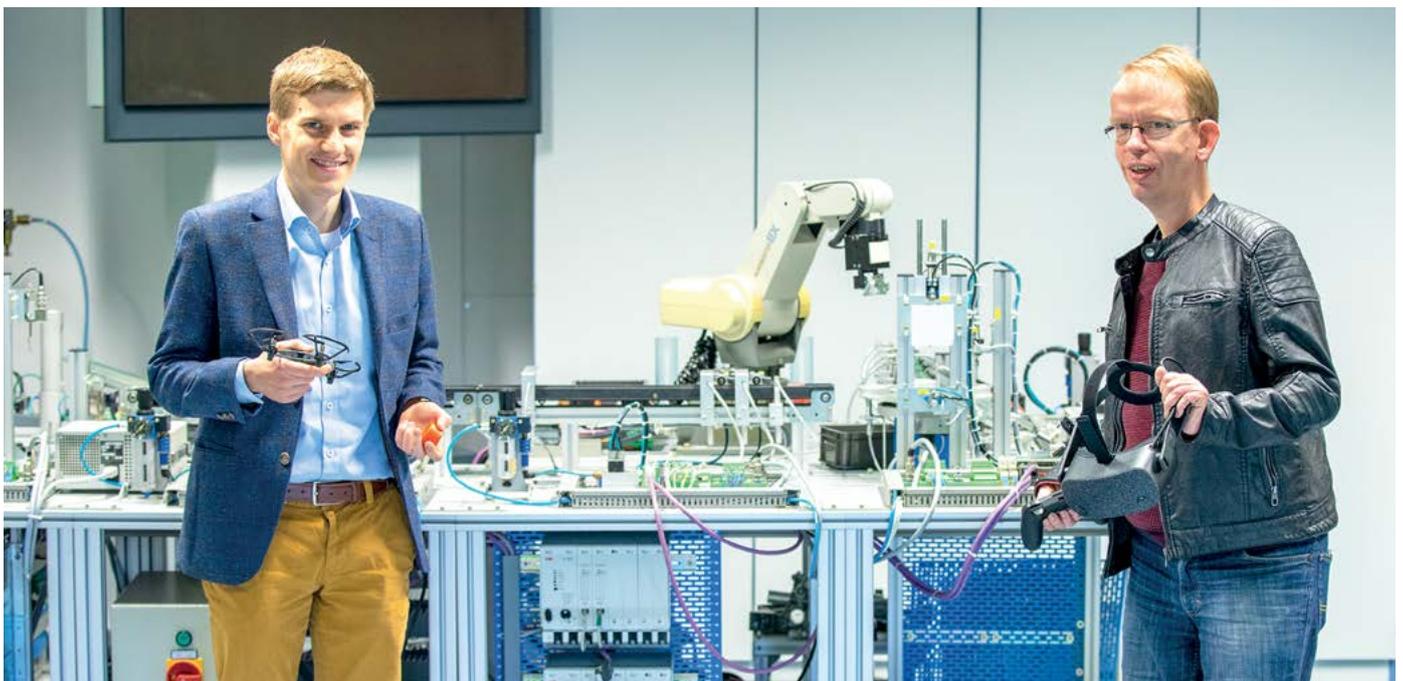
ger any transition between the real system and its twin." By contrast, he explains, working with 2D methods on a monitor results in a limited view, like looking through a keyhole. "With virtual reality, we can do significantly more with the data that is collected about a machine." And data is where Dr. Fabian Transchel comes in.

Adding value

Dr. Transchel is an expert in interpreting data to use it for forecasting – in Industry 4.0, for instance, where plant and machinery are interconnected using smart technology. Or in his specialist field – insurance and finance, where he used to work as a data scientist and later as a technical project manager. "Our infrastructure provides an increasing amount of data," he says. "Evaluating that data makes an important contribution to the value chain."

Professorship endowed by E+S Rückversicherung reinsurer

"Which customers are going to be changing insurer in the autumn? Which ones are good drivers and why?" These, he explains, are the types of question that can be answered using data science so that individualised packages can be put together for customers. Right at the beginning of his role at Harz University, Dr. Transchel developed a Master in Data Science programme, which will be starting in the 2021/22 winter semester both as a consecutive and as a part-time programme for professionals. "Data science is relevant to all sectors," the 33-year-old says. "Experts are highly sought-after." Dr. Transchel studied physics and gained his doctorate in quantum information. His is an endowed professorship, in which his research will cover actuarial mathematics, autonomous driving, robotics and the relationship between artificial intelligence and Industry 4.0. ▲



Bachelor in Marketing Management

New programme at the Faculty of Business Studies

* Claudia Kepke

The 2020/21 winter semester saw the addition of the new Bachelor in Marketing Management programme to the business studies offering at Harz University's Wernigerode campus. "The job prospects for marketing experts are as diverse as the programme itself," explains the Programme Coordinator, Prof. Patrick Hehn. The subject is extremely popular among students and there is constant demand from the business world, he adds: "The considerable interest came as a positive surprise to us all. It shows we were

spot on with our idea for a new programme. The students are eager to learn and full of enthusiasm." That goes for Luisa Affeldt too, who enrolled in the programme in its first year: "In Marketing Management, we engage with advertisements, product placements and media on a daily basis, combining everyday life and study to create exciting, relatable content. Despite the current situation, the professors still manage to deliver the programme in an interesting way that reflects the world around us." ▲



Prof. Patrick Hehn

Marketing Management is a seven-semester programme that gives students an ideal grounding for a variety of marketing-related roles. Possible areas of employment range from brand and product management to market research, event management and PR right through to sales – with opportunities for promotion to managerial positions. Typical employers include start-ups, SMEs and even global players, taking in big-brand manufacturers, retail groups, management consultancies, social media/advertising/event agencies and international non-profit organisations too. Graduates receive a Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) degree, with which they can go on to take postgraduate programmes, including various master programmes offered at Harz University.

For more information, visit: www.hs-harz.de/marketingmanagement

Modifications integrate alumni feedback

Master programme in Tourism and Destination Management

In the 2020/21 winter term, Harz University's tourism master programme was relaunched in modified form under the new name of "Tourism and Destination Management". The changes were partly made in response to an alumni survey, as Programme Coordinator Prof. Sven Groß, explains: "The Faculty of Business Studies had had a programme called "Tourism and Destination Development" since back in 2007 but a lot has happened in the dynamic tourism sector since then. Based on our surveys and analyses, we have decided to continue focusing on (destination) management but we've added current issues such as sustainability, digitalisation and tourism psychology and will be expanding the project work activities, methodological content and the courses we offer in English."

Positive start despite Covid pandemic

Prof. Groß, who lectures in Transport System Management, is very happy with how well the programme has started off despite the new situation: "With 29 students, this is the biggest cohort we've had on the master programme. In spite of the difficulties caused by the pandemic, we were very successful in our efforts to bring together the first-semester students from across Germany – through digital delivery." ▲

For more information, visit:
www.hs-harz.de/en/study/dpt-business-studies/tourism-and-destination-management-ma/

Continuing education – spreading the word

Professor Westermann hosts information event in Wernigerode's Bürgerpark

* Franziska Hain

In September, Harz University's Department of Continuing Education held its first outdoor information event, "Prof. im Park", in Wernigerode's Bürgerpark. It was a gorgeous, late summer's evening, with blossoming flowerbeds and shade-giving trees providing the perfect setting.

Staff from Harz University – in particular, the "professor" of the event's name, Prof. Georg Westermann – chatted animatedly to visitors about the continuing education programmes on offer. The University is especially keen to be available to advise people considering continuing education since there are many things to think about and a lot of information is needed before making a decision. "Normally, we're regularly represented at fairs and other events and offer individual meetings for prospective students," explains Professor Westermann, Vice President for Research and Technology Transfer. "But because everything's a little different this year, we've introduced new measures, including a regular online consultation session where prospective students can obtain detailed advice via Zoom and ask any questions they have. 'Prof. im Park' was designed as an additional opportunity for one-to-one conversations in compliance with Covid rules." And what better backdrop than the picturesque Bürgerpark?

As well as those who had been invited to the event, the University's stand attracted passers-by who were out enjoying the weather. The coffee bike was a particular eye-catcher, serving up a variety of coffee drinks, tea and hot chocolate for visitors. Even people who had previously had no dealings with Harz University were impressed by the event format and stopped to find out about the different programmes on offer. The positive feedback from visitors to the outdoor event was so encouraging that work is already underway on finding new dates and locations for 2021. ▲



Anita Siemens, a member of the Coordination and Support team for dual study programmes, and Prof. Dr. Georg Westermann advise a visitor at the "Prof. im Park" event.

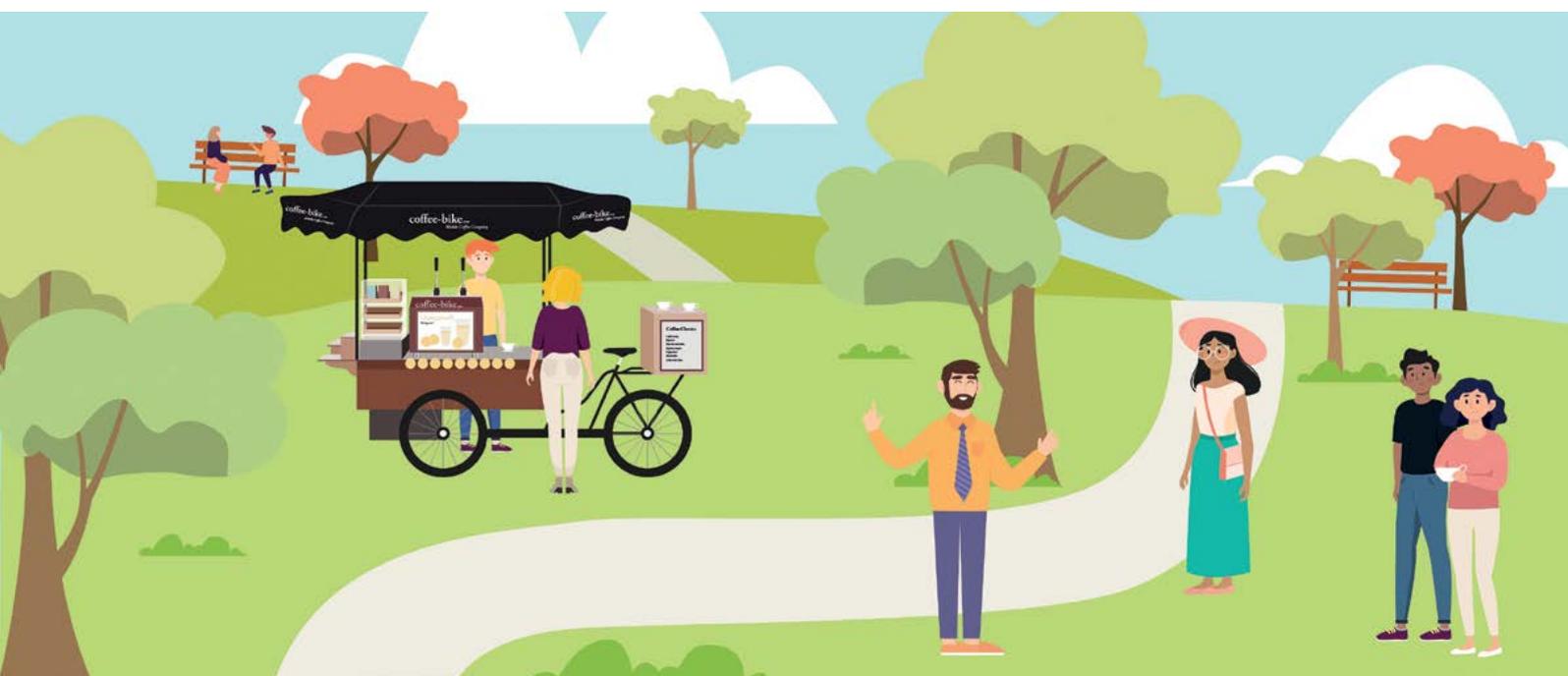
The event received financial support through the "Continuing academic education for SMEs in Saxony-Anhalt, 2019-2021" project under the operational programme funded by the European Social Fund and the federal state of Saxony-Anhalt.

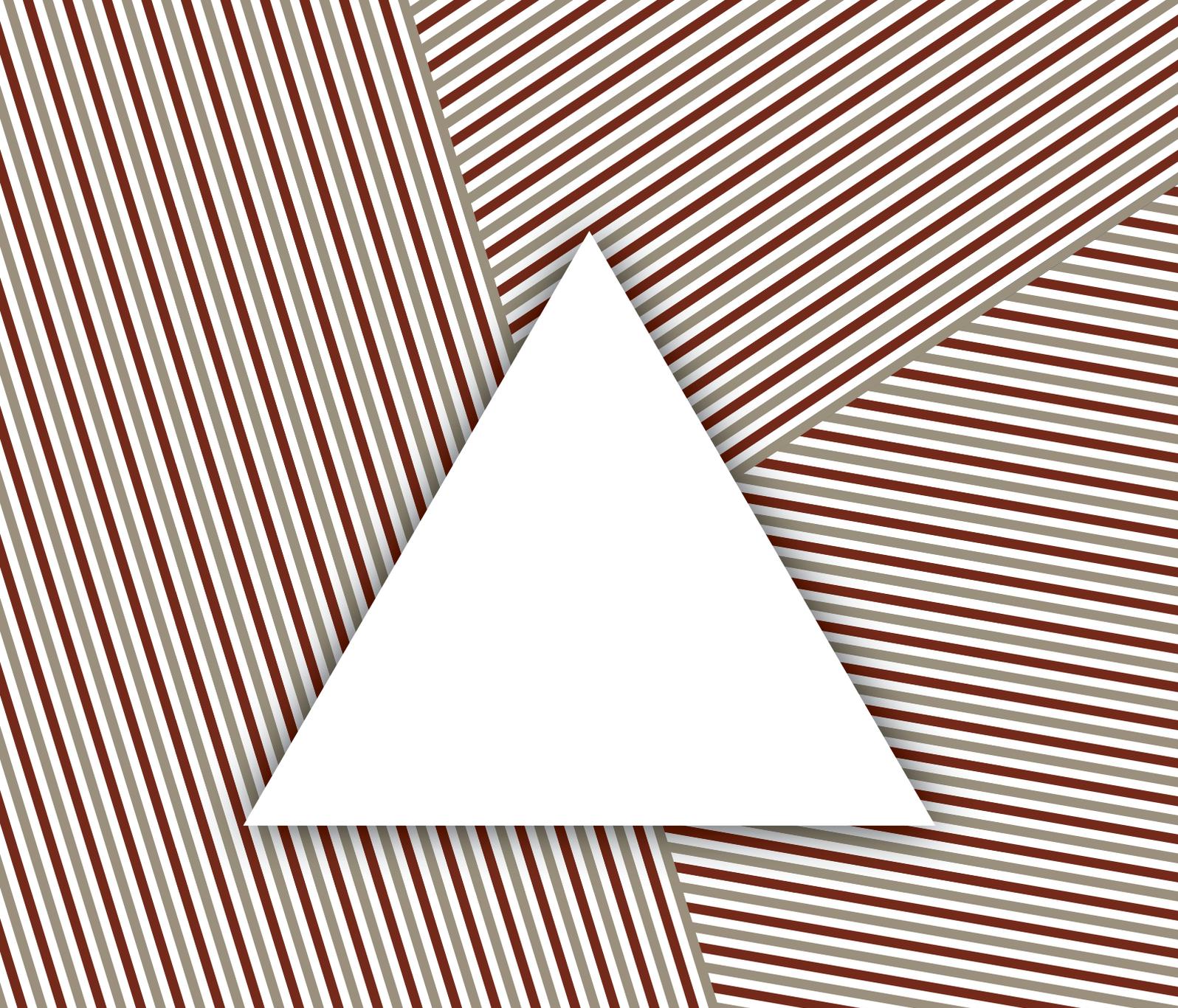


SACHSEN-ANHALT



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Virtual open days

28 and 29 May 2021

For further information: www.hs-harz.de/ViSit