1. Background
In 1993, the Austrian Parliament passed a law (Austria 1993) to create a new Fachhochschul (FHS)-sector in higher education. The law enabled a range of providers to offer vocationally oriented degree level courses, alongside existing provision in the universities. The new sector would be free of many of the features of state control and regulation to which the universities were subject. The law marked a significant development for Austria, not just in policy for higher education, but also for policymaking and governance in the country as a whole. It broke with the tradition of near monopoly of higher education by the universities, and of heavily centralised government control.

The Austrian FHS policy was distinctive in drawing unexpectedly on the British model of non-university higher education, rather than on the more obvious German and continental European models. In particular, the law established a new body, the Fachhochschulrat (Fachhochschul-Council) (FHR) to accredit courses in the new sector, very much on the lines of the Council for National Academic Awards (CNAA) in the UK. The 'accreditation model', as it became known in Austria, broke the tradition of detailed state regulation of the curriculum in higher education. (In Austria, degree courses were subject to four stages of regulation involving the ministry for higher education and the Parliament.) There was an obvious sense in which the Fachhochschul-policy, and particularly the creation of the accreditation model, was an example of 'policy transfer'. Austrian policymakers explicitly referred to the British model as the basis of the Fachhochschulrat.

2. Objectives
The research proposal set out the following aim:
To explore the lessons of a case study of the Austrian 'accreditation model' for the literature on comparative public policy and particularly on policy transfer.
This has been achieved (see 4.1).

The following objectives were set:
1. To explore the way in which proposals for the accreditation model developed and the key factors that affected its acceptance; this has been achieved (see 4.1)
2. To assess how successful the policy has been in achieving stated policy aims; 
   This has been achieved (see 4.1)
3. To examine how far it has offered an alternative approach, both in ‘infecting’ an 
   existing strongly homogeneous higher education system and to decentralising 
   policymaking in a centralised system; (this has been partly achieved, further 
   analysis of the data will consider the issue later)
4. To compare Austrian practice in policy development with the British. Work is still 
   in hand, though the issue is also implicit in the analyses above.

3. Methods
The research was conducted by staff at the University of East London working with 
colleagues at the Institute for Interdisciplinary Studies (IFF) in Vienna. Field work was 
completed between January 2000 and January 2001. The main sources of data 
were:
   • semi-structured, tape recorded, interviews with some twenty of the key 
     policymakers, including all the relevant Ministers, party spokesmen and senior 
     civil servants, and with key actors in the FHS sector
   • policy documents (full access was granted to relevant ministry files)
   • official statistics and publications
   • other research on FHSEN in Austria
   • press coverage
   • literature on policy transfer, higher education policy, culture, civil society and 
     governance

4. Results
4.1 The Fachhochschul-policy
The study first explored the reasons for the rejection of a previous plan to establish a 
non-university sector (NUS) in the 1970s, to assist with the identification of factors 
which led to the acceptance of the FHS policy in the 1990s.

Austria has a highly segmented system of secondary education, with the upper 
secondary level (from age 14) divided into two streams - academic and vocational. In 
the 1960s, there were concerns about the rapid expansion of the academic stream 
(AHS) and possibility of ‘oversupply’ of university entrants. The creation of a non-
university sector was presented as an alternative for some of these students. 
However, the study found two main reasons for the rejection of the proposal:
   • The universities were anxious to retain their monopoly of higher education
• The vocational upper secondary sector (BHS) was anxious not to lose its standing - it was widely recognised as of high quality (comparable to HNC/HND in the UK) - and it was supported by the Chamber of Industry.
• Policymakers felt that they could 'get the expansion under control' and direct pupils to the vocational stream.

The unexpected re-emergence in the late 1980s of the idea of a non-university sector can be attributed to circumstances which had not applied in the late 1960s;
• the consequences of the 1970s decision were becoming oppressive. They included the growth of AHS resulting in doubling of numbers entering university;
  the universities were concerned about their 'overburdening' with students; there was a deep desire for 'relief'.
• evidence of graduate unemployment
• concerns about the efficiency of higher education, with its high drop-out rate and long completion times.
• increasing discontent of the academic community and the public with tight governmental regulation of universities.
• constraints on public expenditure meant that university funding did not keep pace with growth of numbers.
• a lucky coincidence that in 1988, OECD organised a comparative study of the development of the NUS in member countries. This study was used in Austria to support the idea of a NUS.
• a new minister for higher education (Busek) ambitious to reform higher education, and to be seen as a potential leader of the conservative party; he quickly realised that a NUS could also serve as a catalyst for change in the universities. His interview revealed a strong sense of seizing a window of opportunity (cf Stone 1998: 257).
• the decision of the government to join the European Union. Some policy analysts and interest groups argued that the value of a BHS-certificate would not fully be acknowledged and that Austria would have to upgrade upper secondary vocational education to higher education. An EU directive on recognition of qualifications was cited to support this view.

In 1990, the new coalition government noted the need to conform to EU requirements and proposed the establishment of Fachakademien (vocational academies), to 'supplement and relieve' the higher education system. However, it made no mention of the 'accreditation model'. Our research shows that it was
opportunism and manoeuvring by senior officials in the Ministry for Science and Research (BMWF) (responsible for universities) which resulted in that idea.

4.2 The accreditation model
There was debate about which ministry - Education (BMUK), responsible for schools including BHS, or Science and Research (BMWF) - would establish the new sector. The BMUK favoured 'more of the same', and planned to establish state institutions with a centrally controlled curriculum. Officials in BMWF reflected on the wider problems of higher education in the late 1980s - the demand of the academic community for more autonomy, dissatisfaction with government regulation of the curriculum - and the consequent need for new types of quality assurance. They took steps to secure support for their view including:

- a deliberate tactical move to link the discussion of the new sector with a review of the Austrian education system (with focus on the NUS) by the OECD. The review took place in 1992 and supported the BMWF (OECD 1995).
- promoting a workshop of the Austrian RektorsKonferenz in May 1991 which presented information about the patterns of the NUS in other European countries, with four speakers from the UK including the chief executive of the CNAA.

The debate spread to a broader variety of actors and it was increasingly covered by the media. The employees' organisations, in particular the Chamber of Labour, became the most articulate opponents. The Act when finally agreed, had a number of distinctive features:

- Decentralisation: it permitted a wide range of providers (including the non-profit and private sectors) to offer FHS courses. Higher education was no longer a state monopoly, nor a university monopoly.
- Deregulation: the academic control of courses would rest in the FHR
- De-coupling academic and financial decisions: the FHR would approve courses; the minister (through BMWK) would take decisions on state funding
- Mixed funding: the providers of courses were expected to contribute to their funding, no federal capital funding was to be provided (the providers mainly included the regional governments)
- Disaggregation: the Act focussed on accrediting individual courses, though it had provision for the FHR to propose the establishment of Fachhochschulen as institutions when they have sufficient provision.
The Act was distinctive, too, for its brevity: it needed only 19 paragraphs to lay down the complete legal foundation for the Fachhochschul-sector, compared with more than 1,000 pages of legal regulations for the universities. For the FHR, it simply set out its constitution and the basic criteria for its decisions.

4.3 The outcome of the policy
The Fachhochschulrat started work quickly; ten Fachhochschul-courses were approved by the FHR in 1994. By 1999-2000, there were
- 20 institutions offering 55 programmes.
- nearly 10,000 students enrolled.
The government's development plan proposed to increase this to 21,000 students by 2004-5, with FHS entrants equalling about a third of those embarking on higher education.

4.4. The accreditation model and policy transfer
We adapted Page's (2000) review of the policy transfer literature, following Dolowitz and Marsh (1996), to identify key variables in the transfer process - very briefly summarised as:
- what? (what is actually transferred?)
- why? (the reasons for 'borrowing' policy from another country)
- who? (who conducts the transfer?)
- how? (including the search process - if any - and the 'mix of tools').

We found that whilst this enabled us to explain much of the Austrian experience there were several respects in which it did not conform to the theory.

4.5 What was transferred to Austria?
Dolowitz and Marsh (1996: 349) cite Bennett (1993) and others to show that transfer covers a set of wide, but also vague, entities: policy goals, structure and content, policy instruments or administrative techniques, institutions, ideology, ideas, attitudes and concepts. The study raised interesting questions about what was transferred in Austria in the Fachhochschul-policy. There is no single answer: we found that
- to an extent, it transferred policy goals: the goals of its Fachhochschul-policy in the 1980s were similar to those of other countries in the 1960s.
- it may be better to think of the transfer more in terms of similarity of problems to be tackled rather than of goals. Non-university sectors were established in most countries, as in Austria, because of the reluctance or inability of the universities to meet economic and social demands.
Austria transferred ideas and concepts; a key issue in the transfer process was to secure acceptance of the idea of a non-university sector.

yet it did not transfer an institution when it established Fachhochschulen. The Fachhochschul-policy primarily established Fachhochschul-courses. (In practice, new institutions were established to run them, but unlike those in most other countries, they were not state bodies.)

More unexpectedly, the study showed that the seemingly straightforward transfer of the accreditation model is subject to a number of caveats.

Policymakers were muddled and ill-informed. Brunner (Conservative party education spokesman) spoke of the CNAA as a 'buffer' institution, yet this was not a function it fulfilled, for the state did not control the power to award degrees.

There was little detailed understanding of the structure and operation of the CNAA; 'little knowledge of how the UK example worked'. The many changes to the mode of operation of CNAA over the years were also little known in Austria. There was not a single 'accreditation model'; CNAA had operated in significantly different ways over time.

Differences of scale affected the nature of the accreditation model. In Austria, it is the 16 members of the FHR who accredit courses, assisted by a modest secretariat. In the UK, the Council was the formal legal body. The main validation and accreditation activities were carried out by up to 1,000 people throughout the higher education system and beyond (Pratt 1997), assisted by a substantial staff of professional officers. Nor does the Fachhochschulrat conduct visits to institutions, as did CNAA.

Thus, whilst the UK model was central to the development of the Fachhochschul-policy and of the Fachhochschulrat, it was not itself directly transferred. What was transferred was a general idea, a new 'paradigm' for public administration in Austria.

That the Austrian policy entrepreneurs had a limited and in some respects inaccurate understanding of the British model was not, a hindrance to transfer. Indeed, it may have helped the process. There was in Austria, 'selective adoption' (Muniak 1985), where a policy or elements of it are taken out of their contextual frame. Muniak offers this as an explanation for failure in transfer. In Austria, it was an element that helped transfer to succeed.

For Austrian policymakers had a somewhat rose-tinted view of the British model. A range of buzzwords - 'autonomy', 'diversity', 'deregulation' - emerged in public
debate as signifiers of change. To an extent Austria was 'buying a label'. In terms of Rose's (1993) classification, that which most closely describes the Austrian experience is 'inspiration'. The British polytechnic policy and the CNAA were used as an intellectual and political stimulus to develop a novel approach to policy in Austria.

4.6 Why did transfer occur?
Why did Austria develop a Fachhochschul-sector and the Fachhochschulrat? Were the decisions 'voluntary' or was there 'coercion'?

The literature suggests that voluntary transfer is most likely to occur when similar conditions in different countries may produce similar policies. But the extent to which similarity of conditions resulted in the development of the non-university sector and an accreditation model in Britain in the 1960s, and Austria in the 1990s, is limited. Although some circumstances were similar in both countries (such as expansion of student numbers) there were many differences (such as the nature and size of the existing non-university sector in the two countries). The time gap between the two indicates that other factors were at work.

One important change was the situation and view of the universities. By the late 1980s, the idea of 'relief' of the universities was a powerful argument for the creation of a non-university sector in Austria. Once this was on the policy agenda, it opened the debate to arguments about a different model of management and control.

Hood's (1983) use of the metaphor of 'tools' to describe the way governments operate is helpful to explain the choice of the accreditation model. The Fachhochschul-policy and the Fachhochschulrat were tools to solve particular problems and to achieve particular ends. We noted that the FHS policy offered the opportunity for long-awaited change in education; indeed, the aim of several of the key policymakers was to change the nature of the polity.

Hood (1983: 141) suggests that to minimise expense and manpower, governments tend to prefer general to particular 'effectors' (ie use an existing tool rather than create a new one) and passive to active ones. Since the creation of the FHR was both new and active, and remarkably economic in bureaucratic terms, Hood's theory needs revision in this regard.

Hood posits 'overload' (1983: 163) of the toolkit as a reason for policy change. Aspirations and expectations may exceed what it can do with the tools and resources
available. The direct tools of government (in Austria, the universities) were seen as not able to deliver what was needed. 'Inherent limitations' of existing tools - governments cannot force university academics to be innovative, nor can it meet incompatible demands (such as giving directions to autonomous institutions) - necessitated the choice of a novel tool.

A further hypothesis to explain policy transfer is, simply, that governments learn of other ways of doing things (Wolman 1992). In the late 1980s key personnel acquired heightened awareness of models from other countries, for example through the OECD Alternatives to Universities project in 1988-89.

However, we found no evidence that Austria was subject to direct coercion in the 1990s, despite concern about Austria's imminent membership of the EU and the directive on comparability of qualifications. We found that the issue of equivalence of qualifications was not significant for Austria's BHS graduates. Yet the main advocates of the FHS policy admitted to knowing that this was likely to be the case. Nevertheless, they used the EU argument, never believing in its validity, but to advance the policy. Perhaps we have here a new category of 'contrived coercion'.

Although there seemed to be some elements of indirect coercion affecting Austrian policy in the late 1980s and 1990s, for example, the role of the OECD, reflecting as it did the international consensus (OECD 1991) about alternatives to universities, again, the key policy actors had deliberately 'used' OECD, actively seeking its involvement to support their policies.

4.7 Non-transfer
Austria was unusual in that the obvious model for developing a Fachhochschul-sector - that of Germany - was not adopted. There is very little in the literature about 'non-transfer'. Muniak (1985) offers the idea that some policies 'don't fit'; Dolowitz and Marsh (1996: 351) note that lessons learned from other countries can be negative as well as positive. In the Austrian case, the wish to free institutions from state control meant that the German model was rejected. There was even advice from Germany against the transfer of the German FHS model. The head of the German RektorsKonferenz offered warnings about the danger of 'academic drift' in the German FHS.

To these specific concerns were added more general considerations of Austria's national identity: 'we are another country' (Busek). Austria's decision to join the EU
also, oddly enough, weakened the appeal of the German model. It meant that the traditional German job market would diminish in importance, as FHS graduates would be accepted across Europe.

4.8 Who?
Although the policy transfer literature relates to governments transferring policies, we found that the main source of the idea of the accreditation model was less 'the government' than a key group of officials in the BMWF. Two officials were personally committed to change in higher education policy and actively pressed for a method of control of institutions and curriculum that broke with the centralised tradition. There is support here for Rose's (1988) suggestion that civil servants whose careers are based on the success of the national system can emerge as the catalysts for change. In the Austrian case, the key civil servants took on the role of 'policy entrepreneur' (Rose 1993: 57). We can see the diffusion of professional values and elite networking (Stone 2000:50) when Austria became involved in the OECD discussions during the 1980s.

The idea of a non-university sector required consent from a wider range of actors, including ministers and the parties in the coalition, and it was particularly important that the existing majority in higher education (the university sector) was, if not supportive, not actively hostile. The RektorsKonferenz (RK) in 1991 was an important event in bringing the universities 'on-side'. Again, the hand of the key ministry officials was involved. There were important supporters within the university sector, including the previous President of the RK and Schelling at Graz, who was much involved with the development of the Technikum (a kind of proto-FHS) in Voralberg. This last development helped to bring support from the Länder. It was the Länd in Voralberg (led by Gehrer, later to become Minister) which had funded the Technikum.

The main actors (officials and ministers) in the transfer process were familiar with non-university systems in other countries. The RektorsKoferenz had looked at systems in the Netherlands, France and Switzerland. The Rektors' aim was to 'select the best from all the models'. At the November 1992 Vienna seminar, there were, speakers from several European countries. There was an element of 'rational shopping' (Page 2001).

However, the key actors were convinced of the need for a model based on the British system from an early stage. Hood (1983) notes that the search for alternatives may be 'neither random nor open minded' (1983:136). The transfer continued to be
advocated in the face of evidence against it. There had been strong statements from two British commentators at the RektorsKoferenz seminar about the failings of the British binary policy and the CNAA. Astonishingly, one of those present (from the Austrian university sector) reported that it was assumed to be an example of 'British humour'!

The UK as the apparent 'exporting' jurisdiction had little active part in the transfer. As far as the government was a concerned it was a 'passive' exporter. However there was some encouragement from others in the UK, including the Chief Officer of the CNAA and Pratt, speaker at the 1992 Vienna seminar and chair of the OECD Policy Review. The OECD Review team to an extent acted as 'brokers' in the process, but 'exporting' of the policy was not, in terms of formal hierarchy, symmetrical. The advocates of export were low in the British hierarchy; the importers in Austria were near the top.

4.9 How did transfer occur?
We formulated a problem solving sequence to explain the process of policy transfer in Austria:

Problem 1
A desire for change and pressures from outside the education system generate a need for vocational higher education.

Problem 2
University resistance and constraints on public funding generate a need for non-university independent institutions

Problem 3
Examination of alternative mechanisms of control of these institutions, particularly Germany and the UK, and fortuitous combination of key personnel and circumstances results in choice of accreditation model.

Problem 4
The need to 'sell' the model to the higher education community and wider society

Problem 5
How to implement policy, to ensure that an alien model works in the Austrian context.

Conventional literature about policy transfer (eg Evans and Davies 1999) concentrates on the decision-making process (problems 1, 2 and 3) and places less emphasis on the issues of persuasion (problem 4) and implementation (problem 5) that were particularly important in Austria.
Evans and Davies (1999) argue that a policy network approach is an essential tool to understand policy transfer. There are obvious connections here with ideas on policy networks (Marsh 1998, Rhodes and Marsh 1992, Rhodes 1990). In the Austrian FHS context, the relationship between units of government, particularly the role of a small number of senior civil servants - as ‘detectors’, and later as ‘effectors’ of policy (Hood 1983) - and the world outside was central in the development of policy. It was this group which, with one or two senior political figures, established and extended contact with an ‘epistemic community’ (in OECD), and was at the core of the policy transfer network. They undertook Evans and Davies ‘detection’ and ‘search’ stages.

In Austria, there was particular emphasis on 'elite and cognitive mobilisation' (Evans and Davies 1999), exemplified by the use of the OECD Policy Review. Yet this was not a device to convince policymakers; the ministers and political parties were, on the whole, already convinced. Thus, in contrast with Evans and Davies sequence, the 'evaluation' stage of decision making in Austria had already taken place before contact with wider communities. Evans' and Davies' model neglects the importance of the democratic process and the need to secure the consent (if only tacit) of wider publics. As Majone 1991:145) notes ‘Major policy breakthroughs are possible only after public opinion has been conditioned to accept new ideas and new concepts of the public interest.’ The task in Austria was to convince a wider polity. As Stone (1998: 257) notes, 'policy entrepreneurs' attempt to "soften" the climate of opinion towards particular alternatives'. Majone (1991:7) argues that policy arguments succeed not just because of the evidence adduced, but because of the persuasive power with which they are argued. The BMWF was energetic in generating wide press coverage and public discussion of the Fachhochschul-policy.

What arguments and tactics were employed to get the accreditation model accepted onto the Austria policy agenda? Hood's and Jackson's (1991) discussion of 'administrative argument' and of advocacy using 'doctrines' is useful here. They assert that 'administrative argument' consists of advocacy of doctrines by reference to "'common sense" maxims and examples that ostensibly vindicate the maxims' (1991:7). In Austria, 'buzz-words' like 'autonomy' were heavily used in the debate.

We identify the following factors that made the doctrine acceptable:

- 'symmetry' - 'constructing a reality symmetrical with the perceived "problem"' (1991: 26). In Austria, the accreditation model matched the felt need for 'something new'.
• the use of metaphor - of the FHR as an 'organic', responsive entity contrasted with the bureaucratic system of the universities.
• ambiguity - the ability to communicate the same idea to different groups in ways that each finds congenial. The argument for an NUS in Austria had elements appealing to the different interests of universities, employers and potential students.
• the use of 'the public good' as justification; the use of Austria's entry to the EU to support the FHS policy.
• selectivity in argument. The apparent demise of the accreditation model in the UK was little remarked in Austria.
• suspension of disbelief of opponents. The opposition of the Chamber of Labour was allayed by allowing some representation on the FHR of the social partners.

A key phase of policy transfer in Austria was that of implementation. Evans' and Davies' model implies that this is merely a technical matter. So long as the right decision has been reached and resources allocated, the transferred policy will operate successfully. In Austria, even when the Fachhochschul-law was passed, it was a vexed question whether or not the policy would be successful. Many in Austria were sceptical that the FHS policy would succeed. There was opposition in some quarters to the 'accreditation model', especially to its independence from political control. There was considerable doubt that the FHR would be able to maintain its independence.

The study found that the FHR - a basically alien institution - was able to establish itself within the Austrian polity and to operate along the lines intended. We found that the FHR had high respect and acceptance by the sector and beyond. We identified a number of factors that helped to sustain this.
• Its composition; the FHR has sixteen members. Formal academic qualifications where required for half of them, the other half had to be experienced in a relevant professional field. This composition contrasted with the Austrian tradition of social partnership where bodies with comparable tasks would have been assemblies of representative from political interest groups. In the policy debates prior to the FHS Act a modest compromise had been reached, and four of the members were nominees of the social partners.
• The study found that the composition alone was not enough to make this model work. We found evidence of considerable political, regional and other pressure on members of the FHR. Its President (Schelling) was pressured by various political actors up to regional governor. Yet, in the long run, members resisted the
temptation to act like representatives and worked as 'experts'. We identified a number of factors contributing to this:

- The appointed individuals did not depend on their position in the Fachhochschulrat. They already had careers. One respondent noted that they enjoyed talking about content, instead of merely representing external interests. They could feel like pioneers. The Fachhochschulrat had started with high hopes, as a new project with new ways of doing things, which was attractive in itself and worked almost as a self-fulfilling prophecy.

- Despite pressure to approve the first courses quickly, the group discussed the main principles of its decisions first. It started to act as a body with its own ethic, and was concerned and identified with the Fachhochschul-sector only.

- The Fachhochschulrat found its own ways and internal regulations to deal with interventions or with individual loyalties. For example, every application had to be supervised by two members during the accreditation procedure, but neither of these two came from the same region as the applicant.

- The social partner members did not, in the event, damage the integrity of the Fachhochschulrat. Our respondents suggested that this was because these representatives were a small minority, and coming from competing interest groups they neutralised each other. They contributed to the legitimacy and acceptance of the Fachhochschulrat. Ironically, they had more relevant experience than most of the other members, since they had done studies on graduates and demand.

- Unlike most other public authorities in Austria, the Fachhochschulrat was independent of federal and regional governments. The Fachhochschul-Study act guaranteed the independence of all members of the Fachhochschulrat in the execution of their duty. They did not have to obey orders from outside, not even from the minister. Although its decisions were subject to approval by the Minister, to ensure that it conformed to legal regulations, and he could refuse approval if a decision were seen to contradict a national interest, to refuse approval of a formal decision of the Fachhochschulrat would only be taken in extreme circumstances.

- The Fachhochschulrat reacted strongly to any possible intervention. The personal courage of the members, especially of Schelling, the first president, was essential in the political context and became something of a myth. The responsible official in the BMWF and her department strictly followed the intention of the law, supporting Schelling’s fight for independence.

- The high prestige of the Fachhochschulrat helped to protect the Ministry from political pressure.
• The FHR exercised its responsibilities seriously. Every applicant had to provide evidence on: the labour market; acceptance among potential students; staff, buildings and facilities; cost per place and funding. There was intense involvement of and networking with regional politicians. There was intensive interaction with the applicant. Surprisingly we were unable to find evidence of irritation or frustration by applicants about this process (unlike the situation in the UK with the CNAA). It seemed to be widely accepted as appropriate and legitimate. Similarly, re-accreditation (accreditation of an FHS programme was for maximum of five years) was based on a report of a peer review team of two experts from abroad, one practitioner from the professional field of the study programme, and one colleague from a different providing institution. In two cases, rigid conditions for re-accreditation were imposed, demonstrating that this evaluation was more than a formal requirement.

4.10 Wider implications of the transfer of the accreditation model
The 'accreditation model' runs against the grain of Austrian political culture, with its centralised, imperial style, strong bureaucracy, and politicisation at all levels of public administration. This raises a number of questions which are being studied by the research team beyond the timescale of the project:

• What are the characteristics of 'robustness' of institutions? Are there features of the CNAA and FHR that are likely to work in a wide range of political and social contexts? Initial indications are that the placing of responsibility for initiative on practitioners low in the system (course developers) was a significant factor that promoted the success of both institutions.

• To what extent has the accreditation model affected wider higher education policy in Austria. The study has already found that it has been used as an example to promote greater autonomy of the universities (with responsibility for their own budgets and freedom from detailed curricular control). However we detected signs of a rearguard action by some officials (from the Ministry of Education) to create an alternative sector to the Fachhochschulen.

• To what extent has the model affected the polity and nature of civil society in Austria?

5. Activities
OECD (2000), CHER (2000) and Vienna (2001) Conferences: these have been noted in the Activities and achievements questionnaire section of the report.
5.1 Outputs
Pechar, Hans, Pfeffer, Thomas and Pratt, John, (2001), Promoting Innovation and Entrepreneurism in the Fachhochschulen in Austria, Higher Education Management, vol 13, no 1, pp 47-60

Hans Pechar, (2000), The transfer of an accreditation model for quality assurance in higher education from Britain to Austria, Paper to the 13th CHER Annual Conference, 14-16 September 2000

Pratt, J and Hackl, Elsa (1999), Breaking the mould in Austrian higher education, Higher Education Review, vol 32, no 1, pp34-54

5.2 Impacts
As noted in the Activities and achievements questionnaire, there has been substantial user interest in Austria and other European countries, in the outcomes of the study (OECD and Vienna Conferences). It is also being used in policy discussion in Austria about future developments in the higher education system.

Future research priorities
The project team will continue to pursue the themes noted in the Activities and achievements questionnaire:
Further research of this type would be relevant to the EU pre-accession countries, especially from central and eastern Europe, where the transfer of policy may well emanate from the EU and/or from other EU countries.

6. References
Austria (1993) Fachhochschulstudiengerätz (Federal Act on Fachhochschul programmes), Vienna.


OECD (1991) Alternatives to Universities in Higher Education, Austria, Paris


