

6.10.2016**HRK Audit "Internationalisation of Universities":****Positive results for the German higher education system seven years on**

The award ceremony yesterday at which 26 universities* were presented with certificates marks the end of the project phase of the Audit "Internationalisation of Universities" by the German Rectors' Conference (HRK). Over a total of seven years 80 universities have undertaken the audit process as part of the project, funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF).

"The internationalisation of universities is of fundamental importance in safeguarding the global competitiveness of Germany as a research location," says Federal Minister of Education and Research Prof Johanna Wanka. "The audit process has enabled us to gain important insights into the way in which universities can better adapt to international requirements. In this way the Audit 'Internationalisation of Universities' has had a positive overall impact on the entire German higher education system."

"This is a real success story," says HRK President Prof Horst Hippler. "In view of the strong response by the universities and the extensive period of the audit, it has strengthened the German higher education system noticeably in respect of its international focus and profile, creating a genuine competitive advantage. The Audit 'Internationalisation of Universities' has established itself as a quality assurance tool that has become indispensable."

The Audit supports participating institutions in developing their internationalisation strategies and shaping their international profile. This is achieved by combining self-reflection on the part of the institution with external consultancy in order to provide stimulus and support for an internationalisation process across the university as a whole.

Among the universities that have undertaken the audit process over the past two years and were honoured yesterday in Berlin were 13 universities and nine universities of applied sciences. The remaining four universities completed the Audit kompakt "Internationalisation of Universities". This is a consultancy service designed specifically for small universities and those with a particular profile. The Audit kompakt is a recent addition to the portfolio of the HRK project.

After the end of funding from the Federal Ministry, the HRK will still offer the Audit and the Audit kompakt to its member institutions on a cost price basis, also given the sustained demand from universities. The next call for applications will take place shortly. The Re-Audit "Internationalisation of Universities", a programme that accompanies the implementation process of internationalisation measures, will also be re-advertised towards the end of the year.

Together with the audits, the project has promoted mutual exchange among the universities through numerous networking and information events and the systematic dissemination of good examples. The award ceremony yesterday, for example, also marked the conclusion of a networking conference during which representatives of more than 50 audited universities exchanged news and views on topical internationalisation issues in various workshops. The Audit symposium on the question of "The art of internationalisation – how can the many facets of internationalised be managed?" will take place today.

* The following 26 universities received their certificates:

Audit successfully completed in 2016:

Heinrich-Heine-University Düsseldorf, Leibniz University Hanover, Hanover Medical School (MHH), University of Hohenheim, University of Applied Sciences Landshut, University of Lübeck, Osnabrück University, University of Siegen, University of Stuttgart, University of Applied Sciences Würzburg-Schweinfurt

Audit kompakt successfully completed in 2016:

Protestant University of Applied Sciences Berlin, Ludwigsburg University of Education, Neubrandenburg University of Applied Sciences, Stuttgart State Academy of Art and Design

Audit successfully completed in 2015:

Anhalt University of Applied Sciences, Bochum University of Applied Sciences, University of Flensburg, Ernst-Moritz Arndt University of Greifswald, Hof University of Applied Sciences, Jade University of Applied Sciences, University of Kassel, Technical University of Cologne, Lübeck University of Applied Sciences, Technical University of Nuremberg, Saarland University, Julius Maximilian University of Würzburg