

Quality Report 2015

Contents

I	Quality Development and Assurance Goals	3
II.	Quality Goals: Focal Areas 2015 (Plan).....	5
1.	Expansion of the Portfolio of Degree Programs.....	5
2.	Didactics, Learning and Instruction	5
3.	Recruiting Policy	5
4.	Internationalisation	5
5.	Process Quality	6
6.	Focus on Quality and Service	6
7.	Networking with QM Community	6
III.	Implementation 2015 (Do).....	7
1.	Expansion of the Portfolio of Degree Programs.....	7
2.	Didactics, Learning and Instruction	10
3.	Recruiting Policy	13
4.	Internationalisation	13
5.	Process Quality	15
6.	Focus on Quality and Service	16
7.	Networking with QM Community	17
IV.	Internal Evaluations (Check).....	20
1.	Student Evaluations of Seminars and Lectures	20
2.	Evaluations of Company Projects	22
3.	Survey of First-Semester Students	24
4.	Survey of Graduates	25
V.	Accreditations (Check).....	27
1.	System Accreditation.....	27
2.	New Accreditations	27
VI.	Measures Derived from Evaluations (Act).....	29
VII.	Concluding Summary and Outlook.....	31

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 the coming 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. 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 orienta-

tion, scholarliness, customer satisfaction, goal-oriented management, continuous learning, and social responsibility).

This report covers the year 2015, documenting and presenting that period's most important results and implementations, as well as measures derived from these.

II. Quality Goals: Focal Areas 2015 (Plan)

From a quality management point of view, the focus in 2015 was on running the university as a system-accredited institution. This involves assuring the quality standards already achieved and continually working to raise them, as well as putting into practice the relevant theoretically defined procedures in, for example, internal accreditation. The following points were defined as priorities:

1. Expansion of the Portfolio of Degree Programs

Karlshochschule sees itself as offering degree programs which enable and encourage the students to think “outside the box”, especially in areas relevant to society. In this regard, a consistent approach would complement the existing management-oriented degree programs with others which extend into the social sciences and train students to enact their chosen “change” there.

2. Didactics, Learning and Instruction

By encouraging instructors to share their expertise and experiences we create a good basis from which we can maintain consistent quality in our teaching, and then improve it further. Constructive dialogue with others enables each instructor to reflect on their teaching performance and benefit from ideas and motivation to deviate from well-worn paths and try out new methods of instruction which could be integrated in a complementary way.

3. Recruiting Policy

New ideas and innovations also arrive at Karlshochschule in the form of new staff. The professors appointed in the past two years have very rapidly assumed core responsibilities at Karlshochschule, encouraging everyone to think in new, deeper and different ways. During the reporting period a further professorship appointment was made, and this will hopefully also enrich our university in a similar way.

4. Internationalisation

Karlshochschule International University is a living example of internationality. This status encourages us to network in an even better way, to give our university members even more high-quality opportunities for international exchange. As well as building up the university network, the focus here is also on research.

5. Process Quality

During the preparation for the system accreditation, a number of core processes were defined which can support and manage studies and instruction. This created clear and unambiguous processes which give security to students, instructors and employees: security regarding their employment or course of study. The date for their revision was already defined while the processes were being prepared in 2014: the date is this reporting period.

6. Focus on Quality and Service

As a private university, Karlshochschule International University is obliged in a particular way to deliver an authentic and suitable service to its clients (here, primarily the students). The same applies to quality – in instruction, academic support and the service areas. Structural changes have been made to ensure all of this is set up even more appropriately.

7. Networking with QM Community

Having received a third-party confirmation of the outstanding quality which all instructors and employees at Karlshochschule deliver, it was an obvious next step to join the Network of Quality Officers in Germany and establish a valuable partnership here. This also serves to improve the visibility of Karlshochschule among institutions of higher education.

III. Implementation 2015 (Do)

1. Expansion of the Portfolio of Degree Programs

In order to gain more prominence in societally relevant areas without a focus on management, and also to prepare students for the active societal transition, four new courses of study were introduced in 2015:

- International Relations
- Politics, Philosophy and Economics
- Citizenship and Civic Engagement (planned start: winter semester 2016/2017)
- Globalization, Governance and Law (planned start: winter semester 2017/2018)

These courses extend the degree program portfolio at Karlshochschule and open up areas of action in the social sciences to graduates who do not desire an explicitly management-oriented training.

The focal areas of the programs are as follows: (source: Karlshochschule website)

International Relations

“I get switched on when others tend to turn off. I'm passionately interested in what's happening in the world and its effects. I soak up new information like a sponge and throw myself into any new political debate. The major issues and challenges in our world especially revolving around peace, prosperity, environmental protection, justice and human rights are what excite and drive me on.

I want to be socially engaged and I'm curious about other cultures and ways of thinking. I'm interested in building bridges and find it rewarding when I can contribute to achieving or helping to develop solutions to the major challenge of finding peaceful resolutions to a conflict.

I believe in diplomacy as a driving force on the conflict-ridden world stage. I want to encourage people to stop fighting each other with weapons or exploiting their economic power, but negotiate instead through words, knowledge and values. I see myself as a future intermediary between cultures and their respective interests. I can see myself working in the Federal Foreign Office, for an international company or at an NGO.

I want to learn about and understand the context of international politics and economics, ecology and ethics, legal regulations and cultural ideas, as well as the art of diplomatic negotiations. That's why I'm studying *International Relations* at Karlshochschule.”

Politics, Philosophy and Economics

"I've often wondered where I come from, where I'm going and what 'binds the world's innermost energies'. I'm interested in economics – but not an economics that is limited exclusively to mathematics, strives for profit and leaves people out with its complex needs for simple cost/benefit analyses.

I've always wondered why it's always economists that tell us about crises in the media, why philosophers are never asked for a solution, and whether our politicians have ever read Hobbes, Marx or Kierkegaard. I don't want to choose between the worlds of numbers, words or deeds.

I long for answers to the questions about the equitable coexistence of fair trade and fair society reforms and often only find criticism of the suggestions made by thinkers and philosophers. I'm interested in politics as a practical tool of reason and am fascinated by the differences of cultures that clash with the globalization of economies.

I also wonder if there's an economic system that doesn't, in the long term, destroy the planet. Maybe there's a different approach that brings prosperity for all and is an alternative to what we already have.

I want to learn how to resolve conflicts, to debate and to not just simply express my views, but to steadily develop them. I want to have very broad horizons.

That's why I'm going to be a modern universal scholar and study *Politics, Philosophy and Economics* at Karlshochschule."

Citizenship and Civic Engagement

"My objective is to make sense of the society in which I live. I want to develop ideas for my initiatives, my group or my start-up, that help my ideals to flourish. I want to make a difference in this world.

I want to start right here and right now, even while I'm studying, to put the knowledge and skills I've acquired into practice. I don't want to simply explore possibilities, I want my research to bring about change in society and by using words, images and actions, also to the minds of people.

I'm doing volunteer work for the subject that is my passion. I go out on the streets to protest against injustice or to promote my beliefs. I am involved in social networks where I start petitions, campaigns and debates. That's where I mobilize people to join me and support my ideas via crowdfunding. I want to sustainably and constructively change the world in which we live.

I want to live the changes and make a commitment to my future profession, and that's why I'm studying *Citizenship and Civic Engagement* at Karlshochschule."

Globalization, Governance and Law

“Globalization as the meeting of different cultures poses enormous challenges. On the one hand, global trade can bring us closer together in both goods and knowledge. On the other hand, it becomes increasingly difficult to regulate global responsibilities. For me, the issues of social justice, universal human rights and the institutions that protect them, are immensely important.

Can it be fair that I pay €100 for a pair of shoes but the people who made them receive just a tiny fraction of that as their wage? Can it be fair that people are tortured and killed merely because of what they say and think? I feel that as the world grows closer, new problems come up each day.

Law, to me, is more than just a complex set of rules that everyone exploits for their own advantage. For me, law is an expression of the pursuit of justice. It's no longer just part of a national culture, but a way to take our international relations to a new level, where the rights of the strongest are no longer the only thing that matters.

For me, international institutions are the cornerstones of fair prosperity, long-term peace and sustainable civilisation processes. I want to contribute to the new book of rules for our world. My efforts, and those of the organization I will later work for, will then help to put them into practice.

I want to understand it all and that's why I'm studying *Globalization, Governance and Law* at Karlsruhochschule.”

These degree programs had to undergo accreditation before they could start being offered. There is more information on the accreditations in Section V.2.

2. Didactics, Learning and Instruction

It is the multifaceted nature of the instruction at Karlshochschule that makes it so impressive. With the students constantly in focus, it offers a variety of activating learning arrangements and assessment types, which follow a “constructive alignment” approach clearly indicating how they contribute to achieving the well-defined learning outcomes.

In order to ensure that the high quality in this field is assured in the long term, in July 2014 a new appointment was made for the staff position with responsibility for university didactics (which had previously been vacant due to parental leave). Since then, the position has been further developed on an ongoing basis, becoming the “Learning and Teaching Service”. Some examples of core developments in this regard during the reporting period will now be presented.

In the “**Teaching Service**” area, the practice was continued of organising one Instructors Day and one didactics training course per semester, whereby it needs to be emphasised that this basic requirement, laid down in the 2009 Regulations on Quality Development and Assurance, was conceptually expanded at the beginning of the 2014/15 study year and its implementation has been successively revised. The core of the new concept, as can be seen below in the overview, is a differentiation of targeted university didactics events for particular groups in order to ensure that during the course of an academic year, regular, needs-oriented support can be provided to novice and experienced instructors in both the management studies and foreign languages departments.

Study Year	Format	Scope	Target Groups
September	Basic Workshop in university didactics for new Karls instructors + Extension Workshop: LernZIMMER design	2 days	New instructors
November	Extension Seminar I	1 day	Experienced instructors
January	Instructors’ Day	1 day	All
March	Language Pedagogy Seminar	1 day	Language tutors
May	Extension Seminar II	1 day	Experienced instructors
June / July	Instructors’ Day	1 day	All

The substantive priorities of the two **Instructors’ Days** falling within the reporting period (**January and June 2015**) included the issues of evaluation and **blended learning**.

In the January event, Prof. Dr. Francisco Javier Montiel Alafont introduced this topic from a more theoretical perspective with a lecture providing an overview, and then by the second Instructors Day in June 2015 two small pilot projects on the topic had already formed which could be presented in the form of the first ‘workshop reports’.

One of these, under the guidance of Prof. Dr. Björn Bohnenkamp, focussed on a redesign of the fifth-semester module “Change and Innovation” (CHIN) as a combination of Moodle and classroom lessons, as favoured by the “Learning by Teaching” (LDL) concept. The second, initiated by Prof. Dr. Henk van Elst, is aiming at a provisional redesign of a statistics lecture according to the principles of the “flipped classroom” approach.

In order to provide support for these and other similar digitalisation projects, at the beginning of the 2015 summer semester an open “blended learning” working group was set up, whose focalisers are the Didactics Officer Carmen Reck and the IT Manager Rainer Buzengeiger, as well as Prof. Dr. Francisco Javier Montiel Alafont.

With regard to the topic of **evaluation**, which was also covered during both Instructors’ Days in 2015, it can be reported that the focus in January was on a general presentation of the “Seminar and Lecture Evaluation” instruments within the university management system, which had only come fully online during the winter semester 2014-15. In June the topic was how to deal practically with evaluation results. A World Café on didactics and methodology was one example of how the instructors were inspired to work together on the development of ideas and measures which could respond appropriately to the wishes and suggestions of the students. In the most recent evaluation from the 2015 summer semester, there was a noticeable increase in the number of suggestions entered in the open-ended input fields of the survey. One of these wishes, “Fewer .ppt slides with less text”, deserves special mention here because it sparked a lively debate among Karlshochschule instructors on ‘how’ we learn and teach, which will be continued in the university didactics events in 2016.

In addition to the numerous university didactics events and **direct support for instructors on how to carry out their events** (for example, offering supportive events to accompany lessons such as workshops for students on “Learning by Teaching”), the Teaching Service at Karlshochschule has also been offering **one-to-one advice or coaching sessions for instructors** since the 2014/15 winter semester.

This latter service, which is especially targeted at instructors with little or no experience of university teaching, includes elements such as individualised support for lesson planning (introduction to the planning tool LernZIMMER, methodology tips, etc.), advice in dealing with

different types of examinations (such as the learner's portfolio), advice on how to deal with evaluations and evaluation results, or even consultations when it comes to difficult teaching or learning situations (such as conflicts with participants or personal insecurities).

One particular service for novice instructors allows them to request the Didactics Officer to sit in on one or two lessons and observe them with regard to specific issues or development issues. A subsequent feedback session then allows them to reflect together.

Parallel to the “Teaching Service” offers, since WS 2014/15 the Didactics Officer has also been offering **advice and coaching sessions for students** as part of the “**Learning Service**” for both Bachelor and Master degree programs.

In general, the **individualised advice** is sought by students with regard to issues directly related to their studies, such as techniques for learning and working, time management, work management, coping with the curricula, dealing with pressure or overcoming “procrastinitis”, especially in examination periods. The **one-to-one coaching sessions** are more often called for in stressful personal situations, such as conflicts with fellow students, instructors, friends or family, intercultural difficulties such as culture shock or homesickness, and difficult decisions that need to be made, such as changing, pausing or quitting a degree program.

The offer of **team coaching sessions** first gained in popularity among Karlshochschule students after the start of WS 2015/16, in the context of the third-semester module RESO (Resources), which operates with a significantly increased number of “team challenges”, and during the IPRO¹ and APRO² phases of the third and fourth semesters. During the WS 2015/16, a variety of enquiries coming from the EduPartment residential home for Karlshochschule students revealed a need for **mediation support for (culturally influenced) group conflicts**.

In the mid-term, the “Student Counselling and Coaching” offers will be further established, enhancing a further building block in the service-oriented approach at Karlshochschule.

Another important innovation pursued during the past year within the field of university didactics or the Learning and Teaching Service is the new concept for “facilitated reflection”. Here, there is now (again) an increased offer of models, methods and working techniques which allow students to more closely monitor and reflect on personal learning needs, aims and progress. They can develop new possibilities to act and adapt or optimise their patterns of behaviour to suit specific situations, where necessary. This is a foundation of the commit-

¹ Introductory Company Project

² Advanced Company Project

ment at Karlsruhochschule to provide appropriate and sufficient support to students with their individual learning styles.

The newly structured module “Facilitated Reflection” was also synergetically linked to the overall Karlsruhochschule program of promoting personal development of its members. Here, a particular focus was on a better web of connection between the individual building blocks, and a revision of the Personality Points Passport (PPP).

3. Recruiting Policy



The appointment of **Melodena Stephens Balakrishnan** means Karlsruhochschule now has a new professor who had already been teaching here since 2013 as a lecturer. As of September 1, 2015, she is the incumbent Professor of International Marketing Strategies and Entrepreneurship.

Melodena Stephens Balakrishnan has an impressive list of publications. It can be expected that she will contribute to increasing the visibility of Karlsruhochschule in the scientific community, especially given her international orientation beyond the borders of Germany.

4. Internationalisation³

Due to the very dynamic developments of the previous years, the focus in 2015 was less on a quantitative expansion of the network and more on a (moderate and targeted) further expansion of the network for particular degree programs and regions, as well as maintaining the existing quality of service. With this in mind, in the summer of 2015 Karlsruhochschule conducted an alignment of the courses on offer from partner universities with the **new Bachelor curricula** (i.e. the curricula of the degree programs newly introduced in 2015) and the module requirements for the fifth semester (which had been changed during the reaccreditation). Furthermore, previous arrangements for the semester abroad were adapted to meet the requirements of the new degree programs, since in these the mobility window is not in the fifth but in the fourth semester, which necessitates some organisational changes. By making use

³ excerpted from the report of the International Office and University Development for the University Council, by Dr. Jutta Walz

of, and in part extending, the existing agreements, it was possible to reserve contingents for the new degree programs at 16 partner universities in 11 countries. Additionally, the multi-lateral ISEP network (*International Student Exchange Program*) can also be used, which represents over 300 colleges and universities in 50 countries. With the exception of the Arab region, these arrangements cover all the major language and culture areas covered in the language and area studies module at Karlshochschule, including those which traditionally attract the most interest in exchange opportunities (the English-speaking areas: UK, USA via ISEP; Spanish-speaking area: Mexico; France; Russia/Eastern Europe: Russia, Poland, Czech Republic, Hungary, Turkey; Asia: Hong Kong, Korea, Taiwan).

International Activities and Projects

During 2015 in the field of **instruction**, the following events were carried out outside of the regular semester program:

Winter Session “Strategic Management” for a group of Master students from ESC Rennes (7-16 January 2015)

- Co-teaching Karlshochschule – ESC Rennes
- Networking with regard to a possible strategic partnership
- Gaining experience with short-duration programs, with a view to developing own new programs

Emerald Forest (2-6 February 2015)

- *Blended Learning*
- Networking, particularly regarding universities in the UK and USA
- Curriculum integration: 2016 anchored in two modules for the first time (ITM, IMA)

Summer Academies on Intercultural Experience in Karlsruhe (20-31 July 2015) and Istanbul (3-14 August 2015)

- Positive financial results from both Summer Academies
- Positive recruitment effect from Summer Academies, for both German and international participants

In the area of **third-party funded projects**, 2015 saw the completion of the EU-funded research project “Diversity Improvement as a Viable Enrichment Resource for Society and Economy” (**DIVERSE**) under the EIF Community Actions funding line. With 14 partner institutions, this project was led by Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Milan, and ran from December 2013 until June 2015, with a total budget of some 900,000 euros including own contributions, of which 77,000 euros went to Karlshochschule. The aim of the project was to

promote the participation of nationals from non-EU states in the creation of an inclusive European society.

In September 2015 a new international teaching and research project started: **CONNECT 2.0** - Intercultural Learning Network 4 Europe. This is a cross-sectoral strategic ERASMUS+ partnership in the fields of youth and higher education, led by InterCultur gGmbH with a total of eleven partners from seven European countries, and a project duration of three years. The aim is to develop an innovative learning scenario for students which includes both traditional classroom and online components. Furthermore, employees of the participating institutions will receive training to carry out the program, and an alumni network will be built up. The financial scope of this project, including the self-contribution, is 427,000 euros, including 26,000 euros for Karlshochschule.

Lastly, in 2015 together with Intercultural Campus and *interculture.de e.V.*, Karlshochschule organised the conference "**Internationalisation of higher education – from patchwork to integrated strategy**", which provided an opportunity for some 30 participants to share their expertise on opportunities for a professional approach to internationalisation. A range of best practice examples were presented, including the internationalisation strategy of Karlshochschule. The ideas were subsequently developed further in an *open space* format.

5. Process Quality

Even as the processes were being drafted and formalised in 2014, a date for their revision was also built into the plan. As this deadline approached, the processes, including their current reference data sheets, were sent to those responsible for and involved in these processes. Each of the groups then discussed the processes, any deviations and possible adaptations: Why did a deviation occur? Was it a one-off deviation or does the process generally proceed differently than depicted? Agreed adaptations were then incorporated into the process. Most processes did not require any revision.

However, during the course of the university's operations it had already become obvious if a particular process could be discarded or would have to be replaced. For example, the former standalone process of literature sourcing is now connected to the new core process of revising module descriptions. This became necessary because delays had repeatedly occurred, ultimately meaning that the lecture plan was not available on time or with any reliability. To avoid this in future, a process with deadlines was introduced. In the medium term this will be revised again, since a central solution within the university management system is being

sought. This process, carried out twice annually, is particularly susceptible to missed deadlines and therefore it will continue to be monitored in the coming year. In addition, the process of appointing key staff will be checked in 2016 for its quality, effectiveness and applicability.

6. Focus on Quality and Service

In the past year, the **Academic Affairs** department was created to achieve an unequivocal classification of responsibilities and to make this clearer to students. As its name suggests, the Academic Affairs department incorporates the service offices directly related to academic aspects of the student lifecycle and instruction.



Fig. 1: Structure of the Academic Affairs Department and its relationship with the University Communication and Marketing Departments.

Figure 1 illustrates how a student comes to the university: while the Marketing Department raises awareness of Karlshochschule International University among potential applicants, e.g. at trade fairs, and carries out the preliminary non-binding meetings, the University Communication Department deals with enrolment. After this they are assigned to Student Service, i.e. the Academic Affairs Department. The Admissions Department has been entirely incorporated into the University Communication Department.

University Communication also supports the Careers Service Department in the organisation and support of **company projects**. This has led to consistent professionalisation: communication is clearly more structured, especially with students, with all information and key dates for individual steps being provided in advance so students can estimate and distribute their workload. In addition, company representatives are consulted in advance, for instance to establish whether expectations placed on students are realistic. Students describe this company projects phase as being very intense and have evaluated it very positively (see IV 2.). Of course, the presentation phase (=examination phase) is experienced as stressful. Regarding it biopsychologically, it is easy to understand why the students consider the feedback rounds to date to be less than perfect: the individual stress associated with deadlines meant that the feedback coming from examiners and coaches did not find a resonance that stimulated self-reflection. For this reason, feedback forms have been developed to record their comments immediately after the examinations. In this case, too, support is provided by an employee

from the Careers Service and/or University Communication. This gives students the opportunity of profiting from the feedback for themselves and their further studies even some time after the presentation. It can now be seen how the company projects contribute not only to improvement in expertise but also to a student's personal development.

One spin-off from intensively supporting company representatives is also the financial recognition gained for Karlshochschule. Since the University Communication Department took over providing the support, it has systematically monitored the companies involved in company projects, in terms of both satisfaction and willingness to donate.

At the start of their company project, students are obliged to write a **project briefing**. A template for this was introduced in 2014 by the staff member in charge of the module. In collaboration with this staff member, in 2015 QM developed a more detailed template for project briefings for internal projects. In its meeting on October 6, 2015, the Presidential Board decided that the "Project Briefing" template is always to be used when projects meet at least one of the following criteria:

- it has a duration of more than one month
- it has a budget of more than 1,000 euros; or it necessitates external costs
- it spans several departments

The template can be found in the Infopool, where it can be accessed by anyone responsible for a project. Since its use was decided only at the end of 2015, checks in the coming year will determine whether this presidential requirement is complied with. The aim of the use of the project briefing is to name and clearly define in advance the interfaces between participating departments. This should increase service quality internally. In a further step, the project briefing also serves to qualitatively monitor project progress.

7. Networking with QM Community

The high quality of teaching at Karlshochschule University has been confirmed many times with special awards and recently in particular by the unconditional system accreditation. Strengthened by these assessments from third parties, it is time to position ourselves more clearly in the quality community and to stand up as an initiator for "rethinking" in this field, too. At the start of 2015, an opportunity arose within the framework of the spring meeting of the Universities' Working Group of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Evaluation e.V. [German Society for Evaluation] to submit an abstract on the topic "How do evaluations affect universities? – Desirable and undesirable effects":

How do evaluations affect universities? – Desirable and undesirable effects

The influence of evaluation results in the planning and decisions of university management

A report on the experience of Karlshochschule International University

Dr. Diana Casel

The student evaluation of seminars and lectures has become indispensable as a central element in the qualitative monitoring of teaching at universities. In order to ensure a regular high participation rate, closed control loops are needed, which for the students are reflected as visible consequences during their instruction. At the Karlshochschule International University, the findings are not only fed back directly into joint discussions in the teaching events, but are also taken to the Presidential Board as additional evidence when considering decisions to be made regarding staff and further training. So if lecturers receive repeated negative evaluations, the university may discontinue their employment. In recent years, two teaching contracts were not extended or revoked for this reason. In order to avoid having to make this type of decision in future, professionalising the appointment of and support for lecturers was declared by the Presidential Board to be a focus for quality improvement in teaching for the year 2014. This led to the process of the appointment of lecturers being checked at every stage and individual selection criteria (e.g. former teaching activities) have become more focussed. Subsequently, the support for lecturers and the Instructor Manual at Karlshochschule International University have been revised. Furthermore, individual items from the student evaluation of seminars and lectures that were evaluated as only moderately good or were named by students in the free text field have been identified by the Presidential Board as minor development points and highlighted as topics for the Instructors Day. During the Instructors Day at the Karlshochschule International University, these topics are discussed with all teaching staff to derive recommendations for action. The follow-up survey then places a particular focus on whether these have been implemented.

This procedure – from evaluation result or student feedback via feedback cards → securing the results and drafting suggestions for recommended actions by the Quality Management Officer → to the Presidential Board → agreed recommended actions to those involved → subsequent re-consideration in the follow-up – is the control loop that is actively practised at Karlshochschule International University. It is irrelevant here whether the instrument at hand is the student evaluation of seminars and lectures, the student evaluation of general conditions, the survey of employees, or any other.

The focal points derived by the Presidential Board do not represent the only issues that are named as annual topics for quality development in study and teaching. Rather, the results are used to enhance the measures for achieving the overall aims of the university. An example of the professionalisation of the process of the appointment of lecturers can be seen very well in how congruent the focus setting of university management is with the recommendation from external experts: during their first site inspection, the system accreditation assessors also identified the process of the appointment of lecturers as requiring improvement. Since at this point in time the optimisation was already being worked on, by the time of the second site inspection, the assessors could already see results.”

The submitted abstract was judged by the organiser to be so interesting that a presentation and a publication arose from it. The event took place in May 2015 at the Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz University in Hannover. The feedback wall received particularly positive evaluation. Because of the size of the Karlsruhochschule International University, there was an undertone in many questions doubting how significantly larger universities, such as the University of Vienna with over 90,000 students⁴, could benefit from the (positively evaluated) experiences at Karls. Here, the Quality Management Officer positioned herself unequivocally. She explained that she encourages each individual subject department to change things and function as a pilot for the others. In the same way, the smaller size of Karlsruhochschule is not a hindrance to acting as a role-model for larger institutions.

Currently still outstanding is the publication in an edited volume, which is envisioned for 2016. The plan for the coming year is to remain visible and approachable in the community.

⁴ Source: Federal Ministry for Science, Research and the Economy, Vienna; as of 28/02/2015

IV. Internal Evaluations (Check)

The cycle of evaluations and surveys at Karlshochschule is clearly defined in the QUESO (Regulations on Quality Development and Assurance). In order to ensure that this cycle is already clear at the beginning of the year and can be conducted consistently, the Evaluation Calendar was devised as a useful tool. However, in spite of this, not all of the evaluations and surveys were carried out accordingly. This affected the survey of employees, the survey of all instructors, and the evaluation of general conditions. An in-house “values survey” with overlapping topics had been carried out near the due date for a new survey of all employees and instructors, so it was decided not to carry the latter out. Instead, a new survey will take place in March 2016.

The reason for the absence of an evaluation of general conditions in 2015 was a change of staff in one of the key positions for this. Additionally, the Academic Affairs department was being established. So there was a risk that students would be feeling somewhat unsettled by the new structures and the departure of long-term staff members, which would lead to results which could not give an unambiguous picture of the service at Karlshochschule.

Nonetheless, surveys and evaluations which directly concerned the instruction did take place as planned.

1. Student Evaluations of Seminars and Lectures

The heart of the evaluations and surveys at Karlshochschule is the students’ evaluation of seminars and lectures. In previous semesters it had already proved possible to clearly increase the participation rate, and in the 2015/16 winter semester the critical value of 67% participation rate was exceeded for the first time (reference date: 31/12/15); all Bachelor degree programs). This high participation rate means the judgements made in the evaluations can be clearly regarded as meaningful. In Fig. 2 an increase can clearly be seen in the proportion of seminars and lectures with a 67-100% participation rate: in the 2014 summer semester there was no event with 67-100% participation rate, but in the following semester one third of the events fell into this category. Within another year this figure had risen another 30%. So in the winter semester 2015/16, almost two thirds of the Bachelor seminars and lectures had a participation rate between 67% and 100%. This increase corresponds to a reduction in the proportion whose participation rate is less than 24.9%, which has been decreasing successively since the summer semester 2014.

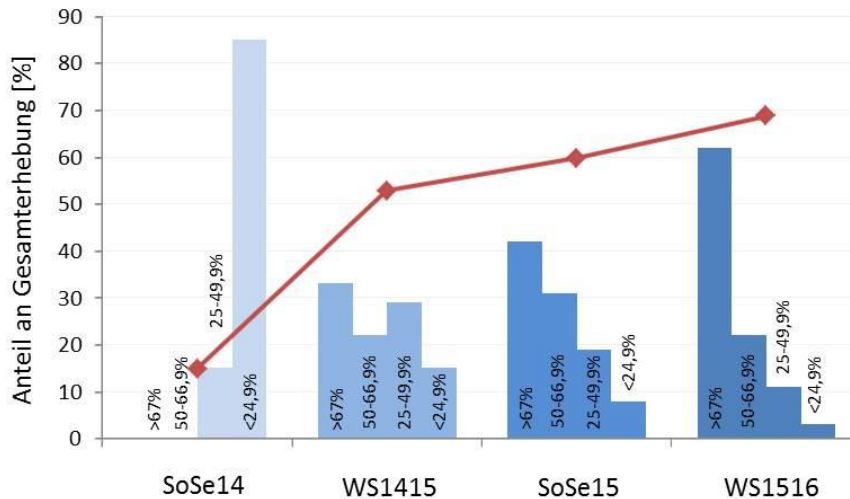


Fig. 2: Development of participation rates in the Bachelor degree programs in recent semesters. The average participation rate has been increasing continuously since SS 2014 and in WS 2015/16 exceeded the critical value of 67% for the first time. The proportion of the seminars and lectures with a participation rate of $\geq 67\%$ increased while the proportion with a rate of $\leq 24.9\%$ decreased.

The aim for the future will be to maintain this level and keep on improving it. It can be expected that the coming increases will be marginal. So a significant focus will be on eliminating participation rates of below 24.9% as far as possible. Low participation rates generally occur for seminars and lectures where new instructors are teaching. As in previous years, a very comprehensive questionnaire is used for these events, which possibly deters the students from filling it out. This corresponds to positive comments on the use of the shortened questionnaire. So it is necessary to raise awareness among the students of the particular importance to new instructors of a comprehensive evaluation with a high participation rate.

In the 2014 Quality Report, core results were presented in table form. At that time, it was not meaningful to compare the results to previous surveys: the reasons were a low participation rate in 2014, adaptation of the questions, and modifications of the answer scales. This year, comparisons can be made (Table 1). The focus of the results here lies in the student satisfaction, achievement of learning objectives and recommendation of seminars and lectures. The values from the previous year are in the table with a grey background.

In nearly all degree programs, the students indicated they are more satisfied than in 2014, which was also reflected in the readiness to recommend seminars and lectures to others. In every degree program, all students chose the answer option "Yes" for at least one seminar or lecture when asked if it could be recommended to others. This also applies to the new degree programs "International Relations" and "Politics, Philosophy and Economics". For both of these, when the courses establish themselves and student numbers reach the foreseen levels, the results for student satisfaction and willingness to recommend to others can both be expected to increase.

For the Arts and Cultural Management course of study there is a reduced willingness to recommend. This is associated with lower satisfaction in the modules, and satisfaction with the instructors is not increasing any more.

Table 1: Summary of core results and their development compared to 2014. (IB = International Business; IEM = International Energy Management; IEVM = International Event Management; IMA = International Marketing Management; IMK = Intercultural Management and Communication; IMM = International Media Management; ITM = International Tourism Management; KKM = Arts and Cultural Management; IR = International Relations; PPE = Politics, Philosophy and Economics)

	IB	IEM	IEVM	IMA	IMK	IMM	ITM	KKM	IR	PPE
Zufriedenheit Lehrleistung der / des Dozenten	2,0 ▲ 2,3	2,2 ▲ 2,4	2,1 = 2,1	2,2 ▲ 2,3	2,0 ▲ 2,3	2,0 ▲ 2,2	2,4 ▼ 2,2	2,3 = 2,3	2,4	2,6
Lehrveranstaltungen, die weiterzu- empfehlen sind	84,7% ▲ 80,8%	91,2% ▲ 80,2%	87,1% ▲ 84,2%	80,5% ▲ 77,7%	88% ▲ 75,9%	82,8% ▲ 71,4%	85,6% ▲ 82,8%	76,7% ▼ 83,1%	75,7%	75,7%
(absehbare) Erreichung der Lernziele	2,4 ▲ 2,6	2,1 ▲ 2,5	2,2 ▲ 2,5	2,2 ▲ 2,5	2,3 ▲ 2,8	2,2 ▲ 2,6	2,3 ▲ 2,7	2,5 ▲ 2,8	2,6	3,3
Zufriedenheit Modul	2,3 = 2,3	2,3 = 2,3	2,2 ▲ 2,4	2,3 = 2,3	2,4 ▲ 2,5	2,2 ▲ 2,3	2,4 ▼ 2,3	2,6 ▼ 2,4	2,5	2,7

One development which can be viewed positively relates to the achievability of learning objectives: a clear increase can be reported here. Whereas in the previous reference period, the values were between 2.5 and 2.8, the values for the management-oriented degree programs have improved to between 2.1 and 2.5. For the social sciences degree programs it can be expected that the values will improve when the new courses are established.

2. Evaluations of Company Projects

Although the company projects also count as an instructional event (in German, *Lehrveranstaltung*), they are not included in the student evaluation of seminars and lectures. Since they have their own, special format, they are also subject to their own, special evaluation, with a focus on the communication between students, clients and the university, as well as reflection on self-organisation. For both modules – the Introductory Company Project (IPRO) and the Advanced Company Project (APRO) – identical evaluation questionnaires are used, to ensure comparability and also to monitor development in a particular student cohort. The cohorts are not totally identical, but the majority of students do go on from the third into the fourth semester. For this cohort-related reason, this section of this year’s Quality Report is based on the results from the winter semester of 2014/15 (first use of the new questionnaire) and the summer semester of 2015.

The students evaluated both modules positively. The IPRO was evaluated as job-oriented, interesting and helpful. The indicators “stressful” and “strenuous” were placed lower down in

the list. If we consider the self-estimates of workload (in hours), we find a possible indication that students organise themselves better after they have completed the IPRO (Fig. 3, dark blue column in each case). These dark blues columns are more evenly distributed, although a second clear peak can be seen at a workload of 31 to 50 hours: almost 22% of the respondents indicated an IPRO-related workload of this magnitude. In comparison, a majority of students indicate a lower workload for APRO, with 76% reporting a figure between one and ten hours. Only 6% of these students indicated they had to work more than 31 hours per week.

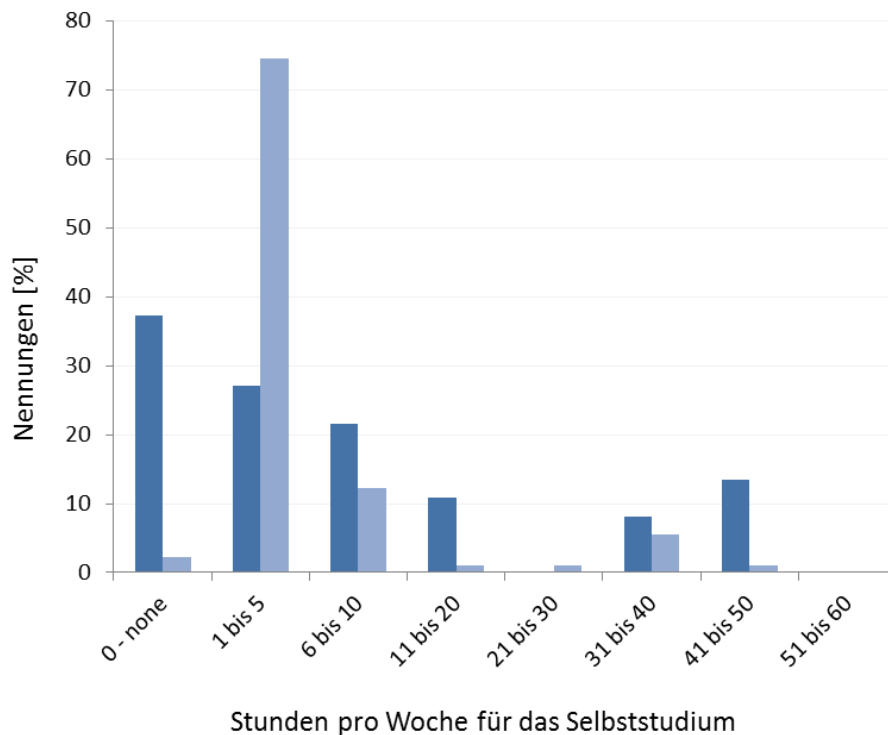


Fig. 3. Indication made by students of how many hours self-study are due to the modules IPRO (dark blue) or APRO (light blue).

Although almost a quarter of students felt the workload was too high for the IPRO (24%; ‘reasonable’ 70%), this feeling changed by the time of the APRO, with only 16% indicating an ‘excessive’ workload, compared to 74% for ‘reasonable’. This also supports the theory that the students are able to organise themselves more efficiently by the time they carry out the second practical project.

It is also important to know whether the students in these practical projects are able to put theoretical knowledge into practice and whether they gain any knowledge which would otherwise have remained unknown. In the IPRO module – the first company project – 83% of the respondents indicated they were able to find a practical application for their theoretical knowledge. And for the second project, APRO, the figure was still 74%. The same applies to the gaining of knowledge which students would not find only in lectures: for IPRO, 91% of the students said they had acquired this type of knowledge during the company project and in

APRO this figure was still 81%. We can ascribe the decrease in these two figures between the first and the second project to the fact that the students have gained greater experience in the meantime.

These results confirm that the company projects are an outstanding enrichment for the academic education of Karlshochschule students. This opportunity is relatively rare in higher education.

3. Survey of First-Semester Students

As in 2014, the survey of first-semester students in this reporting period was also carried out during the Orientation Week. The Orientation Week had been restructured and as a result it did not prove possible to achieve the 100% participation rate of the previous year. So the data is not as good as that of the comparison period.

With regard to the application process, Karlshochschule was able to improve compared to the previous year on several points, but for three topics there was a deterioration. The students evaluated their satisfaction for each topic as follows (the figure quoted here is the proportion of students who rated their satisfaction for each topic as 'very good' or 'good'):

- Transparency 82%; (2014: 80%).
- Atmosphere: 95%; (2014: 87%).
- **Processing time for application documents:** 77%; (2014: 83%).
- **Availability of contact partners for queries** 82%; (2014: 86%).
- Contents of oral interview: 70%; (2014: 68%).
- **Individual support:** 70%; (2014: 83%).
- Schedule of interview day 64%; (2014: 59%).
- Access to information prior to start of studies: 71%; (2014: 61%).

The fact that the satisfaction rates decreased for availability and support clearly reveals a need for action, since support is supposed to be a strength of Karlshochschule. There also needs to be an improvement in the time taken to deal with enquiries, since almost 90% of the students had other universities they could have chosen to study at. Karls cannot allow itself to take a step backwards when it comes to attracting the best and most suitable new students. So it is reassuring to see the positive development regarding "Access to information prior to start of studies". There is still room for development here, though.

New students decide to come to Karlshochschule because of its international orientation (95%), the courses on offer (94%), and the practical orientation/company projects (90%) or support (90%). The least significant criterion was the proximity to place of residence (16%).

A decisive role is played by the factors “Course contents” (100%) and “Practical approach” (90%), when it comes to the selection of degree course, just as they do for the choice of Karlshochschule as university. In addition, another positive basis for the decision for a particular degree program is its “Prospects for the future” (85%). In contrast, much less attention was paid to program length (32%) or the reputation of the professors (35%).

If the results of the evaluation of company projects and the expectations of the new students are overlaid, it is particularly the strong practical approach which can be seen to be both highly valued by new students and positively evaluated by students who completed the projects. So Karlshochschule has clearly developed a strength here, which needs to be firmly established for the future. Support and availability of contact partners for queries then needs to be further improved to successfully compete for the best candidates.

4. Survey of Graduates

The timing of the survey of graduates was close to the graduation ceremonies, which makes the low participation rate even more surprising: this year it was only 33%. This is especially regrettable if we consider that, for the first time, the survey also included questions on the satisfaction of graduates with the support provided during the Bachelor thesis. This can be seen as a particularly sensitive phase since it is the time of the last assessed course work, and therefore the last official action related to the course of study. In order to ensure the students become alumni and, with this, ambassadors for the university, particular focus needs to be paid to this: if a positive impression is gained from this last official action, it can be conducive for the further life path in Karlshochschule (e.g. for Lifelong Learning, if Karlshochschule decides to offer certificate study programs).

In response to the question of whether the graduates would choose their course of study again, one half answered with a clear “Yes”. A further 22% chose “Yes, with reservations”. A clear expression of support for Karlshochschule was given by 53% of the surveyed graduates when they were asked if they would choose Karls to study again. One eighth responded positively but with reservations, although the comments accompanying this answer tended to be positive and motivating. Examples include: *“We can experiment so well! That could be institutionalised, with a start-up lab or something similar! ZU has something like that, too ;))”* (Note from the Quality Officer: This comment came from a surveyed student who indicated no positive experiences of support after submitting their Bachelor thesis.) However, 19% would not study at Karls again. Two “No” respondents indicated that the value-for-money was not sufficient. In future, Karlshochschule needs to work on enhancing the positive identification with

the university of its graduates. The key here is possibly the support provided during the work on the Bachelor or Master thesis, which will be explored in the next step.

Figure 4 shows the different degrees of satisfaction with the overall situation during the thesis period.

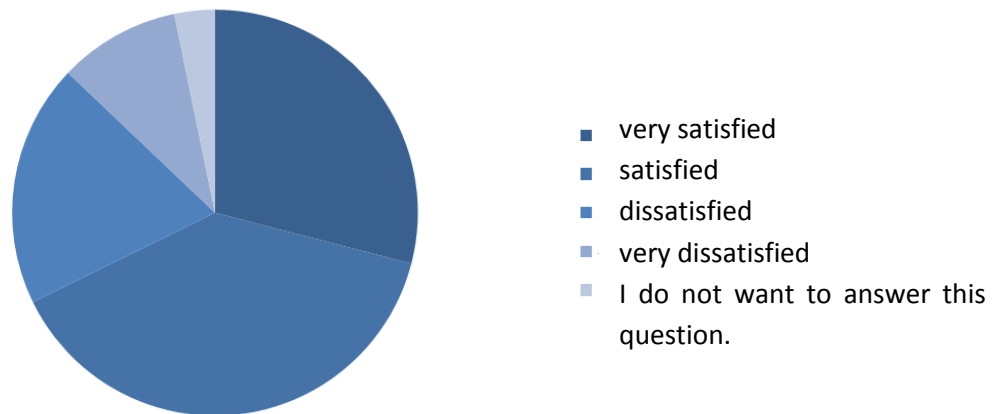


Fig. 4: Satisfaction with the overall situation during the thesis period (from topic to evaluation). The satisfaction is displayed for students from all degree programs.

In general, the surveyed graduates were 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' with the overall situation during the thesis period (29% and 39% respectively). However, there were 29% who were 'dissatisfied' or 'very dissatisfied' with this phase of their studies. This was not due to the topic of their thesis (satisfaction rating was over 90%) but rather the academic supervision (25% satisfied or very dissatisfied) and the availability of the supervisor. For the latter factor, 34% were not satisfied, with more than half of these 'very dissatisfied'. So there is a clear need for action in this regard, if Karls wants its graduates to go out into the world as enthusiastic ambassadors for the university.

After successfully completing their studies at Karlshochschule, 42% of respondents had begun employment and 37% were in full-time studies. Some 20% were looking for work: one problem identified by a majority of these respondents was that employers in their field were generally looking for applicants with professional experience.

V. Accreditations (Check)

1. System Accreditation

After Karlshochschule was accepted into the system accreditation in 2014, with the site inspections also taking place successfully in that year, in April 2015 the university received the results: as of 13 April, 2015, Karlshochschule is system-accredited, without conditions, until the end of the winter semester 2021/22. It only took one year from starting the procedure until notification of the result. The following schedule lists the milestones:

- since 2013 preliminary work
- 8 April 2014 procedure start
- 16 April 2014 self-documentation submitted
- 23 May 2014 first site inspection
- 3/4 November 2014 second site inspection
- 13 April 2015 commission's decision: system accreditation without conditions

This decision, and particularly the speed of the procedure, is a reflection of how successfully all stakeholders at Karlshochschule worked on the accreditation: it was only the intensive, focussed cooperation which enabled this impressive achievement in such a short time.

2. New Accreditations

Immediately after achieving the system accreditation, Karlshochschule carried out its first self-accreditation: the cluster accreditation of the four social sciences degree programs "International Relations", "Politics, Philosophy and Economics", "Citizenship and Civic Engagement" and "Globalization, Governance and Law". Under the system accreditation, Karlshochschule is obliged to carry out the self-accreditations in a way closely based on the questionnaire used by the agency which approved the system accreditation. In this case, it is the questionnaire from FIBAA (Foundation for International Business Administration Accreditation). With this in mind, it also made sense to seek the support of an assessor from FIBAA to advise us during our first internal accreditation procedure. The team of assessors was as follows:

- **Professor Dr. Andrea Römmele**
Hertie School of Governance
Professor for Communication in Politics and Civil Society
- **Professor Dr. Klaus Koziol**
Catholic University of Applied Sciences Freiburg
Endowed Chair Social Marketing
Head of the Department Media and Public Relations

of the Diocese of Rottenburg-Stuttgart

- **Dr. Hans Gscheidmeyer**
Graduate Chemist
Manager at Unilever
Coach, Mentor and Consultant
Chair of the Association “Ethics and Responsibility in the World of Work”
- **Laura Niemann**
Student Vice-President Zeppelin University
Student in Master degree program “Culture and Communication Sciences”
- **Hermann Fischer**
Undersecretary (retired)
Expert at FIBAA

According with §38 of the Regulations on Quality Development and Assurance, the Quality Management Officer assumes responsibility for the procedure and is the internal executor of the tasks which an external accreditation agency would otherwise perform. The site inspection took place on 30 April 2015 on the Karlshochschule premises. All four degree programs were accredited without conditions until the end of the summer semester 2020. The assessors were deeply impressed by their conversations with the alumni. In a very special way, these made it clear that the maxim promoted by Karlshochschule really is actively put into practice: educating people who can act in an ethically considered way. This impression even found its way into the accreditation report: *“... All four degree programs are characterised by the way they convey ethical, social, cultural and intercultural contents: this is not just a reflection of their original substantive aims and curricula, but also of the university’s mission statement. We are almost tempted to conclude that teaching the academic curricula serves as a means to train up academically minded, ethically confident, socially active and intercultural literate personalities. ...”*

After the successful accreditation of these degree programs, the Senate agreed to officially adopt them in July 2015, so International Relations and Politics, Philosophy and Economics could both begin in the winter semester 2015/16 as planned. The interest in International Relations was surprisingly high, despite the low level of marketing measures undertaken. For the winter semester, 13 students enrolled for International Relations and four students for Politics, Philosophy and Economics.

VI. Measures Derived from Evaluations (Act)

The continued increase in the participation rate for the **seminar and lecture evaluation** is a fully positive development. The aim of Karlshochschule is to train mature students who can express their opinions clearly and unambiguously. In this way they can help to change things – especially the things they are experts on and which directly concern them. As the ‘receptive’ party in the seminars and lectures, they are the best people to judge how well the instruction-learning setting is contributing to the success of their studies. As experts, they need to be equipped to form and present their opinions in an appropriate way. It was clear from the last survey in WS 2105/16 that the students needed some training in how to evaluate. So the University Didactics and Quality Management Officers jointly developed measures to raise the students’ general awareness of feedback processes: from the university didactics side, giving feedback was (once again) made a core part of the module “Facilitated Reflection”. The Didactics Officer continues to be available as a contact in case of any problems in the current semester. The fact that she has this role will also be communicated by the QM officer in preliminary conversations with the course spokespeople; these will also be used to make it clear that the evaluation of seminars and lectures is only one part of the whole feedback process. At the same time, she will again explain the value of discussing the evaluation results with instructors – and here, too, the University Didactics Officer has a role to play as contact and, where necessary, mediator. Through this package of measures it can be assumed that feedback from students will become more targeted, usable and objective than it was in some cases in the previous reporting period.

Another field where action is necessary came to light during the **survey of graduates**: supervision of the Bachelor thesis. The Quality Management Officer has already discussed this result with the Dean and submitted a request for the professors to take up the issue. Since the Dean of Faculty I is also the superior for employees in the Academic Affairs department, it can be expected that action will be taken rapidly. He can integrate the ideas from the professors and those from the Service staff, leading to a purposeful solution. The Quality Management Officer will assist this process.

There is also need for optimisation regarding the support for **new students**, since evaluation ratings for Karlshochschule here in 2015 were lower than in 2014. Support at the very beginning of students’ studies is very important if Karls is to make things easier for students and help them prepare for what they can expect from Karls courses and what Karls expects from

them in return. It has to be an aim of the university to offer the appropriate quality of service which guarantees the support needed if students are to be able to work independently, but secure in the knowledge that help is available if they really need it. As in the previous year, it is important to find the right balance here and ensure that Karls is helping students to help themselves. Service at Karlshochschule should not mean doing everything for the students.

The **evaluation of general conditions** was not carried out, since during the relevant time period the organisation was having to cope with significant staff fluctuation. This was due in large part to staff changes in the Examinations Office and Service Desk, both of which are key areas for the students. The organisation needs to gain stability in 2016 and create some 'calm' if it is to demonstrate the resilience needed by students from the institution where they are studying. Students can only complete their studies in peace if they have defined structures and clearly understand who they can turn to when needed. They will also then be able to give sufficient feedback regarding their satisfaction with the different service points they come into contact with at Karlshochschule – this is the core aim of the evaluation of general conditions.

VII. Concluding Summary and Outlook

Summary

Once again, Karlshochschule was able to demonstrate the quality it can deliver on various levels: external assessors and other third parties are particularly impressed by the quality assurance measures in place and being actively practised at Karlshochschule. This then has a positive effect on all members of the university since it shows which goals we have already achieved. Bearing in mind the spirit of Karlshochschule, it is no wonder that its members find new ambitions and treat previous achievements as the basis for further development. This Quality Report shows that there is need for development in various fields of action. One particular example which has been identified is the issue of Bachelor thesis supervision. Here, the whole organisation, but in particular the Examinations Office and instructors, needs to develop measures which can lead to a clear improvement in satisfaction and in turn ensure that the external image of Karlshochschule remains solid.

Outlook

In addition to the process support and monitoring measures already mentioned, the coming year will also see a focus on consolidating the portfolio of degree programs. The decrease in numbers of new students for the degree program International Energy Management and the wishes expressed by students and graduates to further develop this course of study with an emphasis on sustainability suggested this latter change should be seriously considered. Discussions with experts, graduates and students have already been conducted, so the university is aiming to re-introduce the course in spring 2016 as “International Sustainability Management” (starting WS 2016/17). The International Energy Management degree program will then see no new admissions.

Another priority which cannot be neglected in 2016 is the adjustment of the university management system designed to facilitate administrative procedures at all levels. In spite of a clearly drafted specification of requirements, it is still not the case that all modules have been imported into the system. Another factor is the technical developments which have taken place since the specification of requirements was issued, which necessitates a re-adjustment of some specific requirements. This fundamental revision will take place in 2016, allowing relevant modules to be used regularly and securely. This secure operation of the system is a basis for the correct calculation of the key indicators essential for accurate quality assessment and, in turn, for further quality development. These indicators will also play a

central role in future accreditations, since they make a key contribution to the overall picture of a degree program and to the evaluation of its academic feasibility.

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