

Course structure

The programme can be studied in one or in one and a half years and is divided into 13 modules, taught in intensive seminars of one week duration at Kassel University. After 13 modules and an 8 week work placement, a period of six months for writing a thesis and preparing for an oral examination follows.

The language of the programme is basically English, but a few modules will be taught in German. Students who do not speak enough German to follow classes will be able to complete the programme exclusively in English.

The modules of the International Master Programme “Higher Education” presented here complement one another. Students are expected to decide upon a focus of their study by choosing 2 out of several modules in each of the subject areas 2 – 6. Students are welcome to consult their lecturers regarding this decision. Modules of subject area one and seven are compulsory for all students, while modules on offer in subject areas two to six are optional. Students will have to attend modules (in each subject area) on a scale of 12 credit points. In the course of max. 1 ½ years students are expected to acquire 78 credit points and pass 8 weeks of a work placement for which 12 credits are granted. Together with the Master thesis (25 credits) and the oral examination (5 credits) altogether 120 credits have to be earned.

Each of the following subject areas will be taught in modules:

Subject area 1	Introduction to Higher Education Research and Development
Number and type of teaching units	Two part-modules, each one a 2 ½ day intensive seminar (20 hours each)
Teaching content and objectives	<p>Both part-modules are designed to integrate knowledge and experiences which the students already have in the field of research on higher education and in higher education development.</p> <p><i>Part-module 1.1: Topics and Objectives of Higher Education Research and Development</i></p> <p>This module provides an overview of topics in higher education research and the history of the higher education systems of different countries. The main aim of the course is to familiarize the students with research on and the practice of “higher education”.</p> <p><i>Part-module 1.2: Concepts of Higher Education Research and Higher Education Development</i></p> <p>In this course, knowledge of important concepts in the sociology and economy of education and education policy will be acquired. The objective of the course is to provide students with the theoretical tools useful for researchers or professionals in the field of higher education.</p>
Duration and frequency of the module	Both part-modules will be offered in one week once a year
Language	English
Teaching/learning methods	Seminar; with independent reading, analysis and presentation
Student input	90 hours per part-module
Examination structure	Presentation (20 min.) or presentation of a project and term paper (20 pages)
Number of credits	3 credits per part-module

Subject area 2	The Higher Education System
Number and type of teaching units	Two modules, each one a 5 day intensive seminar (40 hours each)
Teaching content and objectives	<p><i>Module 2.1: Structural Development of the Higher Education Systems</i></p> <p>Concepts of diversification and differentiation (of types of higher education, students, and course programmes) will be examined by analysing the quantitative and structural development of the higher education systems of different countries. The impacts of these developments on higher education reform processes in the various countries will also be discussed. Students will become familiar with the relationships between the cycles of reforms and their political and social context as well as the cultural dependency of actions.</p> <p><i>Module 2.2: Higher Education – State and Society</i></p> <p>Access to study, organization of study programmes and of exams will be the main topics of this module. Students will also learn about the participatory rights of the different groups inside a university in the form of a brief description of various higher education legislation. The course aims at providing an overview of the regulations of the organization of higher education institutions, so that students come to know how a university works from the points of view of academic/non-academic staff and students.</p>
Duration and frequency of the module	Each module once a year
Language	English
Teaching/learning methods	Seminar; with independent reading, analysis and presentation
Student input	180 hours per module
Examination structure	Per module: Presentation (20 min.) or presentation of a project and term paper (20 pages)
Number of credits	6 credits per module

Subject area 3	Knowledge and Society
Number and type of teaching units	Three modules, each one a 5 day intensive seminar (40 hours each)
Teaching content and objectives	<p><i>Module 3.1: Higher Education and Work: Acquisition of Competencies and first Employment</i></p> <p>Research approaches to and theories on the relationships between higher education and work (acquisition of competencies and distribution of status) will be analysed in order to assess their explanatory potential for the development of higher education systems in different countries and different fields of study.</p> <p><i>Module 3.2: Transition from Higher Education to Employment and Professional Career</i></p> <p>This module will focus on the critical assessment of empirical findings on the (occupational) career and advancement of graduates during their first years of work based on tracer studies carried out in selected countries, universities and subjects. This analysis aims to assess the importance of these studies for the development of higher education and to work on concepts for independent studies, which could serve as a basis for strategic decisions in the fields of career services and alumni-work at universities and also answer questions on the practical utilisation of competencies acquired at university and thus the quality of higher education as a whole.</p> <p><i>Module 3.3: Students in an International Perspective</i></p> <p>Participants will become familiar with different definitions and role models of students. This module will strongly emphasise the international perspective (especially focusing on Europe). The social situation of students will be described by analysing examples from various fields (e.g. study finance). Different socio-psychological models of perception of what a student is will be demonstrated (considering, among other things, the example of students' service and support). Participants will benefit from this course in a way that enables them to understand the role of students in the context of social processes and to recognise the logic of systems behind various social constructions.</p>
Duration and frequency of the module	Depending on student choice at least 2 out of the 3 modules will be offered each year
Language	English
Teaching/learning methods	Seminar; with independent reading, analysis and presentation
Student input	180 hours per module
Examination structure	Per module: Presentation (20 min.) or project presentation and term paper (20 pages)
Number of credits	6 credits per module

Subject area 4	Teaching, Learning and Research
Number and type of teaching units	Five modules, each one a 5 day intensive seminar (40 hours each)
Teaching content and objectives	<p><i>Module 4.1: Curriculum Development, Course Design, Higher Education Didactics, Evaluation of Teaching</i></p> <p>Students will acquire knowledge of theories, functions and models of curriculum development in various contexts and for different target groups, the practical challenge of designing and implementing curricula, and quality assessment at the level of course programmes. Furthermore, problems and opportunities of the informal dimensions of course programmes and trends in the international curriculum debate will be discussed. This module aims to expand the knowledge which students already have of curricula and courses of study, to strengthen their analytical competencies in the area of curriculum design and implementation and to advance their critical potential for decision making and implementation.</p> <p><i>Module 4.2: Research Management: Planning, Development, Funding, Transfer</i></p> <p>This module provides an overview of and insight into well-established methods of conceptualising research projects (research questions, design, methods, etc.). At the same time students will be made familiar with procedures of acquisition of external research funding at various sponsoring organizations. Furthermore, students will gain insight into the transfer of research results into the market or the public domain. Students will benefit from this module by acquiring the ability to conceptualise research projects, to apply for funding, carry out projects independently, and to report on research results and/or market them.</p> <p><i>Module 4.3: Bachelor's and Master's from an International Perspective</i></p> <p>Participants will learn about the development of study structures according to the bachelor's/master's-model, in line with a credit point and modular system, according to an international and comparative perspective. Students will learn about definitions of the concept, the development and implementation of bachelor and master structures, credit point and modularisation. On the basis of analyses of various kinds of material, students will gain an insight into the different logics and types of bachelor's and master's programmes in a worldwide context, which will enable them to apply their knowledge to other higher education reform settings.</p> <p><i>Module 4.4: E-Learning, New Media and Communication Technologies</i></p> <p>This module aims to familiarise students with or improve their skills in using new media and information technology. A particular focus of this module will be on e-learning and techniques of presentation.</p> <p><i>Module 4.4: Working at Universities</i></p> <p>This module focuses on the basic issues of work-analysis, giving an overview of the different professional qualifications as parts of the division of labour in higher education institutions and the employment situation of university teachers, in order to make students familiar with efficient human resource management strategies.</p>
Duration and frequency of the module	Depending on student choice at least 2 out of the 5 modules will be offered each year
Language	English
Teaching/learning methods	Seminar; with independent reading, analysis and presentation
Student input	180 hours per module
Examination structure	Per module: Presentation (20 min.) or project presentation and term paper (20 pages)
Number of credits	6 credits per module

Subject area 5	Higher Education Management, Organization and Decision Making
Number and type of teaching units	Two modules, each one a 5 day intensive seminar (40 hours each) Two part-modules, each one a 2½ day intensive seminar (20 hours each)
Teaching content and objectives	<p><i>Part-module 5.1: Structures of Leadership and Decision Making in Higher Education. Introduction to Quality Management</i></p> <p>In this module students will acquire the ability to analyse quality management at higher education institutions from a functional, personal, and socio-political point of view. They will gather knowledge about the synchronic and diachronic diversity of decision making and leadership functions and structures in higher education institutions, and will get to know the relationship between internal and external factors in this context. We will discuss the basics of normative and descriptive theories of decision making and their use for the analysis of decision making problems and the structuring of decision making processes in higher education institutions. Finally, students will gain an understanding of the competencies and the roles of decision makers, together with the process-related nature of decisions, cognition and knowledge processing, and communication structures and cultures as basic conditions for decision making. Students will gain an understanding of content and process related aspects of quality as an overarching performance indicator and as a challenge for management.</p> <p><i>Module 5.2: Governance and Academic Cultures</i></p> <p>Students will learn new concepts and instruments for the internal and external steering of higher education institutions and their impact on the organisation of teaching, learning and research. Special attention will be paid to the newly emerging forms of “institutional research”, and to the organisational development of departments. Students will become familiar with important processes and procedures of departmental development and preparation for decision making.</p> <p><i>Module 5.3: Change Management in Higher Education</i></p> <p>The concept of the university as a “learning organisation” is the basis for this module. Main emphasis will be on information about theories, insights, and procedures of modern organisational development with special focus on: (a) theory and practice of “learning organisations”; (b) acquisition and transfer of knowledge and information; (c) change as a process; (d) role of and dealing with conflicts and opposition, and (e) synergetic leadership.</p> <p>As prospective decision makers at all levels in academic self-governance and administration of higher education institutions, students should acquire skills required for leadership functions in an organisational context. Knowledge of organisational theory will be imparted as well as relevant strategic skills.</p> <p><i>Part-module 5.4: Gender Change Management</i></p> <p>Based on the theory of “gendered organisations” the mechanisms and processes of engendering in higher education institutions and science will be explored. This includes international and historical comparisons of the participation of women in higher education and academic life as well as the discussion of methods for gender-sensitive studies at higher education institutions, academic professions and existing gender-policies in different countries. Students will benefit by acquiring qualifications in the field of gender-sensitivity with regard to research questions and problems, by team-work in both same gender and mixed groups, and by developing gender awareness in every day situations.</p>
Duration and frequency of the module	Depending on student choice at least 2 out of the 5 modules will be offered each year The two part-modules will be offered in one week
Language	English
Teaching/learning methods	Seminar; with independent reading, analysis and presentation
Student input	180 hours per module; 90 hours per part-module
Examination structure	Per module: Presentation (20 min.) or project presentation and term paper (20 pages)
Number of credits	6 credits per module; 3 credits per part-module

Subject area 6	Evaluation and Internationalisation
Number and type of teaching units	Five modules, each one a 5 day intensive seminar (40 hours each)
Teaching content and objectives	<p><i>Module 6.1: Evaluation Outcomes/Meta-Evaluation</i></p> <p>Teaching consists of the how and why of evaluation processes and procedures, the conditions under which they are carried out and the utilisation of their results. The aim is to provide an introduction to the basic concepts of meta-analysis, the use of knowledge gained and the measuring of outcomes and effects, case study analysis, methods of carrying out evaluations and transfer of results.</p> <p><i>Module 6.2: Research Management, Indicators and Evaluation</i></p> <p>Students will receive an insight into the organisation of research programmes in basic university units in terms of financial and personnel management. In addition, they will learn about methods of evaluating research applications, scientometric procedures involved in evaluating research performance and evaluation procedures in research units. The aim is to enable students, within research institutions, to make rational decisions that can be understood by the members of these institutions.</p> <p><i>Module 6.3: Internationalisation</i></p> <p>Historical aspects and clarification of concepts. Internationalisation of curricula. Challenges of study programmes oriented to foreign students with the aim of being able to take these developments into consideration in the organisation of central units (e.g. international relations offices, and continuing education). Internationalisation is to be understood as part of the strategy for creating an institutional profile.</p> <p><i>Modul 6.4: International Mobility/Transnational Education</i></p> <p>The students learn about the development phases of mobility, European mobility policies and programmes and national programmes to promote mobility. In addition, problems of the statistical recording of mobility are discussed. The aim is to acquaint students with an important instrument of internationalisation in university life, to promote understanding of the historic-political background and learn about the strategies involved in making successful applications in national and European support programmes.</p> <p><i>Module 6.5: University Policy and Planning, University and Region</i></p> <p>Students will gain an insight into the development of national university systems from a historical and international perspective. This will involve analysis of planning documents, experience reports, data collections, and external presentations. They will also learn about the tasks and functions of the most important buffer agencies of university planning, past and present. Special attention will be paid to the reciprocal relations between universities, and their environment in order to provide the students with an overview of the scope, objectives, and organisations that shape the university and increase their understanding of the dynamics of university development.</p>
Duration and frequency of the module	Depending on student choice at least 2 out of the 5 modules will be offered each year
Language	English
Teaching and learning methods	Seminar; with independent reading, analysis and presentation
Student input	180 hours per module
Examination structure	Per module: Presentation (20 min.) or project presentation and term paper (20 pages)
Number of credits	6 credits per module

Subject area 7	Empirical Research Methods
Number and type of teaching units	Two modules, each one a 5 day intensive seminar (40 hours each)
Teaching content and objectives	<p><i>Module 7.1: Data Collection and Analysis I</i></p> <p>Introduction to quantitative and qualitative questionnaires and to German and international education statistics in order to familiarise the students with the most important statistical procedures in university research and in order to give them an overview of the structure and information content of available education statistics.</p> <p><i>Module 7.2: Data Collection and Analysis II</i></p> <p>Introduction to computer-supported data collection techniques (CAPI, CATI, Online) and multivariate procedures of data analysis in order to familiarise students with elaborate statistical procedures.</p>
Duration and frequency of the module	Each module once a year
Language	English
Teaching and learning methods	Seminar; with independent reading, analysis and presentation
Student input	180 hours per module
Examination structure	Per module: Presentation (20 min.) or project presentation and term paper (20 pages)
Number of credits	6 credits per module

Module	Work Placement
Number and type of teaching units	An 8 week work placement
Teaching content and objectives	Experience in the practical work of university research or organisation. Acquisition of key qualifications, such as team work, experience of the world of work in other cultures etc.
Duration and frequency of the module	One within three semesters
Language	English, other foreign languages, German
Teaching and learning methods	Learning on the job, participatory observation, and working on a small project, within the framework of the practical placing
Student input	160 hours practical, plus 40 hours preparatory work, 120 hours post-practical work and 40 hours practical report.
Examination structure	Practical report (20 pages)
Number of credits	12 credits

Module	Master's Thesis und Examination Colloquium
Teaching content and objectives	Independent master's thesis in one of the chosen special subjects. Presentation and discussion of the thesis in a colloquium. Objective: To enable students (a) to carry out and complete projects in and on time and (b) to learn how to present them.
Duration and frequency of the module	Once
Language	English or German
Requirements	Successful conclusion of 13 modules and work placement
Teaching and learning methods	Independent Master's thesis. Short presentation and discussion of the Master's thesis.
Student input	900 hours
Examination structure	Successful master's thesis (50 pages), Examination colloquium on master's thesis (30 min.)
Number of credits	30 credits (25 for master's thesis, 5 for colloquium)