



University of Maribor
Faculty of Economics and Business



UNIVERSITY OF MARIBOR FACULTY OF ECONOMICS AND BUSINESS

LOCATION:

Slovenia

NUMBER OF STUDENTS IN PROGRAM:

50 per year

SUCCESS METRICS:

- » Validates globally recognized Microsoft Office skills
- » Increases student productivity and success in higher education
- » Helps graduates obtain employment

Slovenian University Prepares Graduates for International Job Market with Microsoft Office Skills

Success Story

www.certiport.com/mos

"We believed adding certification to our offerings would better position our graduates in the job market."

Dr. Samo Bobek
FEB Dean

University of Maribor Faculty of Economics and Business Integrates MOS Certification into Programs

INTRODUCTION

The University of Maribor was formally established in Slovenia in 1975 and currently serves more than 25,000 students with 17 faculties. The Faculty of Economics and Business (FEB) recently marked an even longer history with its 50th anniversary, celebrating a high level of respect both in Slovenia and internationally.

FEB has continuously evolved and transformed its programs by adapting them to the requirements of the

Bologna Declaration, which was adopted by ministers of education of 29 European countries in 1999. The Bologna Declaration advocates a model to allow students and graduates to move freely between countries and as a result, FEB developed a first-cycle university education program and professional higher education program, a second-cycle master's program, and a third-cycle doctoral program.

Despite being a regional Faculty in Slovenia, FEB aims to follow global

Microsoft
Office Specialist

trends and research. FEB teaches students the latest versions of IT solutions and applications that are most used in the Slovenian market and in the global IT industry.

CHALLENGE

With the adaptation of FEB study programs to meet the requirements of the Bologna Declaration, the school developed several new courses focused on obtaining globally relevant technology skills, such as Microsoft Office applications. In order to properly train students, FEB needed access to the Microsoft applications, e-learning resources, lesson plans, and validation tools.



FEB contacted Microsoft Slovenia for assistance in promoting technology skills and heard about the Microsoft IT Academy, which would give them access to the resources they needed to equip students with modern Microsoft technology skills. FEB became a Microsoft IT Academy in 2007.

The Microsoft IT Academy was well accepted by students. FEB was encouraged by the initial success and wanted to validate student knowledge in Microsoft applications with certification.

"We believed adding certification to our offerings would better position our graduates in the job market," said Dr. Samo Bobek, FEB Dean. "Since many of our students continue their careers abroad, certification would help them prove their skills internationally."

SOLUTION

As a business school, FEB already included practical training on

Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, Microsoft Access, Microsoft Outlook and Microsoft PowerPoint in their curriculum. After researching possible Microsoft certification programs, FEB found the best fit for their program was working with Certiport's regional partner Certiadria to implement the Microsoft Office Specialist (MOS) certification exams.

"Microsoft Office skills are stated in a majority of job advertisements as a basic requirement," said

Dr. Simona Sternad, FEB Assistant Professor of E-business. "Earning an official certification would give our students leverage to differentiate themselves from the rest of the job applicants."

FEB became a Certiport Authorized Testing Center and trained their professors for exam administration and proctoring. They invited guest lecturers and employers to speak to students and they emphasized the importance of practical skills such as Microsoft Office knowledge when applying for positions at their companies, which helped students realize the value of MOS certification. Certiadria visited the school for an on campus event where Microsoft presented the Office 365 application and Certiadria presented the benefits and importance of MOS certification.

The first students to take exams were students of the E-business Program. The exams were not required but a majority of students chose to take them and passed.

RESULTS

Today more than 340 MOS certifications have been awarded at FEB and students tend to pass more than one exam. According to feedback from both present and former students, the skills they learn while studying for MOS exams help them become more efficient with their assignments. Many have been hired part-time and some full-time due to their excellent Microsoft Office skills.

Simona Žeks, a graduate of the FEB e-business program, works at Kreativne Ideje as a project manager

and has seen the benefits of MOS certification. "A diploma alone is not enough to find a job, since new graduates do not typically have much to add to their list of experiences," she said. "I realized I needed to take advantage of everything FEB offered to improve my resume, and the MOS certification helped tremendously. MOS certification showed I had knowledge to perform tasks using Microsoft Office tools, and also that I was hardworking and ambitious."

FEB has seen many benefits from implementing MOS certification, including better grades from their students as they are more efficient overall with their Microsoft Office skills.

"MOS certification adds value to the study programs at FEB and is in line with our strategy – we want to produce graduates with practical knowledge and skills," said Dr. Bobek. "Our graduates are now recognized as outstanding in the job market."

MOS is very closely integrated in the e-business program at FEB and they hope to expand to attract more students in other programs.

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