

QUALITY CONCEPT in Studies and Teaching



Quality Concept in Studies and Teaching

In its "Self-Conception", Hochschule Bielefeld – University of Applied Sciences and Arts (HSBI) sets out the objective that on the one hand, its study offer is attractive for prospective students who – e.g. thanks to high marks in their school-leaving exams or thanks to their financial background – have all the options. On the other hand, the course programme is supposed to open up new possibilities for prospective students without a classic educational biography.

After achieving their bachelor's degree, graduates should be able to take up an employment or practice-related or research-based master's studies at a university of applied sciences or a university. For each bachelor's study programme, there should in principle be a compatible master's study programme. Each master's study programme should build the basis for employment or PhD studies.

In order to ensure such permeability, the key parameters for all bachelor's study programmes were developed as early as 2003 and subsequently implemented throughout the university. Dependable perspectives for PhD studies were created through cooperations with universities and joint graduate schools, in particular with Bielefeld University.

Study programmes are unambiguously defined and named and externally delimited against each other in a way that is discernible for prospective students. Study programmes of individual faculties must not compete with each other.

The continuous improvement of the course offer is meant to increase and secure the level of qualification of graduates, to optimise study progress and to further increase student satisfaction. In order to achieve these objectives, the university deems ongoing and honest analysis with regard to studies and teaching necessary. It expects an openness for feedback, not perfection.

Objectives and measures in studies and teaching

The main objective in the area of studies and teaching is improving the permeability of education paths. This includes the best possible support for students by the university along the following steps in their education path:

- Transition from school to university
- Orientation phase
- Studies and teaching
- Counselling and support
- Transition from university to employment
- Perspectives for PhD studies/research

Teaching is complemented by an extensive counselling offer. Students are enabled to recognise their strengths and weaknesses and are encouraged and supported in their development and enhancement.

The university defines its quality orientation in studies and teaching by key parameters. These key parameters were bindingly defined for the entire university in the university development plan and have been applied to all bachelor's study programmes. Since the adoption of framework examination regulations, the key parameters have been defined and made obligatory through the framework examination regulation for bachelor's study programmes. They are also part of the university development plan. Key parameters for the master's study programmes specifically for Bielefeld University of Applied Sciences were not defined because of the strong differences in the study programmes' orientation. However, all master's study programmes must be research-oriented, so that permeability with regard to PhD studies can be guaranteed.

The objective of master's studies is to enhance and expand the knowledge, skills and competence that has already been achieved, to acquire and apply knowledge, to be able to make research-based decisions in keeping with societal, scientific and ethical findings, and to apply the achieved knowledge more profoundly.

The following section describes what is meant by the key parameters for bachelor's study programmes.

Acquisition of knowledge

All bachelor's study programmes are designed for graduates to acquire a large extent of knowledge in their respective subject, to enable them to enhance this knowledge by understanding specialist literature and to impart to them the current state of research in individual fields. All bachelor's study programmes are designed to impart a broad knowledge, integrate how to handle subject-specific standards and regulations and require the bachelor thesis to consider the current state of research.

Methodical expertise

Graduates are expected to master the techniques of scientific work including the necessary information and media literacy and to know and apply the specific methods of the respective subject. They possess moderation skills and are able to present ideas, concepts, projects or products in oral, written or digital form. When they are first designed or further developed, all bachelor's study programmes have to present corresponding modules; examination types of the modules must vary and should, as a rule, be competence-oriented.

Orientation towards practice and qualification

All bachelor's study programmes qualify students for employment based on scientific findings and methods. They impart knowledge about the professional field, a basic understanding of economic contexts and the ability to solve concrete problems based on scientific findings and methods within a given time frame. For this, all bachelor's study programmes include an introduction to the professional field and a course on the basics of economics as well as work terms or practical training periods. In the bachelor thesis, practical problems should be solved using current specialist literature.

International orientation

All students should be able to understand specialist literature written in English. Technical or Business English is a compulsory subject in all bachelor's study programmes. In addition, there may be objectives specific to the study programme; e.g. in Engineering or Business, the competence of being able to communicate in English in international companies, or in Social Sciences, the ability to communicate with migrants. All graduates must show intercultural competence. The students will have the opportunity to gain international experience through stays abroad (studies, internship, summer school, language course, final thesis, excursions) or through interaction with international students at the university. All bachelor's study programmes will create such opportunities or, if possible, mobility windows. The development of English-taught modules will increase attractiveness of Bielefeld UAS for international students.

Personality development

Personality development (independence, confidence, understanding cultural differences, social competence, reflection skills) is promoted by a wide array of activating learning formats, a good student/teaching staff ratio and offers for advice. In addition, personality development is enhanced by studies-accompanying qualification offers, projects, internships and practical training periods, participation in conferences and excursions as well as stays abroad and interaction with international students.