

## Institutional Environment Guideline Descriptions of National Environments

### e-Learning in Public Higher Education in Germany

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#### **The German Higher Education system**

The German education system is structured according to the Basic Law of the Federal Republic of Germany: "The constitutional responsibility for higher education in Germany is divided between the Federal Government and the Länder<sup>1</sup>; the responsibility for the day-to-day business of institutions of higher education, however, lies almost exclusively with the Länder. The Federal Government holds the competence for determining the general principles for shaping the higher education system, which are laid down in the Framework Act for Higher Education (HRG). Based on the HRG, the 16 Länder issue their higher education laws, which regulate further details."<sup>2</sup>

A detailed description can be found at the BMBF (Federal Ministry of Education and Research) website: <http://www.bmbf.de/en/655.php>.

Most German universities are financed entirely by the federal states or receive substantial state funding<sup>3</sup>. According to the BMBF<sup>4</sup>, Germany has 365 institutions of higher education in 2003/2004, i.e. 100 universities and comprehensive universities, six colleges of education, 16 colleges of theology, 52 colleges of art, 162 general universities of applied sciences and 29 colleges of public administration. There are 95 non-state institutions of higher education among the 365 institutions. In 2004, there were about 2,04 million students, over 47.4% of them were women. About 72.7% of the students were enrolled at universities, 27.3% at universities of applied sciences.

The German Higher Education System is in a reforming phase according to the Bologna process (especially the transforming into Bachelor and Master) and has still the task to refurbishing the East Germany State Universities. To support this development and to keep German universities on a higher level the Federal Government "pursues the aim of consolidating the use of new media and their possible applications for education at universities and universities of applied sciences."<sup>5</sup>

### e-Learning situation in Public Higher Education

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#### **Short historic of e-Learning in the country**

The government in Germany recognized early the importance of ICT in education and started back in the 80s/90s with implementation of small regional projects in schools. Since the 90s more and more projects and funding programmes have been carried out by the Federal Government and the regional states (Länder) with the goal to strengthen the capability of the use of New Media in higher education.

#### **Actual situation of e-Learning**

The universities have been strongly supported by specific national programs of the BMBF since the year 2000.

In order to have the foundation on which ICT and e-Learning would be developed, one of the first funding programme of the BMBF, running in the years 2000-2001, was to build up wireless LANs in

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<sup>1</sup> means regional states

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.bmbf.de/en/655.php>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.tatsachen-ueber-deutschland.de/533.0.html>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.bmbf.de/en/655.php>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.bmbf.de/en/equalification.php>

the university campuses - "Campus-WLAN"<sup>6</sup>. Computer rooms for the students with internet connections already existed so the project's goal was to allow students and university staff to have internet access all over the campus and 24 hours per day (using notebooks).

The next priority "Media Content"<sup>7</sup> supports 100 collaborative projects at institutions of higher education which include the development, testing and implementation of innovative, multimedia forms of teaching and learning in day-to-day business at institutions of higher education. Developing new forms of teaching and learning will improve the quality of teaching. Furthermore better organization of study courses and shorter periods of study are to be achieved.

The following priority "Notebook University"<sup>8</sup> funds projects for the development and introduction of an innovative overall concept for the integration of mobile learning everywhere on campus in day-to-day business at institutions of higher education. This was a sequence programme to the Campus-WLAN described above.

The actual priority "E-Learning-Integration"<sup>9</sup> funds the development and testing of organisation models in order to enhance the use of e-Learning and e-Teaching in higher education. "A second action line called 'e-Learning transfer' serves the elaboration of organizational concepts and business models for services that, in particular, facilitate the subject-related production and utilization of e-Learning at universities."<sup>10</sup>

### List of structures/organizations supporting e-Learning

Though most of higher education institutions deal with e-Learning, only some have expertise centres like the ZMML. These centres provide interested HE teachers an insight in the world of e-Learning and the support services available. Main tasks are project support, media production, realisation of third-party projects and teacher training courses among others.

## Laws and politics

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### ICT policy

The German Government gives out general guidelines which include the ICT strategy and the regional states are responsible for the details. Higher education institutions make suggestions to the HE teachers to use ICT in their teaching and research but teacher have a free choice on what to use.

### Teacher training policy & ICT & TT policy

- Who is responsible for TT?
- Are there obligations for HE teachers to follow teacher training (initial, continuous)?

Further training for university staff is offered by departments responsible for University didactics<sup>11</sup>. Some of the subjects are related to e-Learning but this is not always the case. It is not compulsory for the teachers to attend the training which in many cases costs money. It is now common that new teachers have to prove their ICT knowledge when they want to join a university.

There is no official strategy for TT for e-Learning though in some universities the expertise centres offer courses on the subject. In other cases the departments responsible for University didactics

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<sup>6</sup> [http://www.dlr.de/pt\\_nmb/WLAN\\_Bericht.pdf](http://www.dlr.de/pt_nmb/WLAN_Bericht.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> [http://www.medien-bildung.net/produkte/produkte\\_pdfs\\_eng.php/hochschule/produkte/0/0/0/0/0/](http://www.medien-bildung.net/produkte/produkte_pdfs_eng.php/hochschule/produkte/0/0/0/0/0/)

<sup>8</sup> [http://www.medien-bildung.net/notebook/notebook\\_3.php](http://www.medien-bildung.net/notebook/notebook_3.php)

<sup>9</sup> [http://www.medien-bildung.net/projekte2005/projekte2005\\_uebersicht\\_db.php/hochschule/projekte2005/0/0/0/0/0/](http://www.medien-bildung.net/projekte2005/projekte2005_uebersicht_db.php/hochschule/projekte2005/0/0/0/0/0/)

<sup>10</sup> [http://www.elearningeuropa.info/index.php?page=doc&doc\\_id=6491&doclng=6](http://www.elearningeuropa.info/index.php?page=doc&doc_id=6491&doclng=6)

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.hochschuldidaktik.de/>

overtake this role. The situation can be very different between universities so there are no statistics available.

- Advantages to be trained with ICT: Money, Career, Recognition
  - Is pedagogical performance taken into account in the evolution of a teacher's career?
  - What strategies for rewarding teachers other than remuneration can be implemented (peer recognition, prizes, 'coffee and cakes',...)?

For the older generation of teachers there is no real visible advantage in ICT training since they have money, career and recognition, therefore it is not so easy to attract them to ICT training (and sometimes they have fear to lose face). For the newer generation, ICT training is important as in most cases they need the ICT knowledge in order to join a university, as stated above. The advantage for the teachers is that they can save money for their department with the use of ICT, which they can use otherwise. In some cases though, because of the need of expensive equipment and the time needed to accomplish the ICT knowledge required, the advantage is minimal.

### Background information

- Teacher's status and missions
  - Can a teacher be paid for online teaching?

Online teaching as a rule is not paid extra in Germany. Other advantages can be gained as stated in the German Higher Education Act. The exact situation differs among the 16 regional states and even among universities of the same regional state. As an example in Bremen when a teacher offers e-Learning or blended learning scenarios the teacher is allowed to work less hours per week as stated in the Bremen university act; in our knowledge no teacher has ever claimed this advantage.

- Does a teacher have a minimal number of face-to-face teaching hours to do?

The minimal number of face-to-face teaching hours again differs among the regional states and university types. For example in Bremen University:

- ❖ Professors teaching duty in presence of students is 8 hours per week.
- ❖ Assistant professors teaching duty in presence of students is also 8 hours per week.
- ❖ Assistant researchers teaching duty in presence of students varies between 4 and 8 hours depending on their status.

- Can a teacher receive author rights for multimedia production?

The question of author rights for multimedia production is still open. It is not clear if the product belongs to the teacher or to the institution. Some institutions make a contract with the teacher and keep the rights, others make their own interpretations. Some teachers try to keep the copyright of their product but it is not officially clear if that is possible.

### Actions and Infrastructures

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- National/regional actions
  - Is there any national, regional or local initiative to stimulate uptake of e-learning?

The Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) gives out general e-Learning funding programmes every two to three years<sup>12</sup>. The universities have then the option to propose specific projects that comply with the funding programmes. Depending on the available finance resources and the number of university proposals, a selection of the best will be funded.

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<sup>12</sup> <http://www.medien-bildung.net/>

The regional states (Länder) have their own initiatives too, for example Bremen have started two programmes HWP I <sup>13</sup>/ II <sup>14</sup> and T.I.M.E. <sup>15</sup>.

"The German Länder since 1997/98 have taken action to tap the full potential of Internet-based teaching and learning. Initiatives such as the extensive funding program "New Media in Education" (NMB) of the Federal Ministry of Education and Research support programs of the European Union ("eLearning Programme" and "Sixth Framework Programme") and different corresponding Länder initiatives and university-backed project developments have accumulated to several hundred million Euro in the last years."<sup>16</sup>

Most e-Learning actions in Germany come from the funding programmes of the BMBF and the regional states.

### **Institutionalisation phase**

"A vital task for protagonists of e-Learning and professionals at universities, at present, is the integration of the created e-Learning environments in the teaching routines of undergraduate, graduate and continuing education. For this purpose, it is necessary to

- improve the generated teaching and learning modules, knowledge resources and tools,
- constitute project clusters and subject-related networks,
- develop operation and business models for different subjects and types of projects,
- develop support structures and, in so doing, to utilize the potentials of media-based teaching even more systematically.

The efforts to institutionalize e-Learning have, on a small scale, contributed to the evolution of new organizational structures on the level of single universities and of university networks. Examples of these new organizational structures are education portals (Bildungsportale), state-wide e-Learning institutions for lecturers' support and project coordination, e-Learning support centers and subject-related clusters of e-Learning projects."<sup>17</sup>

### **e-Learning support centres**

Due to the increased use of technology in teaching, some German universities have established e-Learning support centres as mentioned above (expertise centres).

"These support centers provide assistance with regard to subject-related, didactical and media-design-related tasks. They contribute to the increase of media acceptance and knowhow and provide staff for the production of digital modules, where required. They support the application of digital teaching through:

- the determination of service demands,
- proactive or responsive forms of consultation,
- training courses,
- cross-linking of the departments,
- administration of universitarian support programs,
- and public relations for the university's e-Learning products."<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> <http://www.blk-bonn.de/hwp01.htm>

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.blk-bonn.de/hwp02.htm>

<sup>15</sup> [http://www.bremen-in-time.de/de/bit\\_startseite](http://www.bremen-in-time.de/de/bit_startseite)

<sup>16</sup> [http://www.elearningeuropa.info/index.php?page=doc&doc\\_id=6491&doclng=6](http://www.elearningeuropa.info/index.php?page=doc&doc_id=6491&doclng=6)

<sup>17</sup> [http://www.elearningeuropa.info/index.php?page=doc&doc\\_id=6491&doclng=6](http://www.elearningeuropa.info/index.php?page=doc&doc_id=6491&doclng=6)

<sup>18</sup> [http://www.elearningeuropa.info/index.php?page=doc&doc\\_id=6491&doclng=6](http://www.elearningeuropa.info/index.php?page=doc&doc_id=6491&doclng=6)