

HRK

How to deal best with student diversity. First results from the current project nexus

Dr. Peter A. Zervakis
Coordinator
Project nexus, HRK



VIII. International Workshop at University of Konstanz
15-17 October 2015, Konstanz

HRK Hochschulrektorenkonferenz
Projekt nexus
Übergänge gestalten, Studienerfolg verbessern

Contents

Introduction
Diversity-Management
HRK-Project nexus: First results
Conclusions



The German Rectors' Conference (HRK)

The German Rectors' Conference is the **voluntary association** of state and state-recognized universities and other HE institutions in Germany.

The HRK currently has **268 member institutions** which account for **94 per cent of matriculated students** in Germany. (about 2,7 mill. in 2015)



The German Rectors' Conference: Mission

- Provide member institutions with information and services
- Formulate and represent common positions on questions of higher education policy
- Advise political and administrative bodies of the Federation and the States (Laender)
- Provide the public with information
- Engage in international cooperation

Intro

The 16 German Länder being responsible for HE institutions (teaching but not research!)



5

HRK Hochschulrektorenkonferenz
Projekt nexus
Übergänge gestalten, Studienerfolg verbessern

Intro

Typology of Higher Education Institutions in Germany



6

Universities: Most universities are general universities offering a broad range of subjects. Universities are based upon the unity of research and teaching. Therefore Professors and lecturers teach and conduct their own research.

Technical Universities/ Institutes of Technology: They mostly focus on engineering and the natural sciences, but they offer medicine, economics and business administration. The nine largest technical universities form the TU9 Alliance.

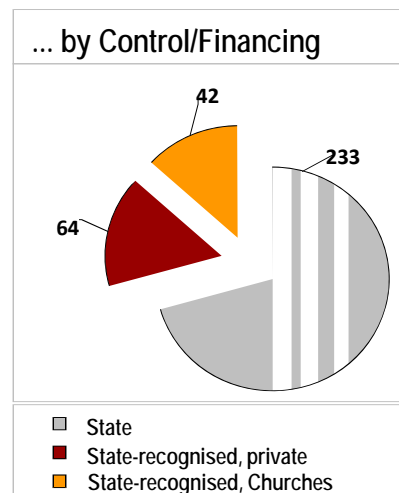
Universities of Applied Sciences: This type of HEI focuses on practice-oriented education based on scientific research. Universities of Applied sciences do not offer Medicine or Law. They do not have the right to award doctorates.

Schools of Art, Music and Film: 55 state recognised Schools of Art, Music and Film offer a wide range of education.

HRK Hochschulrektorenkonferenz
Projekt nexus
Übergänge gestalten, Studienerfolg verbessern

Higher Education Institutions in Germany

... by Type of Institution	
Universities	117
Universities of Applied Sciences	207
Schools of Art/ Schools of Music	55
Total	379



7

Various reform processes at national and international levels are changing German universities

1. On the Way to (Increasingly) Autonomous Higher Education Institutions
2. A Diversifying Higher Education Landscape
3. Supporting Excellence in Research and Teaching
4. Internationalising Higher Education Institutions

8

Diversity Management

National Need for Reforms in Germany

Deficiencies in the (traditional) German Higher Education system:

- Long study times and high dropout rates
- Lack of resources and funding
- Insufficient international compatibility of the study degrees
- No accepted system of quality assurance
- Problems with curricula structuring and orientation
- increasing students' numbers (mass education)
- Growing social and cultural diversity of students (with deficits in mathematics, languages)

9

HRK Hochschulrektorenkonferenz
Projekt NEXUS
Übergänge gestalten, Studienerfolg verbessern

Diversity Management

Proportions of selected groups within total number of students in Germany in 2012

Without standard University Entrance Qualification (HZB, Abitur et.al.)	1,6 %
In a part-time course	3,0 %
In a dual course	3,4 %
With Children	5,0 %
In a distance learning course	5,7 %
From overseas/worldwide	9,2 %
With health impairments	14 %
With completed vocational training	22 %
With migration background	23 %

Quelle: CHE, Hochschulbildung wird zum Normalfall, 2014, S. 6

10

HRK Hochschulrektorenkonferenz
Projekt NEXUS
Übergänge gestalten, Studienerfolg verbessern

Diversity Management

Main Features of the traditional German study model

- Oriented to the “normal” full-time student with attendancy duties
- No entrance exams but different leaving certificates from school
- Students have no practical or professional experience
- Optional students' working experience are limited to time periods outside lecturs
- Consecutive study models in BA/MA programmes
- Transition to the labour market makes sense only after a Master degree

Quelle: Anke Hartt, Universität Oldenburg, 9.7.2015, Folie 3

HRK Hochschulrektorenkonferenz
Projekt NEXUS
Übergänge gestalten, Studienerfolg verbessern

11

Diversity Management

Recommendations of the HRK (11.19.2013)

- Nationwide implementation of BA/MA degrees to answer increasing numbers of university entrance qualifications (6,1% / 1960 to 53,5% / 2012)
- Increasing student mobility and recognition of qualifications
- Diversity of students are an opportunity for adapting new learning patterns
- Flexible two-cycle programmes to create options for individual educational paths (not just accept inflexible consecutive BA/MA-Models)
- Organising for beginners new ways of orientation through study courses
- Strengthening the Bachelors' qualification for the Labour Market
- Gaining competences by teaching along learning outcomes
- Expand sense for 'Quality Culture' within Institutions

HRK Hochschulrektorenkonferenz
Projekt NEXUS
Übergänge gestalten, Studienerfolg verbessern

12

Diversity Management

New Challenges for Higher Education

- Diversity Management (DiM):
Cross sectional task in
 Personal (Continuing Education),
 Organisational (Part time and Long distance
 courses; Offers in Didactics), and Strategy
 development (Profile building, Marketing,
 Research)
- Institutional implementation of DiM in Higher
 Education structures through:
 - Gender commissioners
 - Vice-presidents
 - DiM Departments
 - Staff sections



HRK Hochschulrektorenkonferenz
 Projekt NEXUS
 Übergänge gestalten, Studienerfolg verbessern

13

Diversity Management

- University of Duisburg-Essen:
 Vice-president for Diversity Management
- University of Applied Sciences
 Cologne "Educational Diversity"
 (Project)
- Bremen University:
 Vice-principal for Internationality and Interculturality
- Folkwang University of Arts Essen:
 Project 'E-Portfoliomethode'
- University of Applied Sciences Brandenb
- RWTH Aachen Integration Teams – Hu
 Diversity Management
- Cologne University: Center for Diversity
- University of Applied Sciences Gelsenki



Abb. 1 : Kompetenzbereiche, die während
 des Studiums entwickelt werden sollen; eigene
 Grafik.



HRK Hochschulrektorenkonferenz
 Projekt NEXUS
 Übergänge gestalten, Studienerfolg verbessern

14

Diversity Management

Flexible types of study periods beyond full-time courses

- Part-time courses (rather unattractive as they extend the period of study)
- Open university courses (university not always a learning venue)
- Dual degree programmes ('Sandwich-study courses')
- Further graduate academic education within the concept of LLL
- Blended Learning as a mix of in-class and correspondence study courses ('virtual university')
- Personalized curricular contractually agreed after counselling and in relation to individual life circumstances

But:

- flexible study concepts are often part of a mix
- Division of learning venues through new media becomes blurred between in-class courses and E-Learning in office / at home

15

Quelle: Tino Bargel, AG Hochschulforschung, U Konstanz, 5.7.2015, S.6

HRK Hochschulrektorenkonferenz
Projekt NEXUS
Übergänge gestalten, Studienerfolg verbessern

Diversity Management

Implementing the Second Phase of Bologna (2011-2020)

- paying more attention to the social and cultural diversity of students / „widening participation“ in college
- strengthening flexibility and „studyability“ of curricula
- developing and improving (comparable) competence-driven qualification profiles
- focusing on learning outcomes and competences
- ensuring and enhancing transitions to the labour market
- improving teaching quality
- promoting (international) mobility of students
- lowering drop-out quota

16

HRK Hochschulrektorenkonferenz
Projekt NEXUS
Übergänge gestalten, Studienerfolg verbessern

Diversity Management

Topics in the Quality Pact for (better) Teaching (2011-20)

From 186 supported Institutions 253 projects deal with:

- Concepts of teaching and learning (203)
- Qualifying Staff (167)
- Enhancement of Staffing (151)
- Flexibility of structures in study programmes (150)
- Quality assurance (149)
- Transitions from school to university (125)
- Heterogeneity/Diversity (111)
- Employability/practical transitions into the labour market (109)
- Innovative study program models (96)
- Transition from professional to university education (38)

Quelle: Anke Hanft, Universität Oldenburg, 9.7.2015, Folie 4

HRK Hochschulrektorenkonferenz
Projekt NEXUS
Übergänge gestalten, Studienerfolg verbessern

17

Diversity Management

125 Projects transitions into study programmes

- Measures for better infrastructural and personal resources predominate (online- and e-Learning programmes, numbers of staffing, qualification of staff)
- For Students:
 - Self-Assessments
 - Counselling
 - Supplementary courses

But:

- only corrections of deficits in academic qualifications (approx. ¼ of students) are rather ineffective and only 'half-heartedly' implemented
- issues of project funding and resources remain insecure

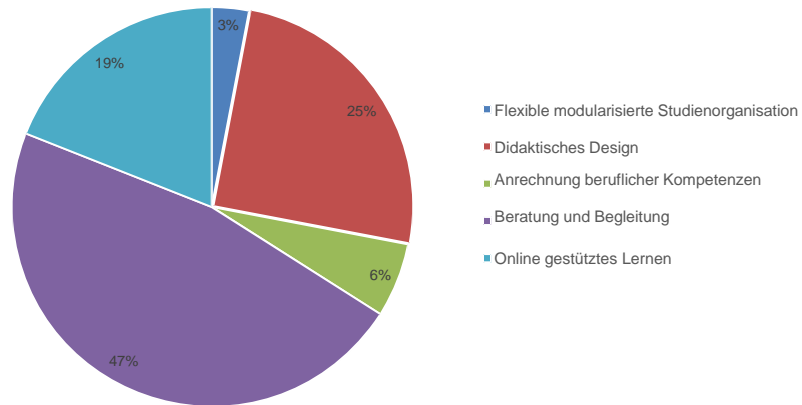
Quelle: Anke Hanft, Universität Oldenburg, 9.7.2015, Folie 5

HRK Hochschulrektorenkonferenz
Projekt NEXUS
Übergänge gestalten, Studienerfolg verbessern

18

Diversity Management

„Transitions" in the Quality Pact for Teaching (QPL)



Quelle: Anke Harß, Universität Oldenburg, 9.7.2015, Folie 6

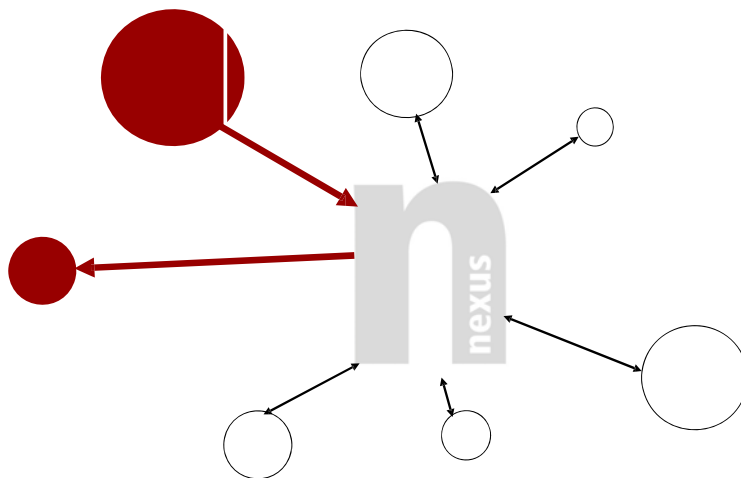
Category-based evaluation of financially supported Higher Education Institutions, data base: 35 HEIs

19

HRK Hochschulrektorenkonferenz
Projekt NEXUS
Übergänge gestalten, Studienerfolg verbessern

HRK-Project nexus 2014-2018 – First Results

The nexus project (2010-2018)

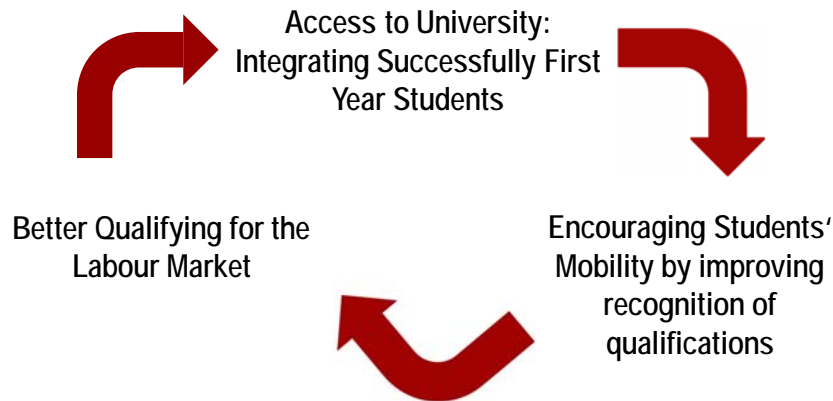


20

HRK Hochschulrektorenkonferenz
Projekt NEXUS
Übergänge gestalten, Studienerfolg verbessern

HRK-Project nexus 2014-2018 – First Results

Focussing at the Student Life Cycle (2014-2018) in “Forming Transitions, Promoting Student Success“

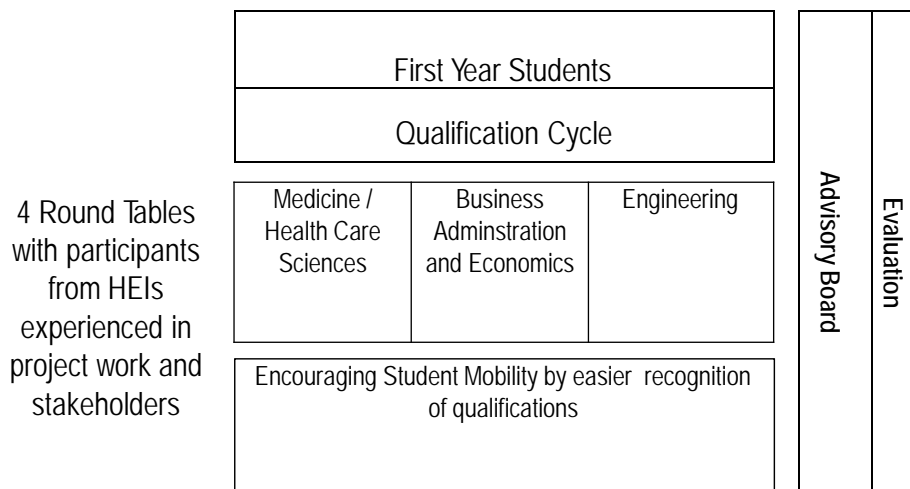


21

HRK Hochschulrektorenkonferenz
Projekt nexus
Übergänge gestalten, Studienerfolg verbessern

HRK-Project nexus 2014-2018 – First Results

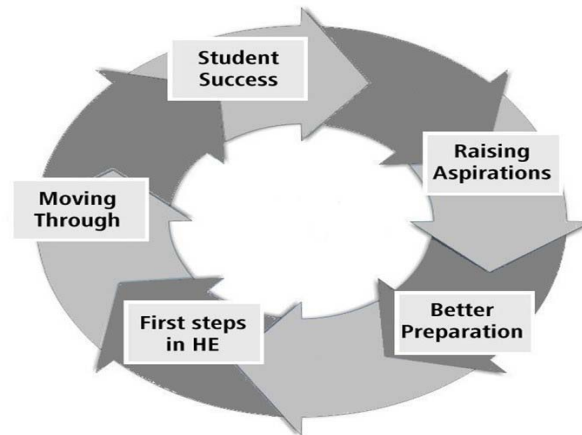
Organizing nexus II – “Forming Transitions, Promoting Student Success“ (2014-2018)



22

HRK Hochschulrektorenkonferenz
Projekt nexus
Übergänge gestalten, Studienerfolg verbessern

„Student Life Cycle“



Quelle: Anke Harff, Universität Oldenburg, 2015, Folie 7

HRK Hochschulrektorenkonferenz
Projekt NEXUS
Übergänge gestalten, Studienerfolg verbessern

Provisions for heterogeneous groups of Students (I)

- 1.Raising Aspirations:** such as programmes for stronger relations between Institutions and society ('Community Service', 'Learning through Responsibility'), HE marketing
- 2.Better Preparation:** Extensive counseling based on individual competences, evaluation of competences (such as assessments, portfolios) for quality-assured recognition of non-university skills
- 3.First Steps in HE:** Smooth introduction (creditable 'open courses'), promoting study abilities through learning centers, literature and math workshops, 'Service Learning' and 'community based' projects etc.
- 4.Moving Through:** Modularization with freely selectable, self-contained individual moduls, duration of study programmes should be arbitrary, graduation by accumulation of separately booked modules

Quelle: Anke Harff, Universität Oldenburg, 9.7.2015, Folie 8,11

HRK Hochschulrektorenkonferenz
Projekt NEXUS
Übergänge gestalten, Studienerfolg verbessern

Provisions for heterogeneous groups of Students (II)

4. Student Success by 'properly' understood Modularization

- Moduls as self-contained, didactically prepared teaching/learning units with classroom and online units
- Weekly, fortnightly or block courses, depending on students time budget, spread over the academic year and with free participation and free choice of different degrees of intensity and participation within respective periods instead of the traditional weekly semester
- Lecturers being didactically experienced learning facilitators and academic experts instead of being just providers of input/presenters
- Student mentors being students' guides instead of just being supervising tutors
- Consequent orientation towards the learning outcome instead of just passing on of learning contents

Quelle: Anke Harth, Universität Oldenburg, 9.7.2015, Folie 11.12

HRK Hochschulrektorenkonferenz
Projekt NEXUS
Übergänge gestalten, Studienerfolg verbessern

Provisions for heterogeneous groups of Students (III)

5. Success in study and learning processes

- Outcome oriented instead of classical examination methods (such as portfolios)
- Periodical feedback loops from lecturers
- Facilitating recognition of skills acquired outside the Institutions
- Transparent, quality assured recognition processes
- General options for credit transfer will be widely recognized

Quelle: Anke Harth, Universität Oldenburg, 9.7.2015, Folie 12

HRK Hochschulrektorenkonferenz
Projekt NEXUS
Übergänge gestalten, Studienerfolg verbessern

Conclusions

Various projects and initiatives indicate that

choice and use of suitable methods of teaching to meet the needs of heterogeneous groups of students can only be successful if

A. Teachers

- are made aware of the needs of their students (for example by obligatory workshops)
- gain professional assistance with the development and planning of courses and the preparation of teaching materials
- get special support with regard to their didactic skills and media competences
- challenges: interest, time, and value of following good practices of teaching

27

Conclusions

B. for heterogeneous groups of Students

- suitable bridging courses, counselling and 'guidance' are not just offered on a voluntarily basis but obligatory
- more flexible curricula are developed & implemented ('Studying in part time courses' and non-formal PT-courses)
- individual, competence-driven methods of teaching and learning get more didactic support
- a variety of competence-oriented examination methods is offered
- measures are laid out evidence-based and are evaluated regularly
- adequate long-time levels of staffing, time and financial resources are available (problem of restricted project funding and sustainability)

28

Conclusions

What can higher education institutions further contribute?

- As part of curricula, including practice-related elements (e.g. in a “practise phase”), teaching key competences and academic reflection of results with i.e. Service Learning projects, use positively students' diversity
- Engaging in dialogue and continuous exchange with companies and other labour market representatives on special needs in various professional fields
- Differentiating study course offers for diverse target groups (e.g. more flexible, informal part-time and dual degree programmes, E-learning)
- Advising students comprehensively on possible professions and career orientation as well as encouraging 'entrepreneurship' (e.g. simulation of business start-ups, competitions, etc.)

Conclusions

What can the labour market contribute?

- Helping students in school to get excited for studying, esp. in math, engineering, natural sciences and technology
- Providing stipends for secondary school graduates
- Providing demanding, well-advised internship positions in sufficient number and compatible with degree programmes
- Supporting participation in practice-oriented projects as integrated part of studies
- Supporting degree theses at all levels (BA, MA, Phd. Etc)
- Contributing to the (further) development of programmes in higher education institutions
- Recruiting visiting lecturers/instructors from the intersection of science and the market
- Enhancing “cross-over” of external experts into teaching and HE in general

Conclusions

What can policymakers contribute?

- Creating an appropriate framework of conditions (developing HE institutions' own profiles, encouraging constructive competition, transparent criteria for selecting students)
 - Fostering higher esteem of teaching in HE
 - Providing sufficient funding and resources in general for implementing more modern, skills/competence-oriented forms of teaching, examining and advising
 - Improving conditions for studying and learning
- See for further reading <http://www.inklusion-online.net/index.php/inklusion-online/article/view/222/224>

31

HRK Hochschulrektorenkonferenz
Projekt nexus
Übergänge gestalten, Studienerfolg verbessern

Many thanks for your attention!

Dr. Peter A. Zervakis
Coordinator
Projekt nexus, HRK



VIII. International Workshop at University of Konstanz
15-17 October 2015, Konstanz

HRK Hochschulrektorenkonferenz
Projekt nexus
Übergänge gestalten, Studienerfolg verbessern