

**Quality Assurance in Teaching and Learning – General**

Within the framework of university-wide quality management **the field of teaching and learning at the Georg-August-Universität Göttingen** is continually being evaluated. Interpretation of the results thereby obtained is an important task, firstly for appraisal and secondly for further development of the courses on offer. Using the various tools of Quality Assurance identifies problem areas at an early stage, allowing suitable measures for improvement to be taken.

For Quality Assurance of teaching and learning it is important that different points of view are taken into account in this:

**Diagram 1: Multidimensional Perspectives in Quality Assurance for Teaching and Learning**



### ***Graduate surveys***

In this context, **graduate surveys** are a tool which enables the inclusion of the output perspective.

The **first cross-faculty** graduate survey into studies and work carried out by the university took place in the **2008/09** winter semester. The 2007 exam cohort from all subject areas and both Bachelors and Masters degrees was asked to take part. The survey took place about one and a half years after graduation. The survey was incorporated into the national project on “Study conditions and professional success” coordinated by the International Centre for Higher Education Research (INCHER) in Kassel, Germany. Nationally about 40 universities and technical colleges took part in this project.

A second survey of the 2008 exam cohort took place in the 2009/10 winter semester. In order to use the results selectively for quality development of the current courses on offer we focused on graduates from the new Bachelors and Masters degree programmes. The ongoing State Examination degree programmes and the completed doctoral programmes were also included. At the Medical Faculty only graduates in medicine with a State Examination degree were surveyed.

**In the 2011 academic year** the graduate survey for the new Bachelors and Masters degree programmes, the continuing State Examination degree programmes and for completed doctorates is an established Quality Assurance tool at the Georg-August-Universität Göttingen.

### ***Goals***

Graduate surveys provide information on the following issues:

- How do the graduates evaluate their studies in retrospect?
- In which professional and occupational fields do the graduates work?
- What was their experience of the transition from studying to professional work?
- Does their professional activity fit with what they studied?
- How do graduates evaluate the acquisition of skills and their usefulness in a professional context?

Panel surveys enable consideration of the long-term professional relevance of the skills obtained during their studies.

### ***Procedure***

- Development/amendment of questionnaire coordinated by the Department of Academic Programme Development and Quality Management (SLL); decision on use of target-group-specific questionnaires (e.g. health professionals) by presidential board in coordination with faculties
- Determining target population in coordination with faculties (total population survey vs. random sampling)

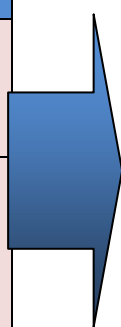
- SLL requests relevant data (address and personal details) from HISSOS
- SLL updates addresses provided by HISSOS using various sources (e.g. Göttingen alumni, residents' registration office, Deutsche Post)
- Coordination and preparation of invitations to participate in the survey
- SLL sends out invitations to participate in the survey, realises several waves of the survey, monitors responses; possibly mixed-mode procedure (hard copy and online invitations)
- Answering questions from graduates when necessary (e-mail/telephone)
- Recording and validating of data by SLL or cooperation partner
- SLL creates methodological report (implementation of documentation, response, representative nature of data obtained) and publishes on Internet site
- Creation of aggregate analyses by SLL or cooperation partner
- SLL sends a summarised report to survey participants
- SLL feeds back results to faculties through office of the Dean of Studies, internal faculty processing and dissemination through office of the Dean of Studies
- SLL feeds back results to central committees and central institutions
- Analysis and consulting on results primarily in presidential board and Central Committee of Teaching and Learning (ZKLS), coordination of process by SLL

**Cycle**

Surveying graduates in the new Bachelors and Masters degree programmes, the ongoing State Examination degree programmes and completed doctorates will take place each year. A **panel survey** is taking place for the first time in 2011: the graduates will be surveyed at different points following graduation (1 year and 3-4 years after graduation). The 2007 exam cohort who were surveyed in 2008 will be surveyed again in October 2011.

**Diagram 2: Graduate survey concept**

	2008/09 WS	2009/10 WS	2010/11 WS	2011/12 WS	2012/13 WS
<b>Initial survey 1.5 years after graduation</b>	2007 Exam Cohort	2008 Exam Cohort	2009 Exam Cohort	2010 Exam Cohort	2011 Exam Cohort
<b>Follow-up survey 3-4 years after graduation</b>				2007 Exam Cohort	2008 Exam Cohort



### ***Survey tools***

The University of Göttingen uses a scientifically-based survey tool, the Kassel Graduate Survey. Participation of more than 50 universities in the INCHER cooperation project means that not only is it possible to rank our own degree programmes [internally] but also by means of a core questionnaire to compare them with other universities. The possibility of integrating questions specific to a university and subject ensures that account can be taken of both the various disciplinary cultures of the faculties and the profile of the university as a whole: currently four different subject-specific questionnaire variants are being used. A qualitative method (qualitative interview) to evaluate very small degree programmes is under discussion.

### ***Analysis and use of results***

The Department for Academic Programme Development and Quality Management (SLL) creates comparative reports covering the university as a whole for graduates and central committees.

Furthermore it provides the offices of the Deans of Studies with aggregated data in a password-protected area (access via <http://www.uni-goettingen.de/de/80227.html>). SLL's quality management division is available if necessary to provide advice on interpretation of specialist data.

Basically, the results can benefit different areas of university development and contribute to the improvement of the faculties' offerings. Take for example the following fields:

- Evidence from graduate surveys and of the appropriation of earnings must be provided for degree programmes to obtain accreditation or reaccreditation.
- Analysis of graduates' assessments enables targeted further development of courses as regards acquisition of key competencies.
- Results on the progress of studies and work can provide the student advisory service and in particular the vocational advisory service with stimulus for further development of their services.
- For the faculties the results offer the possibility of adapting the vision of the acquisition of skills and the professional applications of the courses they have on offer to the practical experiences of their graduates.
- Results from work with alumni can provide information on the loyalty of graduates to the faculty or degree programme.

Work is currently underway on procedures for systematic feedback of the survey results into the further development of teaching and learning.

### ***Materials***

The following materials can be found at <http://www.uni-goettingen.de/de/80227.html>:

- Methodological reports with notes on implementation, response and the representative nature of the data obtained

- Sample questionnaire

***Responsible Institution***

Department for Academic Programme Development and Quality Management (SLL)

***Cooperating Institution***

Internationales Zentrum für Hochschulforschung (INCHER) Kassel [International Centre for Higher Education Research]

***Participants***

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