

In terms of education, which strategic objective do you see as a priority?

Our priority is to increase the pace in pass rate of students in all educational programs. When we compare our situation with other countries, it is absolutely inadmissible that although 70 to 75 % of starting students pass exams, only 20 to 25 % - depending the course - achieve this during the first exam session and only 40 to 55 % after two sessions, while the remainder even needs more sessions. We can of course not exclude circumstances forcing students taking more time, but a variation from 25 to 75 % is too high. Apparently our system is not sufficiently performing to guarantee a majority of students doing better. Instead of pointing at the responsibility of the student, we consider changing our educational system. Therefore, the first point in our program is to increase study success through the adoption of activating study methods and establishing a better educational infrastructure. Available good practices prove it is possible to increase study success. These require of course that professors and assistants are given time and space to adopt a coaching role and to reflect on what they can do to help students. So we do not suggest lowering the barrier, but suggest investing in better educational methods that - stepwise – boost student to pass the barrier. We think this might imply a revision of the academic calendar, allowing more time to introduce e.g., intermediate tests or students giving presentations, for other examination methods and for room to implement intensive coaching (becoming possible by e.g. pooling human resources assisting the students). A potential reform of the academic calendar is therefore a tool to increase study success and not an aim in itself.