University of Siegen

Quality Objectives
Contents

Preambel................................................................................................................................................................... 3
Governance .............................................................................................................................................................. 3
Research ................................................................................................................................................................... 4
Teaching ................................................................................................................................................................... 5
Third Mission ............................................................................................................................................................ 6
Service ....................................................................................................................................................................... 7

Imprint

Publisher: The Rector of the University of Siegen
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Editor: Quality Centre Siegen (QZS)
Status: May 2017
**Preambel**

The university-wide quality objectives for the areas of governance, research, teaching, third mission† and service are described below. They constitute the framework for the specific quality objectives defined by the individual units (faculties, central institutions, administrative bodies etc.).

**Governance**

Quality requirements of all levels of management are aimed at defining responsibility for the core university processes (research, teaching, third mission†) as well as the service processes. They are therefore not only relevant to the university management, but also all management levels in the faculties, main facilities and the administration.

The quality standards set for the management levels are based on the following principles in terms of self-commitment:

- The University of Siegen is well aware of its social responsibilities. The strategic management decisions are therefore oriented on social values and issues impacting on society as a whole, and recognise these in their diversity. In order to address these responsibilities, the management levels provide both an organisational structure that is in accordance with the values and quality goals and the appropriate activity and resource allocation (financial resources, personnel, infrastructure).
- The relationship of management levels and allocated units is based on the principle of shared responsibility – as a combination of participation and transparency. One of the university’s goals is that the participation of all the relevant players in decision-making processes is guaranteed. Competences and responsibilities are clearly regulated at the management levels. The university management also encourages an open communication culture that enables comprehensive information of university members and relevant reference groups. Informative documentation is provided to make structures, processes and decisions comprehensible and verifiable.
- Decisions made by the management levels always take into account their impact on the equal opportunities for the different groups of people. A diversity-sensitive approach in the employment and appointment procedures and career advancement procedures is an important issue for the University of Siegen, especially with regard to the staff structure and the targeted personnel development.
- The management levels ensure a spirit of openness and fairness in dealing with one another that also allows room for creative ideas, versatile lateral thinking and critical reflection. The management style creates a climate in which intrinsic motivation and the appreciation of diversity have the highest priority.

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† Third Mission: This term encompasses the socially relevant areas of performance (e.g. knowledge and technology transfer) of universities beyond research and teaching.
Research

The University of Siegen is identifiable as a relevant place of research with visible diversity. The following definitions in the field of research should help to achieve these objectives:

1. A high level of scientific competence of the researchers is provided, promoted and further developed in their diverse disciplinary cultures. In particular these include:

   » Performance assessment should be fair and transparent and supported by quantitative indicators (such as project volumes, peer-reviewed publications with citation index, monographs, dissertations, prizes, concerts, exhibitions) in NRW-comparison and standardised with regard to discipline and facilities; but in critical assessments also by qualitative indicators (e.g. peer-review procedures).

   » Additional internationally visible and excellent research alliances (e.g. coordinated German Research Foundation (DFG) programmes, Max-Planck working groups, Fraunhofer working groups, benchmark projects) should be formed.

   » Researchers at Siegen continue to be represented and prominently active in relevant regional, national and international scientific societies and bodies.

   » The University of Siegen provides a platform for efficiently communicating and transferring research successes and findings internally and externally.

   » The University of Siegen commits itself to the maintenance of quality standards (e.g. rules of good scientific practice).

2. The University of Siegen offers a fertile setting in which all researchers can distinguish themselves.

   » The research by individual scientists represents the basis of the research at the University of Siegen. Individual research achievements must therefore be evaluated fairly and transparently, acknowledged and recognised for their diversity, regardless of whether this occurs in fundamental or applied fields of research. Increasingly decisive assessment procedures of areas (centres, alliances) should, in addition to indicators, also include a content assessment, for example on the basis of peer review procedures.

   » Additional research capacities are combined in priority areas to ensure greater competitiveness and the intra and interdisciplinary fertilisation of working groups and can be addressed to visible research associations and alliances.

   » The framework conditions (e.g. space, infrastructure, equipment, information) enable particularly successful researchers a phase-wise prioritisation of their research assignments over other assignments. The administration supports the scientists so that their work in R&D projects are primarily scientific and not administrative, e.g. project initiation, project execution and personnel recruitment.

   » Coaching and training mechanisms promote the further qualification and the research success of scientists, but especially that of young scientists. These include e.g. individual supervision and training courses for the formal optimisation of planned projects.
3. Research at the University of Siegen contributes to the qualification and distinguishing of young scientists at all levels.

» Research prospects should be integrated in BA and MA courses. Research findings and procedures should find their way into the teaching.

» A fertile environment for dissertations should be promoted, e.g. no dissertation should fail for financial reasons, due to disability, chronic illness or lack of care.

» The development of young scientists to leading research figures is supported by institutional care provision.

Teaching

At the University of Siegen, research and teaching are an inseparable entity. On the one hand the research findings and processes permanently feed into the academic teaching, and on the other hand the research profits from the teaching. Research gains new impetus from the academic discourse with students; and ultimately only high-quality academic teaching can assure new academic talent.

The University of Siegen considers that it has as an outstanding obligation to assure and permanently develop the quality of the teaching. The quality of teaching can be measured on whether or not it qualifies for career and science, serves to develop personality and leads graduates to assume general social responsibility. These objectives can only be achieved with an optimised teaching and studying that takes the diversity of the students into account. Here each of the responsible parties contributes in their own specific way at lecture, course, faculty and university level.

The safeguarding and developing of such high quality university teaching is in practice oriented on several principles.

» A fundamental principle of courses at the University of Siegen should be the practice of scientific thought and work. The ability to work scientifically also qualifies students demanding and responsible activities outside the university sphere.

» Each course aims to result in a predefined, in each case in specific qualification goals for the graduates. These are described in detail by the respective teaching units and faculties; their suitability and the way they are implemented are regularly reviewed.

» The study programmes are on the one hand in line with the scientific standards, educational profile and current and future labour market conditions and on the other hand enable freedom for individual and diverse educational trajectories.

» A holistic personal development is the foundation for a responsible, critically reflective way of acting in all socio-cultural and technology-related areas of society. The organisation of the teaching and studying is consequently not just aimed at achieving technical and methodological competencies, but also promotes self-competence.

» Internationality serves the further development of scientific and cultural discourse and significantly contributes to the acquisition of personal skills and experience. The rectorate and the faculties ensure the provision of an internationally oriented course of study and
create the appropriate framework conditions for implementing and forging ahead with the internationalisation objectives.

» Internality in studies and teaching must also originate through exchange. The University of Siegen promotes the expansion of exchange formats for students and teachers and the recognition of this achievement through simultaneous quality assurance.

» The promotion of intercultural diversity can only increase with the corresponding temporal conditions: The rectorate promotes the internationalisation of the courses on offer through curricula with integrated foreign study phase (mobility window).

» The organisational framework conditions should enable and specifically promote interdisciplinarity.

» The organisation of teaching productively includes the different interests and aptitudes of the heterogeneous student body. It enables individual learning and different paths through the course. It thus keeps abreast of the increasing diversity, which is also reflected in the composition of the student body, and includes appropriate measures for implementation.

» Teaching and studying activities should be organised in such a manner that they guarantee a coherent range of courses that can be studied within a prescribed timeframe.

» Good teaching includes a variety of teaching formats, whereby the further development of diversity-sensitive teaching forms and concepts are expected, and where the lecturers are actively supported – e.g. through offers of additional learning opportunities.

» Appropriate measures are taken to permanently assess and assure the quality of the teaching.

» The direct contact and close cooperation between teachers and students are important for the development of a trusting collaboration. The University of Siegen provides the relevant framework conditions.

» Lifelong learning is a key task of the University of Siegen. To this end, the University of Siegen provides the appropriate opportunities for its enablement.

**Third Mission**

Science should not take place behind closed doors at the University of Siegen. The fascination that research exerts is something that should be conveyed to all interested parties, while personal exchange should also be promoted. The Third Mission is seen as a link and a multiplying factor between science, business and society. As a cross-sectional task it requires close cooperation between the faculties, the rectorate and the administration. Here the main goals are continuity of exchange, the perception of the University of Siegen as a brand, and both inward and outward transparency.

1. **Continuity and sustainability**

   » External contacts to state and private institutions, business enterprises and individuals should be qualitatively further expanded and continuously cultivated.

   » A successful transfer policy contributes to increasing the third party funding of the University of Siegen.
Collaborations should be designed to be long-term and of high quality. Here the emphasis is clearly on the preamble “quality before quantity”, so that the University of Siegen sees strategic partnerships as the measure for all cooperation efforts, national and international.

The relevance of the University of Siegen for society and the research scene should be communicated.

2. University of Siegen as a brand

A successful transfer policy contributes to gaining recognition for the research and transfer performance in the region and beyond, and translates into such things as invention disclosures, patents and publications.

The University of Siegen should be seen as a successful and important educational institution.

The good supervision of students and the long-term contact with the graduates (alumni, career promotion) are an inherent component of the transfer policy.

The University of Siegen supports spin-offs from the university, realised by students and employees.

Students and employees should identify with the university and remain connected to the university in the long term.

3. Internal and external transparency

The university’s knowledge should be made transparent to the outside world both nationally and internationally.

The dialog and exchange with society should be actively pursued and promoted.

The University of Siegen will meet its responsibility to society as a whole.

Part of the internal transfer capacity is the promotion of interdisciplinary research and teaching.

Successful internal communication is an important requirement for shaping an own identity over status groups.

Service

At the University of Siegen, service includes processes in the area of the university’s central administration, the main institutions and within the faculties. The general objective of the service units is to enable as efficient and effective functioning of the other service areas as possible. In order to guarantee consistent high quality at the university the individual areas have given themselves the following goals.

The central university administration sees itself as an effective, efficient, transparent and process oriented service facility for the university. The quality definition therefore encompasses the following aspects:
1. Objectives and tasks of the central university administration

   The central university administration sees itself as being responsible for ensuring that the University of Siegen provides the best possible service to safeguard unlimited and efficient fulfilment of its tasks in research, teaching and transfer.

   It has set itself the target of providing its services for all members of the University of Siegen, especially for its students, in a high quality and purposeful manner as best and quickly as possible.

   The central university administration guarantees a service oriented task fulfilment within the framework of the applicable statutory and non-statutory regulations.

   It provides a central, reliable and task-based database (data collection, processing, storage and documentation).

2. Profile of the central administration within the university

   As a service unit, the central university administration is creatively, actively and enthusiastically involved in achieving the overall goals of the university, facing the students, scientists, staff in the faculties and central facilities in a friendly and competent manner.

   The central university administration especially supports the university management, university council and the faculty authorities in the preparation and implementation of strategic and operational activities. It works closely and faithfully with the bodies, faculties, and main institutions of the University of Siegen as well as with cooperation partners, state agencies and other organisations and individuals.

3. Principles of the internal organisation of the central university administration

   To guarantee efficiency and effectiveness, the central university administration operates in a service and process oriented manner, economically and transparently. To this end, all the work processes, especially with regard to the interfaces (both at administration and faculty level and also on the horizontal and vertical levels within the administration) are defined, optimised and interlinked.

   The staff of the central university administration is supported through adequate relevant training, further training and retraining, and are given the opportunity to further develop their potential and skills so that they can be responsible for their tasks and cope with new challenges. Core skills for dealing with intercultural diversity shall in particular be promoted (e.g. language skills).

   The rectorate promotes the introduction and development of internationalisation management structures across the university. Paramount is the creation of structures that support all players in the university in expanding, handling and promoting cultural diversity.