

Code of Conduct for German Higher Education Projects Abroad

Preamble

German higher education projects abroad¹ constitute an important element of the internationalisation of German universities. The scope of such educational projects, carried out under the main academic responsibility of German universities, ranges from individual study programmes offered in collaboration with partner universities abroad to larger projects such as establishing university branches and bi-national universities. Within these projects, the connection to Germany can be ensured in particular through the joint development of curricula, language training and cultural activities, as well as exchange programmes, study visits or internships in Germany and by teaching staff who come from or were trained in Germany.

The heads of the German universities are aware that the success of higher education projects abroad rests primarily on the involvement of all stakeholders and the commitment of all project partners. They assure that they will play their part in making them succeed.

The following points have been noted:

German higher education projects abroad

- are based on a collaborative approach: They are developed and established in close collaboration between German and foreign higher education partners. Higher education projects abroad are set up as transnational study modules and courses or, alternatively, as branch campuses or spin-offs of German universities. They are implemented on the basis of contractual agreements at university and/or government level.
- ensure academic freedom in research and teaching.
- guarantee access to education, research and teaching free from discrimination, particularly with regard to a person's racial or ethnic origin, ideological or religious orientation or their sex.
- provide applicants and students with comprehensive information about their study offers, the course and structure of their degree programmes, admission requirements, examinations and recognition of the academic qualifications offered, and any student contributions or other costs incurred by students. They also ensure transparency with regard to the institution and institutional procedures, academic boards and responsibilities, for example by providing the necessary information and comprehensible descriptions on the university and/or project websites.

¹ The designation "German higher education projects abroad" encompasses both the German universities involved and their foreign higher education partners.

- support students' study success through clear and transparent selection criteria for admission. In addition to the standard admission requirements of their study location, students at German higher education projects abroad also fulfil the academic and linguistic prerequisites. If enrolment at the German university is required in order to study at a German higher education project abroad, then this requirement will be given particular attention.
- charge student contributions and tuition fees only to the extent required and appropriate to ensure the continuation of the course. The universities involved endeavour to provide scholarships for students and/or to attract funding from external sources. If scholarships are provided, they are awarded on the basis of performance-related and/or social criteria.
- are conducted with the participation of German staff and/or faculty trained teaching staff or staff employed at German universities/academic institutions. The qualifications of the teaching staff involved in the courses fulfil both the requirements of the study location and those of the German university/universities involved. The participating universities endeavour to ensure the continuing professional education of teaching staff.
- guarantee, through their courses, that graduates will be qualified for successful employment in their area of specialisation in the project's host country. The academic qualifications offered by German higher education projects abroad are recognised by both the host country and the participating German universities and open up access to advanced study programmes at German universities. The universities involved assure the quality of the programmes they offer as part of their institutional quality assurance processes and regular monitoring.
- provide students with specific contact persons for their subject-specific, organisational and social concerns. Furthermore, German higher education projects abroad set up fixed contact points for questions and problems, thus enabling students to raise complaints. Within the framework of the legal requirements of the study location, opportunities will be given to voice and represent students' interests in all relevant issues.
- strengthen linguistic and cultural ties through the intensive exchange of students and teaching staff in both directions. The universities involved establish the necessary framework conditions for the mutual recognition of study achievements. They also promote exchange through intercultural preparation of and support for the projects in question. In the students' interest, German higher education projects abroad aim to provide possibilities to learn the German language, where possible up to a level far beyond basic knowledge.