

Call for Contributions:

Recognition Culture in Higher Education. International Perspectives on Lifelong Learning and Student Mobility

11–12 December 2023, Bonn, GSI Conference Centre

An affirmative attitude towards mobility and permeability in higher education is an important requirement for facilitating individual and flexible learning paths as well as intercultural learning experiences. It thus allows for a responsive and forward-looking academic system. The recognition of knowledge, skills and competencies provides an essential foundation to translate these aims into higher education.

About the conference

Amidst socio-economic challenges of post-industrial societies, such as the shortage of skilled labour and the demographic change, as well as in the aftermath of a global pandemic, academic recognition and recognition of prior learning (RPL) respond to diverse educational landscapes and the changing societal needs. In this context, it is necessary to assess which processes, frameworks, and conditions are suitable to strengthen an academic culture that is open towards heterogeneous learners and diverse learning paths by appreciating competences acquired outside the own HEI through recognition while ensuring academic quality.

How can the shared objectives of student mobility and lifelong learning be transformed into a common culture of recognition? What are the challenges for HEIs in advancing recognition practices and which (new) concepts act as possible answers? Which strategies and instruments are needed for the implementation of quality-assured recognition practices of different learning experiences, including microcredentials, virtual or non-formal and informal learning? These ques-

tions will be approached in three interconnected subject areas: **Recognition Practices in HEIs, Lifelong Learning and Student Mobility.**

The conference will highlight the relevance of academic recognition and recognition of prior learning for lifelong learning, student mobility and the strategic development of HEIs. It aims to discuss current approaches, practices and challenges, and to advance recognition by offering a space for international exchange and reciprocal learning on the subject, e.g. by presenting practical examples. Although this conference emerges within the European Higher Education Area and thus focuses on European perspectives, we are highly interested in gaining and exchanging views from around the world.

Proposals for contributions are welcome along the three subject areas:

Recognition Practices in HEIs

Implementing an affirmative recognition culture in higher education requires the development of well-functioning and transparent recognition procedures – both on a practical level of improving

recognition processes and workflows in separate HEIs and on an overarching level of creating shared standards, frameworks and structures. Major challenges and future tasks exist in the ongoing digitalisation of administrative processes, in the extension of networks dealing with academic recognition and RPL as well as in the further development of quality assurance measures concerning recognition practices. Key questions of this track are: What are main features of well-functioning academic recognition and RPL practices? How can national and international cooperation between HEIs and other educational stakeholders be strengthened? What can they learn from different projects, initiatives, and approaches?

Issues of Interest:

- Quality standards for and management of academic recognition and RPL
- Recognition practices and their evaluation in HEIs, alliances and networks
- Digitalisation of administration
- Support through artificial intelligence
- “Automatic recognition”
- Frameworks on academic recognition and RPL
- Strategic and administrative development of recognition processes
- Competence-oriented approaches to curriculum development

Lifelong Learning

Making lifelong learning accessible for more people promotes equal educational opportunities and can serve as an answer to global socio-economic challenges and the transformation of workforces. In this context, a variety of actors calls for reducing barriers between educational sectors (permeability) and establishing flexible learning paths, e.g. the EU in the framework of the European Year of Skills 2023. These require the strategic development of qualification frame-

works, competence-oriented teaching and learning as well as an affirmative culture towards RPL and diverse educational backgrounds. This track will discuss key factors of permeability in HEIs and will share ideas on the further development of educational offers promoting lifelong learning. In addition, it will examine the chances and the requirements of opening the academic system for non-traditional students.

Issues of Interest:

- Culture of appreciating heterogeneity in educational backgrounds
- Implementation of RPL in HEIs
- Competence-oriented teaching and learning in academic and vocational contexts
- Increasing access to higher education for non-traditional students
- Microcredentials
- Cooperation between academic education and vocational education and training (VET)
- Permeability between educational sectors
- Alliances and projects promoting lifelong learning

Student Mobility

New models of student mobility as a central feature of academic exchange and internationalisation have emerged amongst digitalisation efforts and increasingly flexible learning paths. HEIs are challenged to adapt recognition processes and to organise mobility while furthering the standardisation and quality assurance of recognition. Amidst this development, international partnerships and alliances remain a major factor for the fostering of student mobility and interinstitutional cooperation. Furthermore, comprehensive recognition practices and an academic culture of recognition that supports international experiences are an integral part of mobility structures. This track examines and discusses established

and new forms of student mobility as well as the supporting conditions that must be considered when promoting study experiences abroad and international academic cooperation.

Issues of interest

- HEI alliances
- Microcredentials as drivers of student mobility
- Internationalisation of curricula (e.g. via joint degrees, alliances, mobility windows)
- Virtual and blended mobility
- European attempts to enhancing international mobility
- Standardisation and quality assurance

Organiser and Conference Location

The German Rectors' Conference (HRK) is the association of public and government-recognised universities in Germany. Due to this large membership, representing all types of higher education institutions, the HRK functions as the voice of the universities.

The HRK's MODUS project aims at enhancing student mobility and permeability across educational boundaries through further improving academic recognition and recognition of prior learning at German HEIs. This includes amongst other aspects the harmonization and dissemination of quality-assured standards for recognition as well as promoting the use of digital processes and infrastructures for recognition procedures. MODUS is funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF).

As the birthplace of Beethoven and the former capital of Germany, Bonn provides a variety of cultural and historical places of interest as well as political and international organisations, such as the office of the United Nations. The Science

Region Bonn is home to a variety of universities and research institutions as well as national science organisations such as the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), the German Research Foundation (DFG) and the HRK. In December, the traditional *Weihnachtsmarkt* (Christmas Market), with its famous mulled wine and crafted local products, is worth a visit.

Audience

We invite the following interested parties all around the world to contribute to the discussion on recognition in higher education along the mentioned subject areas: university board members, lecturers, researchers, admissions officers, staff from international offices and continuing education centres from higher education institutions as well as representatives from other institutions in higher education who are engaged in questions of lifelong learning, student mobility and recognition.

Guidelines for Submissions

We are looking forward to receiving proposals targeting the thematic areas of **Recognition Practices in HEIs, Lifelong Learning** as well as **Student Mobility**. Research results, projects, initiatives, methods, tools, ideas etc. are welcome as the subject of a contribution. Interactive inclusion of the audience through the integration of digital tools, discussions or other means is appreciated.

Who?

Presentations etc. can be submitted individually or as a group.

What?

Possible formats for your contribution include:

- *Presentation:* A talk of 15 to 20 minutes. Accepted presentations will be arranged into thematic panels that include space for discussion by the conference organisers.
- *Alternative format:* Contributions could include workshops, panel presentations, roundtables as well as formats of your own suggestions. Roundtables and panel presentations should be proposed as a group submission. Please note that there might be up to 70 participants and that we plan with programme slots of 60 to at most 90 minutes.

When?

- Deadline for proposals: 24 July 2023
- Notification of acceptance: 4 August 2023

How?

- Please use the attached submission form to hand in your proposal.
- For group submissions (panel discussions, roundtables, workshops), please respect a certain gender balance in your planning.
- Please submit your proposal in English.

- Please send your submission using the attached form no later than **24 July 2023** to modus-conference@hrk.de (subject: Call Recognition Culture in Higher Education).

In case you may have any questions, please contact Lena Apfel (apfel@hrk.de) or Louisa Langenkämper (langenkaemper@hrk.de). Further information on the conference can be found at <https://www.hrk-modus.de/recognition-culture-in-he/>.

We are looking forward to an interesting and exciting conference with you!

Form for Submissions

Recognition Culture in Higher Education

11-12 December 2023, Bonn, GSI Conference Centre

Conference Proposal

Information on the contributor(s)

Contact person

Full Name:

E-Mail:

Organisation/Institutional
Affiliation (with country):

Current Position:

Short CV:
(max. 500 characters)

Further contributors (if applicable)

Full Name:

E-Mail:

Organisation/Institutional
Affiliation (with country):

Current Position:

Short CV:
(max. 500 characters)

Full Name:

E-Mail:

Organisation/Institutional
Affiliation (with country):

Current Position:

Short CV:
(max. 500 characters)

If there are more than three contributors, please include the details in the email.

Please indicate the thematic area(s) that your contribution relates to:

Recognition Practices in HEIs

Lifelong Learning

Student Mobility

... and the format of your contribution:

Presentation

Alternative format:

Please briefly delineate the format you envision.
(max. 250 words)

Your proposed contribution:

Title:

(130 characters)

Description:

(max. 500 words)

Fields marked in red are mandatory.

I have taken note of the [data protection information](#) and agree to it.