

Quality Report 2014

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I. Quality Development and Assurance Goals

The goal of the Quality Development and Quality Assurance System is to implement the Mission Statement of the University in its individual areas of activity, and to provide practical instruments for the agreement, measurement and improvement of quality.

Quality management at Karlshochschule entails the regular and systematic surveying, processing and publishing of data on the achievement of quality goals, using quantitative and qualitative methods. This data should result in strategic decisions to maintain or improve quality.

The quality development and assurance process encompasses the following steps:

- Goal definition
- Identification of methods
- Indicators of target achievement
- Evaluation (internal and external)
- Dealing with the results

The overriding objectives of the university are listed in its Mission Statement and its strategy document (STEP - Structure and Development Plan). Every year the university committees take these and devise tangible objectives for that year. Specific occasions when this occurs are the closed-session meetings of the Presidential Board and the professors at the start of each year. The objectives then become topics for discussion in the Senate, University Council and Faculty Council, subsequently being fed into the target agreement process.

This then includes a target agreement interview between each member of staff and their superior. The Deans conduct the target agreement interview with the professors in their faculty, the appropriate members of the Presidential Board conduct them with the directors of the service offices they are responsible for, and these conduct them with their staff. In preparation for these target agreement interviews, each service office also has an internal meeting. The focus of the interview is on the employee's satisfaction with his or her work situation, an evaluation of target achievement, clarification, identification and agreement on targets for the next period, an agreement on indicators for measurement of success, the dates when the respective targets should be reached, development of specific steps toward target achievement, and the agreement of any supporting measures. A written record is made of the targets, indicators, dates, steps and supporting measures.

The conditions framing the activities of the university and its staff are formed by the quality development and quality assurance system together with the Karlshochschule principles (results orientation, scholarship, customer satisfaction, goal-oriented management, continuous learning, and social responsibility).

This report covers the year 2014, documenting and presenting that period's most important results and implementations.



II. Quality Goals: Focal Areas 2014 (Plan)

The two aspects dominating the year in 2014 were the successful re-accreditation of the eight Bachelor degree programs and, at the same time, undergoing the procedure of the system accreditation which should result in the award of the Accreditation Council seal of quality when completed. The following additional priorities were also in place:

1. Didactics and Instruction

In order to guarantee a continuing high standard among our instructors, Karlshochschule has already introduced efficient instruments which take effect if the desired and agreed quality of performance is not achieved. Since it is important to ensure that even during the process of attracting new instructors the right decisions are already made, in 2014 we took a close look at this process and optimised it, including all the corresponding documentation.

2. Profiling Research

As a university with an international orientation, research is also embedded in an international framework. In 2013, Karlshochschule successfully submitted an application for inclusion in the European research project DIVERSE starting in December 2013.

After the conferences in recent years that formed the focal areas for both faculties, the linking conference “ReThinking Management” was scheduled for 2014.

3. Recruiting Policy

Following the successful appointment of the new Professor for Strategic Management in 2013, in 2014 the search was on for new incumbents for the Professor of Marketing, Branding and Consumer Culture as well as the new Professor of Critical Management and Sustainable Development.

4. Internationalisation

A range of goals were pursued regarding internationalisation which together have an impact on quality assurance and student satisfaction:

- i. Increase the proportion of exchange placements among the outgoing students 2014/2015 to at least 75%.
- ii. Availability of exchange placements for the total cohort and all degree programs (WS 2015/2016).

- iii. Increase of process quality by introducing the university management system in the International Office.
- iv. Successful organisation of Summer Academies in Istanbul and Karlsruhe

5. Employee Satisfaction

A particularly relevant issue at Karlshochschule International University is that of employee satisfaction. As described in many studies, satisfied and motivated staff create a healthy company – and that is equally valid at our university. Clarity is now needed on the issue of how employees feel and which measures can be taken to increase satisfaction.

6. Focus on Quality and Service

The particular context of a private university means that an impeccable contact with students is of great importance; this applies to their role as customers, too. This is reflected in the focus on quality and service at Karlshochschule International University. In the period under review, the main focus was on transparency in quality management and the continued implementation of the university management system.



III. Implementation 2014 (Do)

1. Didactics and Instruction

The basis of quality in teaching is to be found in the events which students and instructors experience together. At Karlshochschule 'experience' is not just a nice jargon word: it is the reality lived out every day. This places particular demands on the instructors so they receive specific support: the Instructor Manual provides the necessary theory and events such as Instructors Day provide an opportunity for mutual support among colleagues.

The Instructor Manual is regularly updated. In 2014 a new chapter was added, on "Didactics". This fundamental addition was coordinated by a new member of staff who was appointed in July 2014 to be responsible for university didactics. She helped to focus on the Lern-ZIMMER method, which is of prime importance for the didactics in place at Karlshochschule. This included incorporating a revised version of the method in the Instructor Manual and presenting and discussing it at the Instructors Day on September 20, 2014, as well as during a compulsory didactic training for new instructors on September 27. Additionally, all new instructors are expected to draft a Lern-ZIMMER concept for their own teaching sessions. The staff member in charge of didactics was available to advise them on this. During the 2014/15 winter semester, "Method Meetups" [*Methodenstammtisch*] were hosted, where new instructors could meet and share their experiences of teaching at Karlshochschule. The Lern-ZIMMER method will continue to be implemented systematically in the coming year.

With regards to recruiting new instructors, potential for optimisation during the process was identified and corresponding measures taken. For example, a new structure and organisation was put in place for the candidates' interviews with the respective representatives of the university, to ensure that there is now a meaningful progression, with all the necessary information provided in time for each subsequent interview. This enables an optimal assessment of the candidate, including their teaching qualifications and suitability for a post at Karlshochschule. The results are entered into a staff information form, which is accessible in time for each interview. This measure improves both the process of assessment and its documentation. As soon as the measure was introduced, clear improvements could be detected in the assessment of the candidates. It awaits to be seen whether this is then reflected in the first evaluations of these new staff members during the coming semesters.

2. Profiling Research

The year 2013 saw the start of funding for the EU-supported project DIVERSE. “The main aim of the project is to develop an innovative and effective model for integrating migrants from third countries (non-EU-citizens). This development will take place by adapting and improving the practice of multi-stakeholders concerned with the estimation and assessment of the potentials of these migrants for the host country – in regard to both social and economical aspects. One particular priority is the recognition of third country nationals’ non-formal competencies and the relational connection between them and the institutions in the context of migration and integration, as well as organisations’ diversity management practices and approaches. The intended results of the project include proposals for the public and for governments to increase civil participation.”¹ In this way, Karlshochschule is enhancing the expectations it has of its own character and actions regarding its approach to civil society and to its own internationalisation. An additional member of staff had already been taken on in 2013 to provide scientific and organisational support for the project and conduct general research coordination.

Another enhancement of the university’s profile occurred by hosting the international conference “ReThinking Management 2014: The Impact of Cultural Turn”, which brought together the focal areas of both faculties. Karlshochschule believes the term ‘cultural turns’ should today be understood from a diverse totality, as used by Bachmann-Medick (2010). If we follow the general orientation of social sciences with regard to culturally relevant topics, the plural ‘cultural turns’ represents current movements or re-orientations which intersect the various cultural sciences and extend beyond them. Topics and concepts such as performance, materiality, embodiment, space, mediality, narrativity and meaning creation, along with translation, interculturality and transculturality, have all moved ever more strongly into the foreground in recent decades. This conference took as its core thought the idea that management theory cannot be understood as a sub-discipline of economic sciences, but rather as a field between and beyond disciplines – with a decidedly cultural perspective. The core issues of the conference were the relevance of various models with their potential in and influence on both management theory and management practice.”²

¹ Text from the Karlshochschule website

² Text from the Karlshochschule website

3. Recruiting Policy

The incumbent Professor for Strategic Management, Prof. Dr. Dirk Nicolas Wagner, has been teaching at Karlshochschule since September 2013 and is actively engaged in networking Karlshochschule with external partners to benefit both the university itself and its students. Additionally, he is available whenever needed to advise the university's Service Offices.



Similarly high expectations awaited the candidates applying for the vacant posts of Professor for Marketing, Branding and Consumer Care and Professor for Critical Management and Sustainable Development.



The new appointee to the post of Professor for Marketing, Branding and Consumer Care is Prof. Dr. Björn Bohnenkamp, who started teaching at our university on April 1, 2014. In the course of the year he took over leadership of the Bachelor degree program International Marketing. His own teaching spans from first-semester Bachelor courses to the Master level.

In addition to marketing expertise, Björn Bohnenkamp also brings with him experience in the media field, so synergies with the professorship in Media Management can be expected.

As of September 1, 2014, Prof. Dr. André Reichel became Professor for Critical Management and Sustainable Development. Upon commencement of duties, he also became Head of the International Energy Management Bachelor degree program. He will also assume responsibility for the Sustainability and Urban Development specialisation in the Master program.



Prof. Dr. Reichel enriches our university with his experience in the field of sustainability research and as an expert assessor for national and European processes in this field.

4. Internationalisation

Almost all the goals set in II.4 were achieved. The proportion of exchange placements (Goal i) could actually be increased to 88.5%. The completion of the new exchange agreement led to the number of available exchange places (Goal ii) rising further to a total of 163 (as of October 2014). We welcomed the following new partner institutions:

- Chile: Universidad Vina del Mar
- Finland: HUMAK University of Applied Sciences
- Greece: University of Economics and Business
- UK: Coventry University
- Japan: Kansai Gaidai University and Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University
- Mexico: Tecnológico de Monterrey
- Norway: Lillehammer University College
- Portugal: Catholic University of Portugal
- Spain: Pompeu Fabra University and Universidad Autònoma de Barcelona
- United Arab Emirates: The Emirates Academy of Hospitality Management, Dubai

There is now more choice available to the degree programs Arts and Cultural Management and Trade Fair, Conference and Event Management (as of 2014 cohort: International Event Management). It is relatively difficult to find partners with a suitable range of courses for these programs because, in international comparison, they have a very specific combination of specialist and mandatory modules.

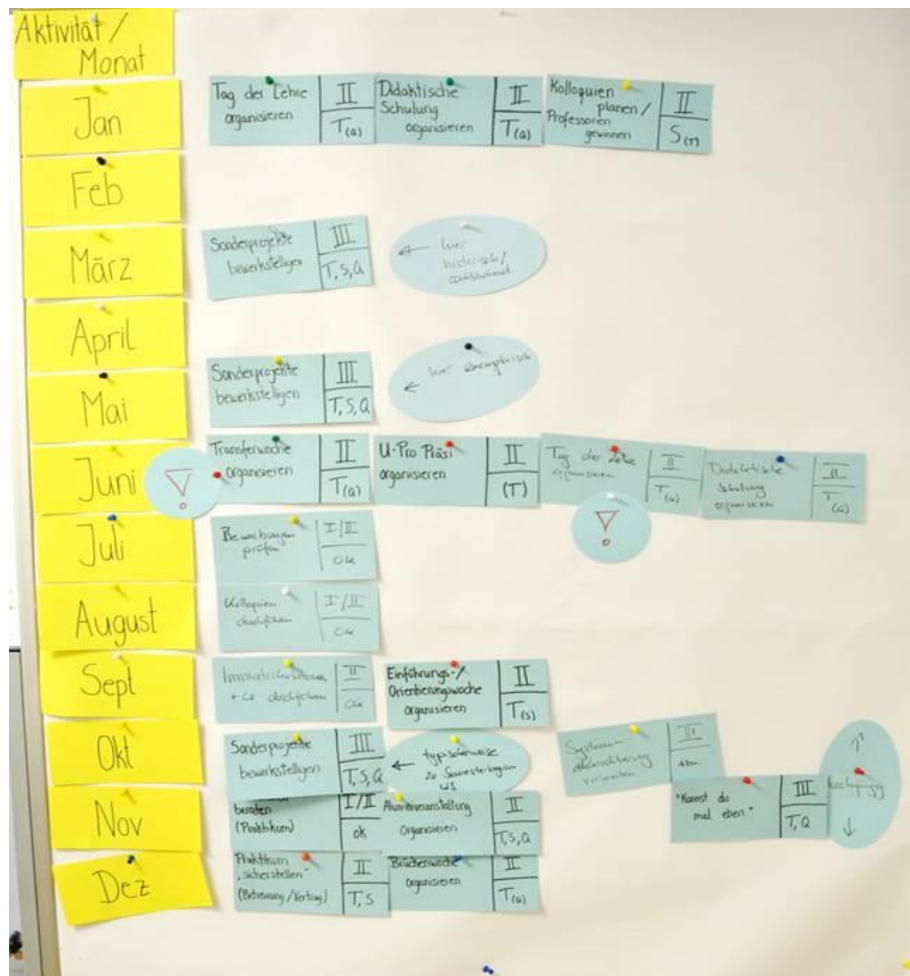
Both Summer Academies (Goal iv) in the summer of 2014 were carried out successfully. The post-event briefings with the cooperation partners AFS and Istanbul Kültür University identified further measures for improvement which will be put in place for 2015. (Award of ECTS credits only to matriculated students, group allocation in Istanbul based on prior knowledge into one beginner and one advanced track, information on test modalities to be available on the website and the advance provision of sample tests with solutions.) Additionally, as in previous years there was a two-week Winter Session on Strategic Management for Master students from ESC Rennes as well as an 'Emerald Forest' project week for students at Karlshochschule and partner universities. The latter is organised as an international event and the number of international students and coaches actually increased this year, enhancing the international and intercultural dimension of this simulation. Furthermore, support for the students could be intensified and qualitatively improved due to the participation of an experienced coach from the Tallinn University of Technology and student coaches who had taken part in 'Emerald Forest' in 2013.

5. Employee Satisfaction

Dissatisfaction could be felt during discussions with staff and from the general staff atmosphere in 2014 but initially no clear cause for this could be identified. In a Services meeting on April 11/12, 2014, it became clear that staff were feeling overworked, which did not simply refer to there being too many individual tasks to complete but rather that there were additional 'disturbances' from third parties making it difficult to work in a focussed way.

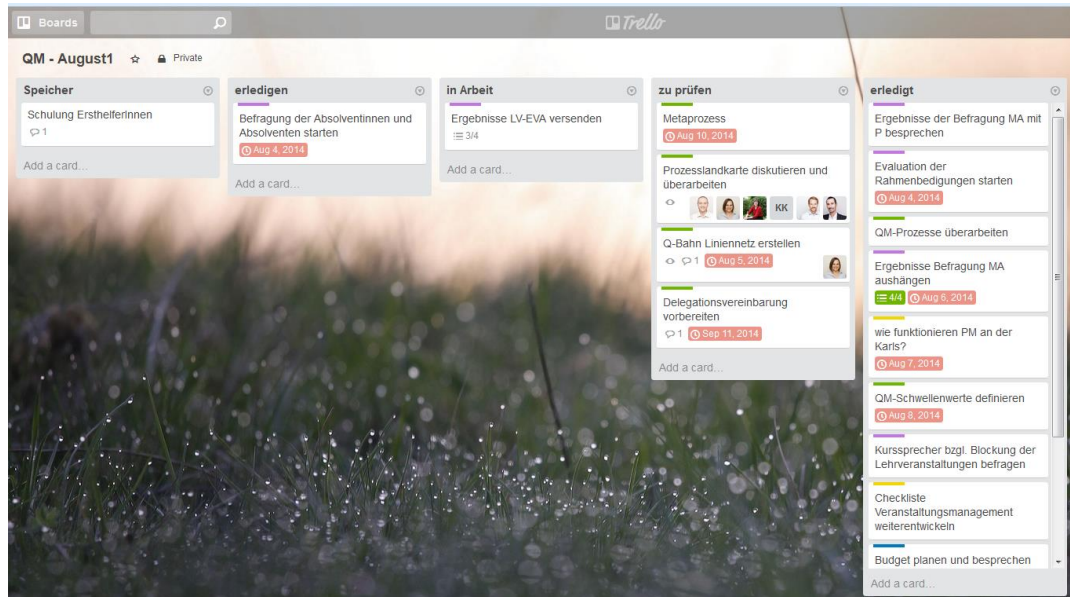


A management strategy idea was subsequently put forward by Prof. Dr. Dirk Wagner during the meeting of the heads of the university services on June 4, 2014: the use of ‘management calendars’. Entries in these calendars record which tasks are repeated at which times and can reveal potential for bring forward some (e.g. planning tasks) from periods of high activity to periods when less is due. The management calendars cannot fully portray everyday business – they are only used to record repeating tasks or (plannable) projects. Each department organises a management calendar – the following illustration portrays an example from Customer Services.



In the next step, 'sprintboards' are compiled to initially focus on one month: individual main topics are now divided into more details and, where appropriate, tasks are assigned to individual staff members. The sprintboard offers a further possibility: Kanban cards can be used to change the status of a task needing to be performed. This then allows anyone to see who is dealing with a particular matter and what stage it has reached. A further expansion of this method is the use of interfaces to other departments to avoid apparently 'spontaneous' calls for action which could in fact be foreseen and worked on in advance. Since these tools were initially only presented to the directors of the Service Offices, it was at their discretion when they presented them to their department as a way of assisting their staff's work: the nature of these tools with their frequent use and discussion means they require an appropriate explanation for all employees and departments involved. One issue which became clear was the lack of suitable wall space in some departments for the positioning of a sprintboard, so the free online tool Trello was installed, enabling departments to work together with all employees. It also offers the feature of assigning deadlines and checklists to the tasks. Trello is available as an app for smartphones and tablets, which means the sprintboards are also

readily accessible from every meeting of the service office directors. The following figure is an example screenshot from a 2-week sprintboard in Quality Management.



Since the sprintboards are discussed regularly both within a department and between the service office directors, a transparency in the ways of working soon arises. The next employee survey will include questions to assess the usage and uses of sprintboards.

6. Focus on Quality and Service

The revision of the feedback box system continued in 2014. Previously, the feedback slips and statements were hung up without pre-sorting. In 2014 the clarity of the Kanban system was introduced to the feedback wall removing any ambiguity regarding whether initial steps towards a solution have already begun and which solutions have been found for which issues. In another change to previous years, the university QM unit was responsible for contacting the areas affected by an issue described on the cards, requesting a statement and suggestions for a solution. It also kept the Presidential Board informed of the contents and status of the feedback cards. The Presidential Board considered the status of the cards during its meetings, although its function is only that of monitoring.

This feedback wall will continue to be improved until the most suitable solution for Karlsruhochschule is found, with further optimisation measures planned for 2015.

A range of working groups were already formed in 2012 and 2013 and these continued their work in 2014. Most significantly here, there was a focus on the "Processes" working group with intensive activities during the reporting period. As well as drafting, revising and optimising the descriptions for all clearly defined processes at Karlsruhochschule, a metaprozess was

defined with the aim of preventing an excess of processes at the university. The background to this restriction is the observation that an excessive process-orientation at Karlshochschule would in fact be contrary to and even harm the university philosophy. So the university's own character necessitates the goal of defining and clearly recording as many processes as necessary to be balanced by one of leaving enough room for creativity and innovation – factors which need to be enhanced and supported at Karlshochschule. With this in mind, the processes which have already been described in the Quality Manual are also being consolidated and in the coming year they will be checked again and optimised where necessary. November 16, 2015, has been declared Process Day, when all involved will come together to revise the processes.

Another working group focussed on the university management system. In the previous reporting period, there were still technical issues with student evaluation of teaching using the university management system but in the winter semester this could be introduced with a delay of two weeks. Minor technical problems continued to be observed in the evaluation system but these will be resolved. During the coming semesters, the focus will be on punctual evaluation, result export and result presentation.

Further potential to increase process quality by gradually introducing the university management system can also be seen in the International Office (see II.4 Goal iii). In this regard, in early 2014 the whole application process for exchange and guest students will be transferred to an online procedure. Applicant data will be recorded directly into the database, reducing the time and administrative effort involved. Further packages of the university management system will be introduced from 2015, including: the import of data on partner universities; the presentation of application processing as well as the check-in and check-out of the incomings; the preparation of standard letters and certificates for incoming and outgoing students; presentation of assignment and application processes for outgoings, including selection of scholarships; and the provision of special key indicators and reporting for the International Office.



IV. Internal Evaluations (Check)

1. Student Evaluations of Seminars and Lectures

A separate software was still used for the summer semester evaluation of seminars and lectures but by the WS 2014/15 the evaluation could be performed within the university management system. Additionally, shorter questionnaires were in use in the winter semester – this was introduced in response to student wishes. The shorter questionnaire was initially only in use for instructors who were already teaching at Karlshochschule with the previous questionnaire being retained for new teaching staff; this was also used for staff who were teaching modules jointly with new colleagues. In order to increase participation rates in the winter semester, staff from the service offices attended the seminars and lectures so the students could take that opportunity to directly fill in the questionnaires online. This helped increase participation rates to 90% or more.

The results of the student evaluation of seminars and lectures are presented in the following table (only the items in the short questionnaire are included). A year-on-year comparison does not make sense here since too few data from the previous period are available. Future participation rates will be high enough to ensure meaningful comparability of the data.

	IB	IEM	IEVM	IMA	IMK	IMM	ITM	KKM
Insgesamt bewerte ich das Modul	2,3 ± 0,9	2,3 ± 0,7	2,4 ± 0,7	2,3 ± 0,8	2,5 ± 0,5	2,3 ± 0,7	2,3 ± 0,5	2,4 ± 0,7
Ich empfinde den von mir für diese Veranstaltung zu erbringenden Arbeitsaufwand (Vor- und Nachbereitung) als angemessen.	2,1 ± 0,4	2,2 ± 0,3	2,2 ± 0,3	2,3 ± 0,3	2,2 ± 0,3	2,4 ± 0,4	2,2 ± 0,2	2,3 ± 0,4
Ich habe die Lernziele der Lehrveranstaltung erreicht.	2,6 ± 0,6	2,5 ± 0,6	2,5 ± 0,5	2,5 ± 0,5	2,8 ± 0,5	2,6 ± 0,7	2,7 ± 0,8	2,8 ± 0,5
Das fachliche Niveau der Veranstaltung empfinde ich als angemessen.	2,2 ± 0,8	2,0 ± 0,7	1,9 ± 0,6	2,2 ± 0,7	2,2 ± 0,4	2,1 ± 0,6	2,1 ± 0,5	2,1 ± 0,7
Welche Schulnote würden Sie der „Lehrleistung“ des Lehrenden geben?	2,2 ± 1,0	2,4 ± 0,8	2,1 ± 0,8	2,3 ± 0,9	2,3 ± 0,6	2,2 ± 0,9	2,2 ± 0,6	2,3 ± 0,8
Lehrveranstaltungen, die weiterzuempfehlen sind	80,8%	80,2%	84,2%	77,7%	75,9%	71,4%	82,8%	83,1%
Workload	4,6 ± 3,3 h Min: 0 h Max: 20 h	3,0 ± 2,1 h Min: 0 h Max: 12 h	3,6 ± 2,2 h Min: 0 h Max: 10 h	2,8 ± 2,3 h Min: 0 h Max: 16 h	2,7 ± 2,0 h Min: 0 h Max: 9 h	2,6 ± 2,2 h Min: 0 h Max: 13 h	3,5 ± 2,4 h Min: 0 h Max: 13 h	3,2 ± 1,9 h Min: 0 h Max: 10 h

The values are similar for all degree programs. Common to them all is the fact that the poorest rating is achieved for the item “I achieved the learning objectives of the seminar/lecture”. Focus will be placed on this aspect during the coming period and an additional briefing with

the instructors will take place to ensure the students can be made more aware of the learning objectives. The issue of whether or not the objectives have been reached will also be specifically considered during the seminar or lecture.

The workload appears to be low. This has to be viewed in the context of the timing: the survey was carried out mid-semester. Even if the didactic design and learning arrangement at Karlshochschule are intended to spread the workload evenly, it appears to be the case that the majority of the students still tend to concentrate more intensively on the course contents just before the exams. Discussions with the students have also confirmed that the workload increases towards the end of the seminar period.

The members of the Quality Committee decided to modify the shorter questionnaire by adding some items to ensure that all of the key issues in the extensive questionnaire are covered by at least one question. This revised questionnaire will be used in the 2015 summer semester for everyone.

2. Survey of First-Semester Students

For the first time, the survey of first-semester students addressed the issue of satisfaction with the application procedure, which is very important to Karlshochschule. QM is also interested in the entrance quality of new students and their expectations regarding their degree program and Karlshochschule.

In total, 153 new students took part in the survey. Only 122 replied to the question on student status: 70% were (international) students enrolled for a complete degree program at Karlshochschule and 30% were exchange students.

The most significant factors behind their choice of university were: international orientation ("internationality", 93%), the languages on offer (87%) and the courses on offer (85%). This makes it very clear why new students select Karlshochschule and the differences they expect here compared to other universities – since 84% of responders indicated they had further universities they could have chosen. So Karlshochschule needs to live up to these expectations and continue to place a particular priority on these key issues.

The factors "Practical approach" (91%), "Course contents" (82%) and "Prospects for the future" (82%) are the most important reasons behind the selection of degree course for new students. A comparably minor role is played here by the short program length (25%) or the reputation of the professors (37%).

The question about the application process, which was included for the first time, was broken down into the following sub-questions:

- Transparency
- Atmosphere
- Processing time for application documents
- Availability of contact partners for queries
- Contents of oral interview
- Individual support
- Schedule of interview day
- Information provision regarding start of study

The following aspects were generally rated as “very good” or ‘good’: Transparency (80%), Atmosphere (87%), Processing time for application documents (83%), Availability of contact partners for queries (86%) and Individual support (83%). Here Karlshochschule’s strengths clearly show through in the application process. For the aspects ‘Contents of oral interview’ (68%) and ‘Schedule of interview day’ (59%) there are obviously still improvements to be made by Karlshochschule. There are also opportunities to develop the aspect of ‘Information provision regarding start of study’ (61%), which 12% of those surveyed even rated as ‘poor’ or ‘very poor’.

New students brought good school grades with them to Karlshochschule International University: on average the overall grade was 2.4, with a range from 1.3 to 3.4. Two clear peaks were visible at 1.9/2.0 and 2.6/2.7. These entrance qualifications and the interviews give every reason to hope that these new students will successfully graduate from Karlshochschule.

This survey of first-semester students is conducted once every year and in 2015 will again take place during the Orientation Week.

3. Student Evaluation of General Conditions

General conditions also have an impact on whether students complete their degree programs successfully. The following results of the student evaluation investigate these general conditions. The students' satisfaction with individual Service Offices was measured in regard to a selection of parameters:

- Service in general
- Opening / Office hours
- Availability of staff
- Willingness to help of staff
- Service focus of staff
- Expertise of staff

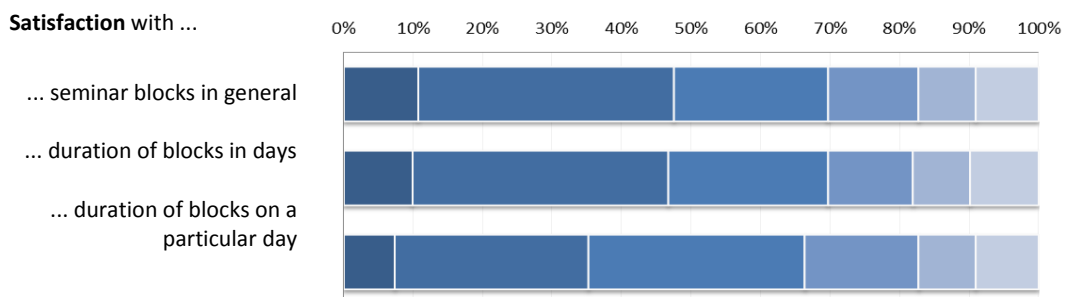
In spite of repeated invitations and reminders, only 30% of students actually took part in the survey. Of these, 71% indicated they were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the service in general across all service offices, with the general service at the 'Service Desk' achieving a rating (97%) well above the average. In fact, for the Service Desk all parameters were rated above 90% satisfaction; the willingness to help of the staff here was rated as satisfactory by 99% of responders. For this parameter, the next-placed service offices after the Service Desk were the Student Service (97%) and then the Library and International Office (both 95%).

For the Library, the opening hours were mentioned by many students in the open answers on the survey as having potential to be improved. This is a challenge which Karlshochschule will have to face up to in the coming year. Many students use the library for more than just access to important reference works: it is an inspiring place to carry out their academic work. For this reason, Karlshochschule would like to make the facility available to its students 24 hours a day since this forms part of the university's ambition to provide the service its students need to enjoy their studies and complete them successfully.

In the survey of first-semester students, responders positively rated the time taken to deal with their application documents. If this is taken as the initial setting of standards, then during the course of their studies, students should continue to have their enquiries to specific service offices dealt with just as quickly. On average, 82% of the students were satisfied or very satisfied with the time taken to deal with their enquiries. Here, the Service Desk was also clearly above average with a rating of 94%. A significantly lower rating was accorded to the Corporate Career Service (56%). Obviously a thorough investigation of this service office is needed since some students reported that they never received an answer.

In the summer semester, seminars and lectures could be offered as a block for the first time, in order to allow teaching staff to assign more of their time to continuing professional devel-

opment. Even during the semester itself, submissions to feedback boxes and personal conversations with students were demonstrating a generally unsatisfactory reaction to this measure. As a consequence, the quality management representative included questions on the block-timing of seminars in the survey on general conditions. Students responding to the survey had mixed responses to the organisation of lectures and seminars in blocks; the extremely negative impression gained during the semester was not reflected in the survey responses. Some 48% of the students were satisfied or completely satisfied with the seminar blocks, whereas 35% were dissatisfied or completely dissatisfied (Figure, bar 1). As the Figure shows, a similar picture can be seen when looking at the question designed to measure satisfaction in relation to the duration of a block in days (bar 2). The picture then reverses in the answers to the question on the duration of a block on a particular day. Here only 35% are satisfied or completely satisfied, and 48% dissatisfied or completely dissatisfied (bar 3).



Based on these somewhat ambiguous responses and taking particular account of the negative attitude towards seminar blocks prevailing among students during the semester, this option of organising lectures and seminars into blocks has only been retained for international instructors.

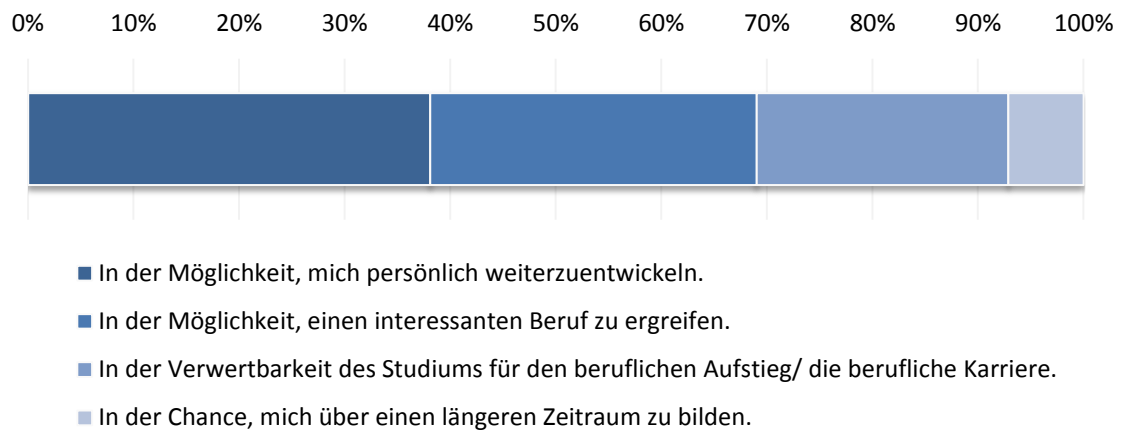
Although the results have only been presented very concisely here, it can clearly be recognised that Karlshochschule takes its service-based approach very seriously. The ratings and specific consideration of the responses to the open questions in the survey have led to and will lead to measures being implemented to optimise the relevant aspects and amend them for the benefit of the students. The next survey, planned for June/July 2015, will assess whether these measures achieve what they are intended to achieve.

4. Survey of Graduates

The survey for this reporting period was directed at the 130 students who graduated in 2013, but only 42 took part, which corresponds to a participation rate of 32%. The intention is to ensure that this is raised to and kept at over 60% in future reporting periods.

The questionnaire for the survey of graduates was also revised this year. It was extended with questions designed to reveal whether the graduates found employment corresponding to the main subjects they studied and whether the contents of their degree program delivered the requisite knowledge for their positions.

To start with, it can be seen that students took an average of 6.5 semesters to complete their studies at Karlshochschule, which corresponds to expectations since the responders were exclusively Bachelor program graduates. This result is also a confirmation that the curricula are composed in a way which makes sense and can be completed in the standard period of study. Asked about the value of their studies, the most popular answer was the opportunity to develop as an individual (38%).

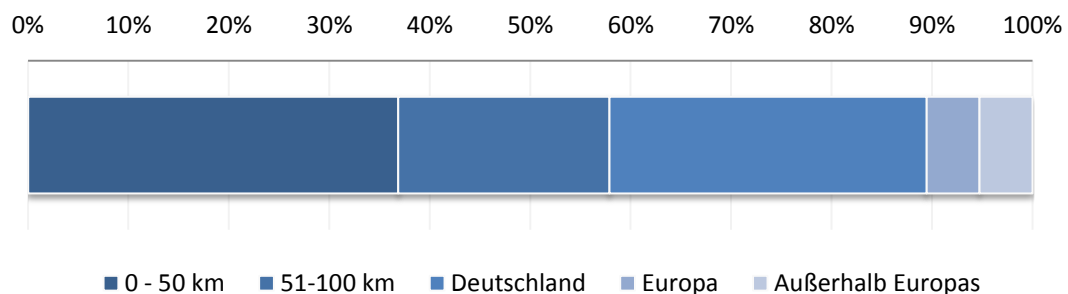


Half of the 42 responders decided to continue studying and half decided to enter the labour market. All of those who decided to pursue an academic path chose a Master degree program: none of them chose to pursue a second Bachelor. Three of the graduates stayed on at Karlshochschule for their Master, with others going on to the following institutions of higher education (where the specific choice was indicated):

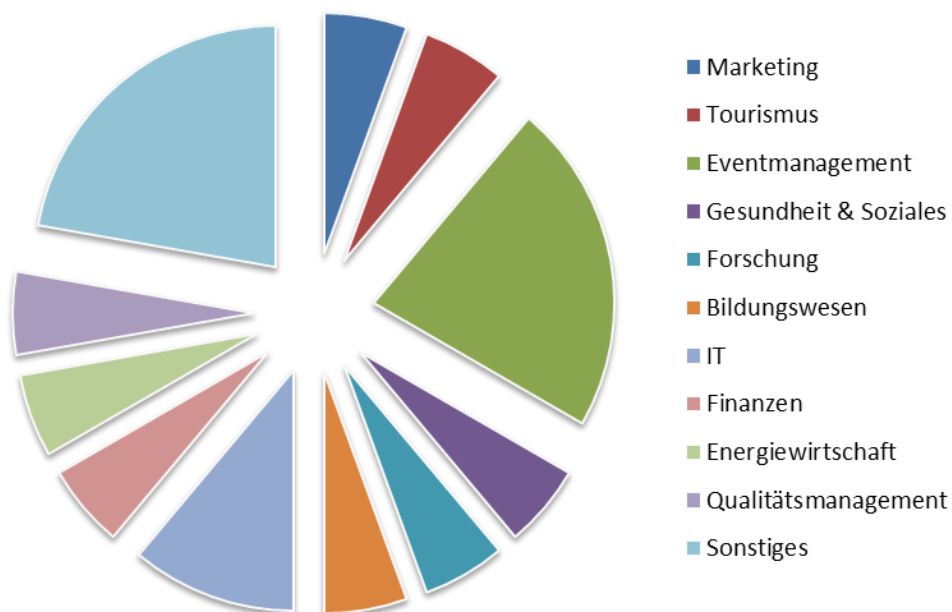
- Darmstadt University of Applied Sciences (2x)
- HULT IBS (2x)
- University of Bayreuth
- Eberswalde University of Applied Sciences for Sustainable Development
- Neu-Ulm University of Applied Sciences
- MCI Management Center Innsbruck
- Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam
- University of Paderborn
- University of Siegen
- TU Dresden
- London School of Economics and Political Science
- Universidad de Valencia

From the survey respondents who chose the path of employment, half found a position at an employer with whom they had previous contact. This contact came from: internships or company projects (30%), other contacts related to the course of studies (10%), other type of contact (69%). This shows a tangible benefit arising from the company projects and employment-oriented activities at Karlshochschule: they network students with regional companies and do indeed lead to employment offers. Students were able to convince employers of their potential on the basis of their training and knowledge, which confirms the practical relevance of course contents and curricula on offer at Karlshochschule.

During their job search, graduates demonstrate significant mobility, even if 90% remain in Germany. Inner-German mobility is definitely acceptable to our students.



The following picture emerges regarding 'sector mobility':



Graduates enter employment in a very diverse range of fields extending well beyond the direct focal points of the studies offered at Karlshochschule. This is evidence for the capability of graduates to apply the strategies they learnt to issues in other fields, i.e. to transfer exper-

tise to other disciplines. This, too, is an indication of the extent to which the course contents successfully prepare students for the realities of working life.

Future surveys will be designed to ensure broader coverage, ensuring more substantive results.

5. Survey of Employees

The annual survey of staff at Karlshochschule evaluates whether the general conditions and the support from service office directors is sufficient to enable staff to perform their core tasks successfully. Particular objects of this evaluation are:

- Staff satisfaction
- Clarity of goals and feedback as to the degree of goal achievement
- Appropriate provision of resources and information
- Processes of decision-making, opinion formation and arrival at consensus
- Manager orientation on the values anchored in the Mission Statement
- Communication

There were a total of 39 employees. Three were on parental leave and another six did not participate for other reasons, resulting in a survey participation rate of 83%.

The first question on staff satisfaction can be seen as ‘flash feedback’ asking for an instant answer with no deliberation. Over half (57%) of the staff responding reported they were very satisfied or satisfied with their job. However, this does mean that 43% are either only ‘somewhat satisfied’ or ‘dissatisfied’ so it is now necessary to continue increasing the proportion of staff who are satisfied. This could take several years since it depends on several factors, including the intrinsic motivation of individuals themselves.

The rating for ‘clarity of goals’ improved again for this reporting period: staff are aware of the university goals (2.0 / previous year 2.1) and department goals (1.79 / PY 1.95). There was also a better feeling of working together to achieve common goals (2.67 / PY 3.05).

Attitudes regarding the issue of further training have also improved: higher ratings were indicated on the issues of whether sufficient CPD is on offer (2.88 / PY 3.55) and whether there is enough time for this (3.23 / PY 4.95). In this regard the Karlshochschule management were able to bring about a clear improvement for staff by making them aware of the need for them to be proactive in shaping and initiating their own training requests.

Staff satisfaction is also dependent on the working atmosphere, which includes the factor of whether problems are discussed and resolved in an open, objective and quick manner. Questionnaire answers reveal that staff feel problems can be discussed openly both within their own department (2.03 / PY 2.55) and with other departments (2.32). There were also positive responses to the questions of whether resolution takes place quickly (2.26 / PY 2.45) and objectively (2.26 / PY 2.65); for figures within the respondent's department these represent better values than in the previous year and for figures regarding problem discussion and resolution with other departments, there were no previous-year values to compare.

Other responses clearly reflect the service-oriented approach at Karlshochschule – one point in the Mission Statement. The staff are familiar with the contents of the Mission Statement (1.87 / PY 1.85) and they base their own work objectives on these contents (2.29 / PY 2.0). Here the decrease from the previous year needs to be further investigated to ensure that any reasons for a negative trend can be discovered and counteracted. Success was achieved in improving the ratings regarding familiarity with the university's strategic objectives (3.07 / PY 3.5) and the operative procedures (2.9 / PY 4.25); on the latter issue the university management has achieved an obvious increase in quality. This is quite possibly due to the clear orientation provided by the university's focus on achieving system accreditation, which was a dominant issue in 2014. It remains to be seen if this development continues in 2015 – a year which will see a change in the office of President – and whether communication at the university also changes.

Transparent communication is a further building block for staff satisfaction. The mood of employees is described as very good (1.62), as is the mood within the respondent's own department (2.28). Interestingly, the mood in other departments receives a clearly less positive evaluation: as yet there is no explanation for the value of 3.19. If the negative assertions heard occasionally during the year regarding the atmosphere at the university turn out to be solely based on staff believing that the mood is bad in departments other than their own, there needs to be an investigation to find out why this is so and how this can be corrected.

With regard to the openness of communication in 2013, the Presidential Board received a bad rating of 4.6. This improved significantly in 2014 (3.29) but the issue remains very sensitive so QM prioritised this point during a discussion of the results at a staff meeting to offer a further perspective on why there needs to be a particular understanding of this issue. This includes the reasons why the communication on certain issues might appear non-transparent due to data protection issues. This discussion clearly showed the extent of the overlap between these issues and the issues where there is a desire for more transparent communica-

tion, so the potential for dissatisfaction is high. It has at least now been recognised. In 2015 the University management will increase its efforts to ensure appropriate communication and take into account the staff wishes correspondingly.

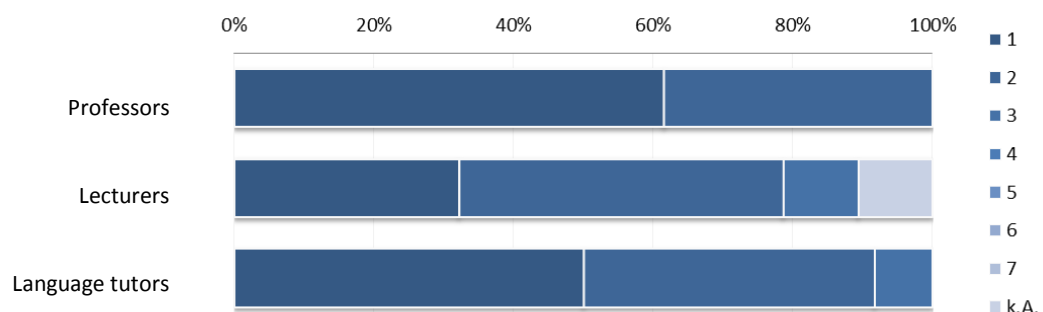
In the coming year, the Quality Report will be focussed on the areas of communication, task assignment and organisation structures. The next employee survey is planned for Spring 2015.

6. Survey of Instructors

Instructors (all teaching staff) are surveyed once each year. The design of this questionnaire is similar to that used for the survey of employees. For this report, the focus will be on the topics of communication, own abilities and evaluation/feedback, with responses categorised according to the three instructor status groups: professors, lecturers (*Lehrbeauftragte*) and language tutors.

The instructors in general are convinced of the value of their work (1.6), with the highest agreement coming from the professors (1.4): all professors agreed or fully agreed with the statement that they are convinced of the value of their work (response options 1+2). The corresponding figure for the lecturers is 79% and the language tutors 92%.

I am convinced of the value of my work.



There was also a positive rating for the suitability of the subject area being taught. The professors rated the statement “My teaching activity fully corresponds to my specialist area.” with 2.0; the rating from the lecturers was 1.7 and the language tutors 1.5. This agrees with the assessment given by students, 86% of whom consider the expertise of the instructors as very good or good, although here the best figure was recorded for the professors (91%). Since this shows instructors are being employed according to their qualifications, the general conditions then become crucial to the quality of teaching. Instructors indicated they wanted receive information earlier which they needed for their lectures; the statement “I receive all information I need for my lectures in time” received an average response of 2.6. In contrast,

the facilities in the teaching rooms received a higher rating (1.8), with the best figure coming from lecturers (1.5).

The Evaluation of Instruction can be seen as an additional instrument for an instructor to monitor their own achievement of their objectives, but this is only perceived as 'somewhat applicable' (3.0).

Clear organisational structures are essential for functional communication. Professors (2.6) and lecturers (3.1) at Karlshochschule feel they are 'well' or 'fairly well' informed about the assignment of responsibilities at the university but language tutors are clearly less satisfied on this issue (3.6). The average value for all instructors is 3.0, which represents a deterioration of 0.2 compared to the previous year.

Structures are only perceived as somewhat transparent. Neither the professors (3.5) nor the lecturers (2.9) nor the language tutors (3.4) were able to agree positively to the statement regarding transparent structures. Taken together there is a year-on-year deterioration of 0.5 points. One factor behind this could be the high staff fluctuation which Karlshochschule experienced in 2014. In 2015 work clearly needs to be undertaken to remove ambiguity in the structures and improve clarity in communication. One way to do this is via the Instructor Manual, which is being revised as part of the procedures relating to didactics and teaching.

All instructors, especially those permanently employed by Karlshochschule, need to be informed about strategic objectives and operational procedures in order to be able to shape their own activities and teaching accordingly. Regarding the strategic objectives of the university, professors felt they were well informed (2.4) but there is room for improvement with the lecturers (3.3) and language tutors (3.5). The need for improvement is even clearer on the issue of operative procedures: professors (3.4), lecturers (3.5) and language tutors (3.6) all feel only somewhat informed. This deserves particular attention because all instructors indicate the cooperation with the Presidential Board functions without problems (2.0). In contrast, the instructors' perception of how Presidential Board decisions are communicated is not one of complete openness (3.4). An explanation needs to be found of the expectations which instructors have regarding Presidential Board communications and the extent to which these expectations are being met.

Among the instructors, the mood (2.4) and inter-staff relations (1.9) are described as good, and mutual trust also appears to be very good since problems between colleagues can be discussed openly (2.3) and are dealt with within the faculty in an objective and quick manner (2.5). Additionally, instructors assess the opportunity to give and receive feedback among

colleagues as sufficient (2.8); the lowest figure here was for the lecturers at 3.0. One possibility to improve the situation in this regard might be for lecturers to have a (virtual?) forum.

V. Accreditations (External Check)

1. Re-accreditations

During the reporting period, Karlshochschule voluntarily underwent an early accreditation of its Bachelor degree programs. This was intended to provide clarity on the impact of the university quality management system on already existing degree programs, revealing whether the system is suitable for the requirements of the system accreditation. The discussions which took place during the inspection with everyone involved were completely convincing: all eight Bachelor degree programs were awarded the FIBAA Premium Seal, making Karlshochschule the first higher education institution in Germany to have all of its Bachelor degree programs carry this accreditation.



Excerpt from the FIBAA Press Release

"In particular, the assessors evaluate the participatory culture at Karlshochschule as excellent: the internal cooperation between participants in different degree programs is characterised by a finely woven web of discussion and coordination forums which create the framework for an intensive and systematic coordination of both specific modules and the overall set of modules on offer. There are both institutionalised and informal forums where a lively and

fertile exchange takes place, giving rise to joint projects and cooperative seminars and lectures. The Karlshochschule culture also includes close, responsible support for students, which is particularly visible in the form of organised meetings and feedback groups, as well as tutoring and mentoring programmes.

The assessors also praise the cultural-constructivist approach and the corresponding didactic profile of the degree programs, which lead to a systematic growth in knowledge. The forms of instruction and assessment are chosen carefully to suit the curriculum contents and their stimulating wealth of variety is impressive.

A further characteristic of the degree programs is the fact that international and intercultural contents are integral components with an impact throughout all of the curricula. This universal focus on internationality ensures the students are being prepared for international tasks in a consistent and verifiable way.”

This praise is an honour to all involved since it demonstrates how intensely quality management is enacted by students, professors, staff and management at the university.

2. System Accreditation

Towards the end of the previous reporting period, Karlshochschule received approval to undergo the procedure of system accreditation. This system accreditation procedure evaluates whether the quality management system is capable of carrying out the accreditation of degree programs to meet external standards (such as those of the Accreditation Council).

Prior to the on-site inspections which are a standard part of the process, Karlshochschule itself checked all the important processes and documents, revising them where necessary. In particular, the processes subject to description were being revised, scrutinised and portrayed realistically. Both system accreditation inspections took place in 2014. After the first inspection, the assessors already showed a positive reaction and expressed their desire to carry out the second inspection very soon. A representative sample of relevant aspects was chosen to form the focus of the second inspection or documentation submission (re. Point 4) by the university:

- International Marketing Management degree program
- Control mechanisms between management and lecturers
- Revised process descriptions including metaprocess and map of processes

- Function and decision matrix, threshold values in QM system, documentation on closed-session meetings, organigram and job descriptions of service group directors and the Quality, University Development and Equal Opportunity Officers

Since the International Marketing Management degree program had already been assessed during the voluntary re-accreditation, the documentation for this degree program could be submitted in full.

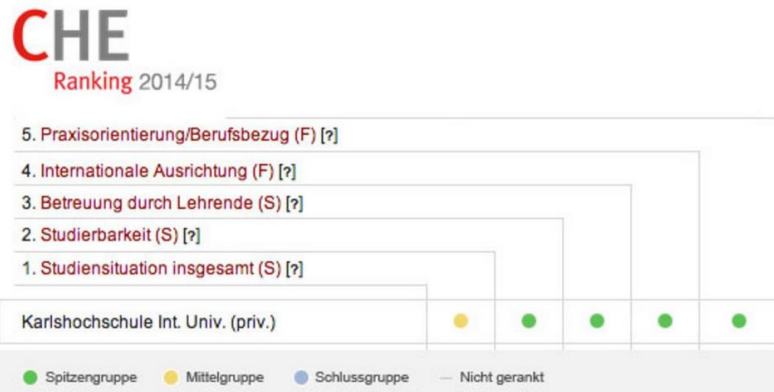
The core features of the control mechanisms between management and lecturers have already been described under Point III.1 in this Quality Report, so in order to avoid unnecessary repetitions, the reader is referred to page 7.

For the metaprocess, staff from various service areas drafted a process to avoid life at the university becoming overloaded. The background here is the objective of finding a balance allowing all necessary processes to be defined and lived out without endangering the cultural sciences orientation of Karlshochschule. During the second site inspection, it was exactly this point that was identified as the greatest challenge for the future: finding the delicate balance between a system of control oriented towards culture and one towards processes. However, the assessors were certain that this can succeed in an environment as charged with creativity and positivity as Karlshochschule.

A decision regarding the result of the system accreditation procedure was not yet taken during the reporting period: it was to be expected for April 2015.

VI. CHE Ranking (External Check)

In the ranking conducted by the Centre for Higher Education (CHE), Karlshochschule earned a top placing for several aspects of its economic science degree programs. In particular, the facilities gained excellent marks thanks to the special atmosphere created by open spaces, glass walls and open-air lectures: Karlshochschule received a 1.3 grade for this criterion. In the categories “Contact to students” (1.5) and “Study organisation” (1.7) it also scored well. A grade of 1.7 was also achieved for the criteria “Teacher support” and “Job market preparation”. And Karlshochschule was also among the cream of the crop when it came to “International orientation”.



93.8 per cent of the graduates achieved their Bachelor's degree in the regular period of study. This statistic puts Karlsruhochschule, currently with more than 650 students, among the best universities in the country. As early as 2011 there were top marks for this university in the CHE Ranking. Current rankings can be found, for example, via the CHE website and in the "ZEIT Studienführer 2014/15".³

³ Text adapted from the Karlsruhochschule website



VII. Measures Derived from Evaluations (Act)

One priority during the coming years will be communication and its impacts on many levels. An example here is better information for applicant students concerning the start of their studies, including both practical information and an idea of the expectations Karlsruhochschule has of its students. Clear expectations will be communicated to them with the specific intention of relieving the burden on staff at the Service Desk, making students aware how they need to be more independent. This does not involve a reduction in services provided but rather the issue of guiding students to help them find information and solutions themselves. In other words, the further the students progress in their studies, the greater the university's expectation is that they can work independently – and this should also manifest in the non-academic aspects of university life. All important information will be communicated during Orientation Week. Where useful, another round of information takes place once the Karlsruhochschule students have 'settled in'. Improvements in student information for the entire duration of the degree program have already been put in place by the management with a new communication channel being opened and put into good use: the electronic newsletter is received by all students and contains information that directly affects them (such as the appointment of new staff).

The Presidential Board welcomes the rating improvement for the item "Presidential Board decisions are communicated openly" (3.29 / PY 4.6). However, this should be seen as an interim result, since further improvements in staff satisfaction with the Presidential Board can be expected for 2015 as relevant measures are introduced, especially in the area of communication. The university faces a special challenge soon with the appointment of the new President because a change of this magnitude at the top of the university requires clear and careful communication if all members of the university are to be reached. Basically, all staff members want to see a transparent flow of information. Since this primarily concerns decisions relating directly to staff, there are clear data protection regulations which have to be obeyed. In future, staff will receive all information in a timely manner which is necessary for their work and its future development, insofar as this information can be communicated without breaching any data protection guidelines. In this regard, any desire of departing staff members for discretion will be respected and other staff will be made aware of this factor.

Although there is still felt to be room for improvement regarding workload (3.0), there has been a clear improvement since last year concerning the opportunity to concentrate on tasks

at hand (3.0 / PY 4.35) and resolve them rapidly (2.97 / PY 4.25). The Presidential Board warmly welcomes this improvement, which came about because the previous year's objectives were pursued consistently: the foregrounding and documentation of the work situation during target agreement interviews. Additionally, the internal meeting of the Service Offices also specifically dealt with the problem of feelings of overwork, clearly showing the staff that the university management is interested in the issue of work-life balance and how to improve it. The measures arising out of the subsequent meetings (see Management Calendar) will form topics of the survey of employees in 2015.

Further goals for 2015 include increasing service in the library without creating further workload for the staff: the main aim is to enable the library to be permanently open. This would meet the students' wish for extended opening hours and also enhance the role of the library as a place for academic work to take place. It is not currently planned to offer the lending service around the clock: this will initially be possible via direct contact with library staff. The Karlshochschule management nevertheless sees 24-hour opening for the library as an increase in service provision for students because they will have increased access to the space and to the books as reference works.

The Presidential Board welcomes the increase in the participation rate for the student evaluation of seminars and lectures and also the implementation of this evaluation within the university management system, but there is still further room for development on both issues. It was possible to carry out the evaluation within the university management system without great problem but this caused a delay of two weeks, which needs to be avoided in future. The survey revealed that students see learning objectives as being only 'somewhat well' achieved and also that there are some degree of unfamiliarity with the learning objectives. Here, the EduSlides can help: these are used as templates for all lecture and seminar documents and clearly portray the topic "Learning objectives". So instructors have a factual aid which they need here. They can also be made more aware of the issue during Instructors Day. This student feedback has been given directly to the staff member responsible for university didactics so she can include the issue in her planning for Instructors Day.

As far as the Presidential Board can see, there is room for improvement in the levels of participation in the student evaluation of seminars and lectures. This also applies to the evaluation of general conditions as well as the survey of graduates. For the evaluation of general conditions, a date has now been found when the students will have more time and when we can expect them to be more willing to take time to consider the issues involved. In the run-up

to this date, staff at the Service Desk will actively draw attention to the survey and it will be appropriately publicised around the university.

For the survey of graduates, especially where they graduated three years or more ago, other ways need to be found since internal publicising is obviously not going to have an effect. Here, the alumni-related work at the Marketing Office can assist with quality management since the marketing department is developing a strategy to enhance the long-term connection of graduates to Karlshochschule. Alumni with this sort of good relationship are aware of the university's needs, including quality management. It can be assumed that these alumni will tend to be more open for surveys and will also act as disseminators, helping the university to reach graduates who otherwise would not be in contact with the university.

VIII. Concluding Summary and Outlook

The excellent quality of degree programs at Karlshochschule has been confirmed. This has been attested by several external assessors and one further evaluation – the system accreditation – is still due. The opinions expressed during the on-site inspection indicate a positive result here, too. These excellent certifications will set the standard for future quality management work and the next round of internal accreditations.

The positive results from 2014 were achieved jointly by the range of Karlshochschule members and we should ensure they are clearly tangible to all members, demonstrating the values they are benefitting from at our university.

For the coming year, the challenge will be to secure the quality and service provided – and then to keep improving it. It is the responsibility of all staff members to represent Karlshochschule in a way which corresponds to these values, ensuring the university continues to attract new students and further support for its mission.

LEGAL NOTICE

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PUBLISHER
Angelika Habermann
Management

EDITOR
Karlsruhochschule International University
Quality Management Unit

Chief Editor
Dr. Diana Casel

Karlstraße 36-38 | 76133 Karlsruhe

Tel.: +49 (0) 721 1303 542
Fax: +49 (0) 721 1303 300

dcasel@karlsruhochschule.de

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