

27 June 2016**Digitalisation in higher education teaching: much is being done, much is still to do**

German universities are actively tackling the topic of digitalisation in higher education teaching. This was the conclusion reached in a study by the *HIS-Institut für Hochschulentwicklung* (HIS Institute for Development in Higher Education) on behalf of the Higher Education Forum on Digitalisation. The study will be presented today as part of the Rhineland-Palatinate E-Learning Day in Koblenz. All state and private universities in Germany were included in the survey.

Almost three-quarters (73 percent) of the universities are pursuing a policy of enriching their teaching with digital components. Over one-third (36 percent) name a blended learning approach, i.e. a combination of face-to-face lectures with e-learning courses, as their guiding vision. Forty-two percent of the universities see digital teaching as a tool for improving their programmes with the aim of increasing student success, the quality of teaching or the ability to balance family life and study. In contrast, only two percent of the universities in the survey have absolutely no digital components in their teaching. Only 15 percent do not see digital teaching as a strategic goal.

"German universities have recognised the importance of digitalisation and are actively incorporating this into their teaching methods. Nonetheless, inadequate staffing and financial resources often prove a stumbling block when it comes to expanding and developing digital teaching. This is also reflected in the study," said Prof. Dr. Horst Hippler, President of the German Rectors' Conference (HRK). "Seventy percent of the universities surveyed said the biggest challenge was human resources, and half named the budget."

Prof. Dr. Michael Jäckel, Chair of the "Governance & Policies" working group in the Higher Education Forum on Digitalisation and President of Trier University, said: "The snapshot shows that there is awareness of the topic in universities, but much less so in direct teaching than in infrastructure such as campus management and learning platforms. It is also clear that sustainable digital 'enrichment' in teaching is not being sufficiently promoted within the universities and responsible ministries. The many initiatives we have must not be allowed to fizzle out as temporary projects in the face of daily university routine."

Inter-university associations and consortia are widespread in the field of digital teaching. For example, 70 percent of state universities collaborate with at least one other university. The universities want to expand on these collaborations and make better use of their potential: over half the institutions would like an inter-university network of colleagues. Around 40 percent want to develop a model for the exchange of digital teaching services.

The survey was conducted as a quantitative study for the "Governance & Policies" topic group of the Higher Education Forum on Digitalisation. A total of 200 universities responded during

the survey period in March/April 2016. The study will be published soon, results can already be found [here](#) (in German only).