UNIVERSITÄT PASSAU

Didactic handout

Create a qualification profile step by step

Project ISA:Dig

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Stiftung Innovation in der Hochschullehre

Content

Foreword

This handout helps in creating a qualification profile and elaborating qualification goals for study programs at the University of Passau (and beyond, if applicable). In addition to basic definitions of terms, the handout offers practical step-by-step instructions. The qualification profile of a study program. A workshop would be, for example, a suitable form, as all responsible stakeholders of a study program would have the chance to participate, and expertise in higher education didactics could easily be included (e.g. Wildt/Wildt 2017 & Jenert 2016).

Before developing the qualification profile, it is important to take as many different analytical measures as possible to create a comprehensive database (phase I in the program development process). In the case of new degree programs, these include an analysis of the occupational field, an analysis of the competitive situation, and systematic internal university stakeholder discussions. For existing degree programs, these analysis measures are supplemented by student surveys and basic statistical data on the degree program in question. In the run-up to qualification profiling, the aim is to systematically collect, prepare and exchange information with all stakeholders in the study program to have a good common multidimensional basis for decision-making.

1. Definitions

Qualification goals - The focus on competences of graduates

The design of high-quality study programs does not take the teaching content to be imparted as a starting point, but rather focuses on the profile of graduates (Hanft 2020, p. 55 & Burger/Scheuermann 2017, p. 50). The qualification profile of a study program is based on central competencies that students can successively achieve during their studies and which graduates should have acquired after successful completion (a "training promise", so to speak). These competencies, which are specific to a study program, should be achieved by all graduates, regardless of which modules and courses they have chosen in detail. Therefore, the central qualification goals are limited to the most important competencies and are formulated rather generally. Care should be taken to ensure that these are also realistically achievable - in the context of the specific Bachelor's/Master's program.

Qualification goals describe the subject specific as well as interdisciplinary competencies that students acquire during their studies (in the sense of learning outcomes). They are formulated from the students' perspective.

Qualification profile - the foundation of curriculum and module development

The qualification goals for a study program are formulated in the qualification profile. It is meant as a foundation for the subsequent development of the modules and is a central element of competence-oriented program development (Wissenschaftsrat 2015, p. 14), as well as a requirement regarding system accreditation.

A **qualification profile is** a systematic presentation of selected qualification goals (competence-oriented learning outcomes) for a study program. It serves as a guideline for the following curriculum development.

(University) Qualification Framework

There are various national and international qualifications frameworks which, among other things, contribute to the national and international comparability of degrees. For German university degrees, the HQR (Qualifications Framework for German University Degrees) is binding. It describes general competencies of university graduates, which generally apply to the bachelor's, master's, and doctorate levels. These general partial competencies are applied to the respective degree program by specifying them in the qualification profile.

The **HQR** is a document that fundamentally describes general competence goals for graduates at universities at the various qualification levels (Bachelor, Master, Doctorate).

The classification of competence areas is based, among other things, on the HQR[1].

[1]Kultusministerkonferenz (2017). Qualifikationsrahmen für deutsche Hochschulabschlüsse: https://www.hrk.de/fileadmin/redaktion/hrk/02-Dokumente/02-03-Studium/02-03-02-Qualifikationsrahmen/2017_Qualifikationsrahmen_HQR.pdf [08.02.2022]

2. Procedure step by step

Step 1: Identification of qualification goals based on competence areas

There are different curricular goals, which are relevant for basic consideration when developing the profile of a study program. The orientation towards (educational) goals of university studies usually balances situational principles (practical professional application) and scientific principles (scientific subject concepts and research methodology). In addition, educational goals refer to social responsibility and personal competence (education as self-purpose). Ideally the orientation to those three areas of competencies results in intersections (cf. Erpenbeck 2015, David 2018, Jenert 2021).

Consider **three competence areas** when creating the skills profile:

- Scientific and research competencies
- Professional competencies (incl. social competencies)
- Educational goals

Professional competencies refer to basic and specialized knowledge and understanding considering typical methods, principles, concepts and working methods of a subject area. In this system, this also includes practical professional competencies.

Interdisciplinary competencies are basic and special competencies that are applicable across several subject areas and disciplines and are independent of the subject. In the present system, social competencies (e.g., ability to work in a team, ability to network and think critically, communication skills, learning techniques, etc.), which are very strongly related to professional skills, are included. In Addition, there is a need to focus on educational goals (e.g., democratic citizenship, personal competence, etc.) as well as on educational processes that do not serve any specific purposes.

This classification is intended to support the focus on qualification goals and the respective possibilities for aligning the content of the study program. The areas of competence are not meant to be particular; there are implicit overlaps and opportunities to consider intersections when formulating qualification goals. In many cases, specialized knowledge has direct relevance for professional practice, and the ability to manage a project can be useful for behaving socially responsible.

For your specific program, identify the professional and interdisciplinary competencies that graduates of the program should have achieved.

Use the following questions as a guide:

- *What should graduates be able to do after completing their studies?*
- *What professional and interdisciplinary competencies (knowledge, skills, attitudes, readiness, etc.) should students develop?*
- *Are there specific requirements that must/could be considered? (legal frame for specific qualifications, mission statement of the university, recommendations with regard to general educational objectives)*
- *Have requirements placed on graduates outside the university (tasks and fields of activity) also been considered?*

Notes:

- Make sure that the competencies that are central to your program of study are clear, creating a skills profile that is specific to the program.
- For bachelor's degree programs, also pay attention to the fit with possible master's degree programs (and their admission requirements), if applicable.

Step 2: Formulating qualification goals

Now formulate the most relevant qualification objectives (15-20) along the following categories. Also note the correct formulation using descriptors (according to Bloom), see ISA:Dig (2021): Didactic handout "Guideline for formulating learning outcomes".

The following categorization helps to systematize the qualification goals identified above. As far as possible, all categories should be covered, although the number of qualification objectives in the categories may vary. Based on the HQR (Kultusministerkonferenz 2017)[2] , the following categories are recommended:

[2] These categories are based on the competence dimensions of the Higher Education Qualifications Framework (Kultusministerkonferenz 2017). For the derivation and genesis of the individual categories according to the competence model of the HQF, see Bartosch (2019) p. 22.

Categories	*Examples*
	Graduates...
A. Knowledge and understanding	*... describe the main features of the specific (sub-) subject area XY **(A1).*** *... repeat basic theories and methods of XY (as concretely as possible) **(A2).*** *... develop their own models for theory XY **(A3).***
B. Description, analysis and evaluation	*... analyze sources in terms of XY (respecting specific techniques or perspectives) **(B1).*** *... interpret research results with regard to current social issues **(B2).*** *... identify societal expectations of their own activities and take a stand **(B3).***
C. Planning and conception	*... develop scientific questions independently **(C1).*** *... plan and create products (for example media product, lecture, exhibition...) **(C2).*** *... demonstrate inclusive attitude in the design of XY **(C3).***
D. Research and investigation	*... conduct independent research and prepare for writing scientific papers **(D1).*** *... integrate international research results into their own scientific activities **(D2).*** *... present work results in a visually and rhetorically concise way **(D3).***
E. Organization and evaluation	*... verify or falsify own ideas about the occupational field XY **(E1).*** *... form social networks in the area XY **(E2).*** *... recognize scope for action to introduce the XY models in professional field Z and reflect on the effectiveness **(E3).***
F. Professional qualities, personality/attitudes	*... differentiate between various leadership styles and recognize them in case studies **(F1)**.* *... find their role in interdisciplinary teams as well as act and communicate in an efficient way **(F2).*** *... reflect on the consequences of their own professional actions for society (F3).*

The categories "Professional Qualities" and "Personalities/Attitudes" are presented in the HQR as cross-cutting competencies that are found throughout the program as learning outcomes.

Step 3: Distinguishing qualification goals of Bachelor's and Master's programs

When identifying and formulating qualification goals, a final check should be made to determine whether they correspond to a bachelor's or master's level. The different qualification levels are presented in a differentiated manner in the HQR. The following illustration uses examples to illustrate the desired deepening of competencies:

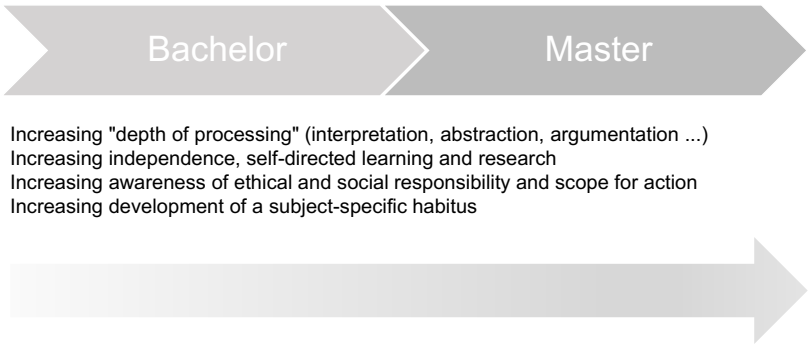

Fig.1: Competence development in bachelor and master studies

In **Bachelor's degree programs,** scientific fundamentals, methodological competencies and professional field-related qualifications are taught in accordance with the profile of the university and the study program. This ensures an overall broad scientific qualification in Bachelor's degree programs. Within the Higher Education Qualifications Framework, the Bachelor's degree is characterized as the first degree qualifying for a profession. The ability to connect to Master's programs must also be taken into account at this point, in the sense of deepening and further developing the competencies acquired in the Bachelor's degree.

Master's degree programs serve to specialize in the subject and in science and can be theoretically differentiated according to the profile types "application-oriented" and "research-oriented". In accordance with the idea of specialization, more demanding levels of competence are also addressed, since certain foundations can be assumed.

For more information and helpful documents related to program development, visit the ISA:Dig project website, which is currently under construction.

https://uni-passau.de/isadig

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Publisher

University of Passau

Inn road 41

94032 Passau

ISA:dig

Forschungsprojekt für partizipative
und innovative Studiengangsentwicklung

Dr. Lisa David

Martina Gallenmüller

Contact: projekt-isadig@uni-passau.de