

## **DIES Training Course “UNIVERSITY GRADUATES’ TRACER STUDY COURSE (UNITRACE)”**

### **Course Outline**

In many countries a new demand is emerging: higher education institutions should provide empirical evidence regarding the professional relevance of their study programs. In some countries higher education institutions are formally required to conduct graduate tracer studies in order to get the accreditation of their study programs. Besides the aspect of accountability higher education institutions are becoming more and more interested to get a systematic feedback from their graduates. Mainly the improvement of the study programmes, and more specific the revision of curricula are the core objectives of the graduate tracer studies.

Very often such studies are done on a low level of professional expertise, resulting in low response rates, much too simple data analysis and wrong interpretations of the findings. **The DIES Training Course “UNIVERSITY GRADUATES’ TRACER STUDY COURSE (UNITRACE)”** offered by the **International Centre for Higher Education Research at the University of Kassel (INCHER-Kassel)** in Germany is targeted to people from higher education institutions who will be responsible for realizing graduate tracer studies. Participants will be enabled to conduct professional tracer studies. Furthermore, participants will **be trained in the freeware software QTAFI**, a key tool developed by INCHER-Kassel to prepare questionnaires, online-surveys, tables and figures for professional tracer surveys.

The participants will be trained by experienced researchers in the major steps of the studies: questionnaire development based on relevant theories and specific research questions, research methodology, organization of the field work, methods to achieve a high response rate, data entry and data editing, coding, data analysis, interpretation of findings and reporting. Participants will be accompanied and supported throughout the whole process of a tracer study.

It is expected that participants apply **in a team of two members per institution**. Both team members are supposed to jointly conduct the tracer study at their institution. This will enable them to support each other during the process. It is recommended that one of the team members should have knowledge in higher education policy issues (e.g. curriculum development, quality assurance, accreditation). The other team member should be experienced in empirical research projects including data analysis. Both team members are expected to attend the whole series of workshops in the training to make sure that both of them gain a deep understanding of all aspects of a tracer study to support each other.

The training will be realized in three consecutive workshops comprising the following components:

### **Workshop 1**

**Survey preparation** (e.g. relevant theories, design of the survey, identification of mailing addresses of the graduates, organization of the field work, methods to achieve a high response rate)

Location: Kassel University, Germany.

Time and duration: two weeks: October 11th – October 22nd, 2010.

### **Workshop 2**

**Data analysis** (e.g. data entry and editing, coding, data analysis)

Location: Kassel University, Germany.

Time and duration: two weeks: 6 – 9 months after the first workshop, date to be specified.

### **Workshop 3**

**Interpretation of findings and dissemination** (e.g. the role of comparisons, presentation of findings, different kind of reports, tables and figures)

Location: Central America, Eastern Africa, Southeast Asia (depending on home regions of participants, to be specified).

Time and duration: two days: 12-18 months after the first workshop, date to be specified.

The training programme will always provide opportunities for the exchange of valuable experiences and views among the participants. **Since the three training components are related to each other, it is expected that participants are present at all three workshops.**

## **Participants**

UNITRACE is directed at expert staff of universities and intermediary bodies of the Higher Education sector (e.g. University associations, Higher Education Commissions) holding a university degree. All participants should be in charge of conducting or coordinating tracer studies (graduate surveys). Experts from the following countries are eligible to apply for the DIES Training Course UNITRACE:

**South East Asia**: Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam

**Eastern Africa**: Burundi, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda

**Central America**: Belize, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama

It is requested that participants implement a tracer study parallel to their participation in the three workshops. **Applicants should hand in a letter of intent of their home institution to conduct a tracer study.** Each phase of the tracer study will be prepared in detail during the workshops and should be realized by the participants at their home institutions after each workshop.

It is expected that participants apply **in a team of two members per institution.** Both team members are supposed to jointly conduct the tracer study at their institution. This will enable them to support each other during the process.

Expected profile of the participants:

**Team member “Higher Education Policy”:**

Professional experience in higher education policy, e.g.

- curriculum development
- quality assurance
- evaluation
- accreditation

The team member “Higher Education Policy” should be well connected to the university top management.

**Team member “Empirical Research”:**

Professional experience in

- empirical research projects
- data analysis
- methodological approaches to evaluation
- basic knowledge and skills in SPSS are welcome

The team member “Empirical Research” should have access to necessary technical resources.

***Please note: Good proficiency of English is required for both team members.***

The maximum number of participants will be 18.

## **Technical requirements**

Each participant should have a notebook with at least Microsoft Office 2007 programs WORD, EXCEL, ACCESS, POWERPOINT. An SPSS installation (version 18) is recommended. The participants should be able to make new installations on the notebook (administrator password?).

The notebook should be equipped with WLAN.

## **Costs**

International flight costs, board and lodging, emergency health insurance as well as the tuition fee will be covered by DAAD with funds from the German Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development. Participants’ home institutions are expected to cover local transportation in their home countries and visa costs as a counterpart share. Further details on terms and conditions will be given to the admitted applicants together with the invitation letter.

## **Application**

**Application deadline: July 22, 2010**

Applicants will be informed **by mid of August 2010** whether they are accepted.

Application documents should include:

- A completed **application form** as attached. The application form should be filled in jointly by the team members
- A **letter of intent of your institution’s top authorities** which confirms the institutes’ commitment to conduct a graduate survey and to timely provide necessary resources.
- The above mentioned letter should include a annexed **statement explaining the kind and characteristics of the graduate survey** that should be carried out at

the participants' home institution. The statement includes information on the following aspects:

- a) Which cohorts of graduates should be included (graduates of one year, e.g. 2009, or graduates of several years, e.g. 2007, 2008, 2009)?
- b) At what time after graduation should the survey take place (e.g. 6 months, 1.5 years...)?
- c) What is the planned scope of your survey (graduates of selected faculties; institution-wide)?
- d) Do you plan to establish a panel design, in which the same graduates will be asked at a certain time after graduation and again a few years later to analyse the development over time?
- e) Which methods of data collection do you plan to use (e.g. online survey, paper-based questionnaire, telephone interviews...)?
- f) Which resources at institutional level are foreseen to support the team of the two UNITRACE participants when conducting the tracer study?

The selection committee will include members of INCHER-Kassel and DAAD.

Applications should be sent **by email to:**

**Constanze Engel**

[constanze.engel@incher.uni-kassel.de](mailto:constanze.engel@incher.uni-kassel.de)

and **in copy to the respective DAAD office in your home country/ region:**

**South East Asia:**

Indonesia:	Dr. Buchholt	buchholt@daadjkt.org
Philippines:	Ms. Lange	daad.manila@googlemail.com
Thailand:	Ms. Mülverstedt	info@daad.or.th
Vietnam:	Ms. Bossmann	bossmann@daadvn.org

**Eastern Africa:**

Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda:	Ms. Kirai	kirai@daadafrica.org
Ethiopia:	Dr. Zehle	janazehle@yahoo.de

**Central America:**

Belize, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama:	Ms. Rusak-Rojas	irusak@conare.ac.cr
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## Schedule of Workshop 1 - Survey preparation

October 11th – October 22nd, 2010 at Kassel University

The first workshop will take place from October 11th to October 22nd, 2010 at Kassel University, Germany. It is supposed to serve as preparation for the field phase of the tracer study that the all participants should realize after the return at their home institution. The first workshop will give both team members an extensive introduction in design, methodology and prospects of graduate surveys. It is crucial that both team members develop an understanding of all aspects (design, methodology, conduction and integration at the institution) of graduate surveys and attend the whole series of the three workshops. This will enable them to conduct their tracer study at a high professional level.

### Workshop 1 (Survey preparation) - First Week

Saturday, October 9	Arrival in Kassel	
Sunday, October 10	Individual preparation for the training	
<b>Monday, October 11</b>	<b>Introduction and overview</b>	
	1. Welcome and introduction	Harald Schomburg
	2. Methodology and Methods of Tracer Studies - an Overview	Harald Schomburg
	1. Objectives of Graduate Tracer Studies	
	2. Design of Graduate Tracer Studies	
	3. Preparation of the field phase	
	4. Tasks in the field phase	
	5. Methods report	
	6. Data cleaning and coding	
	7. Data analysis	
	8. Reports and dissemination activities	
	3. Design of regular Graduate Tracer Studies for individual institutions	Harald Schomburg
<b>Tuesday, October 12</b>	<b>Questionnaire development</b>	
	Objectives of Graduates Tracer Studies: Questionnaire and research questions	Ulrich Teichler
	Principles of questionnaire development	Harald Schomburg
	Questionnaire development	Group work
<b>Wednesday, October 13</b>	<b>Questionnaire development</b>	
	Participants are developing a master questionnaire for their institution of higher education	Group work and plenary
<b>Thursday, October 14</b>	<b>Graduate Tracer Study Systems at German Universities (1)</b>	
	Excursion to universities in Berlin that conduct tracer studies in a Germany-wide cooperation project supported by INCHER-Kassel. Topics: First hand experience on prospects of tracer studies (contribution to evaluation and accreditation procedures, quality assurance, curriculum development); dissemination strategies for research results; dealing with challenges and resistance to tracer studies; dealing with problems in the implementation process.	

	<i>Travel to the Free University of Berlin</i>	
	Meeting with researchers and administrative staff of the division "graduate studies" at the Free University of Berlin	Heidemarie Hecht, Co-ordinator
<b>Friday, October 15</b>	<b>Graduate Tracer Study Systems at German Universities (see above) (2)</b>	
	Meeting with researchers and administrative staff of the Technical University of Berlin and the Humboldt University	NN

### Workshop 1 (Survey preparation) - Second Week

Saturday, October 16	Cultural excursion and travel to Kassel	
Sunday, October 17	Individual preparation for the training	
<b>Monday, October 18</b>	<b>QTAFI - a key tool for Tracer Studies</b>	
	<p>Online-questionnaire with QTAFI</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Types of question</li> <li>2. Codebook</li> <li>3. Testing</li> <li>4. Administration of a survey</li> <li>5. Data analysis</li> </ol> <p>Automatic data capture - Concept and training of an open source tool</p>	Martin Guist
	Participants generate their an online version of questionnaire using QTAFI	Group work and plenary
<b>Tuesday, October 19</b>	<b>Pretest of the questionnaire</b>	
	Introduction to pretest methodology	Harald Schomburg
	Pretest of the questionnaires and questionnaire revision	Group work and plenary
<b>Wednesday, October 20</b>	<b>Field phase preparation</b>	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Availability of addresses</li> <li>2. Address database</li> <li>3. Address quality and update</li> <li>4. Invitation letters</li> <li>5. Incentives</li> <li>6. Web page</li> </ol>	Choni Flöther, Lutz Heidemann
<b>Thursday, October 21</b>	<b>Conduction of the survey</b>	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Planning of mailing actions</li> <li>2. Reminder</li> <li>3. Methods report</li> <li>4. Questionnaire administration</li> <li>5. Help desc</li> </ol>	Choni Flöther, Lutz Heidemann
<b>Friday, October 22</b>	<b>Winding up</b>	

	Remaining issues and further cooperation	Harald Schomburg
<b>Saturday, October 23</b>	<b>Departure</b>	

### **Workshop 2 - Data analysis**

*two weeks workshop between April and June, 2010 at Kassel University, exact date to be specified*

The second workshop will take place about 6-9 months after the first workshop. All participants should have finished the field phase of their Graduate Tracer Studies. The participants will take the data from their surveys with them. These data will be used and analysed during the workshop. The quality of the data will be checked, data errors will be detected and corrected, reliability tests will be performed and mainly descriptive data analysis will be done (frequencies and tables).

Both team members will gain a deep understanding on requirements of data quality as well as measures to assure data quality and in data analysis. This knowledge is not only crucial to prepare the data basis for further analysis but also to develop the reports to be written. The understanding of the measures of data quality and data analysis will enable participants to produce reports of high quality and to deal with eventual resistance and doubts about the gained results.

### **Workshop 3 - Interpretation of Findings and Dissemination**

*two days workshop between October 2011/January 2012 in each region (Central America, Eastern Africa, South East Asia), exact date to be specified*

The third workshop will take place about 12-18 months after the first workshop. All participants should have finished the reports from their Graduate Tracer Studies. The participants should also have already experience with other dissemination activities. The workshop will provide opportunities to share the experience with report writing and dissemination activities of different institutions of higher education. Further steps in data analysis and special report writing will be trained as well as strategies to improve curriculum development in higher education based on feedbacks from graduates.

## Trainers

The trainers of the Graduate Tracer Study Workshops will be members of the International Centre for Higher Education Research of the University of Kassel (INCHER-Kassel) with high experience in graduate surveys at national and international level. The trainers of INCHER-Kassel will be supported by external trainers from other institutions of higher education co-operating with INCHER-Kassel in the conduction of tracer studies to foster an exchange of experiences and to provide participants with first-hand experience on implementing institution-wide graduate surveys.

Trainers of INCHER-Kassel:

Choni Flöther	INCHER-Kassel	Co-ordinator of graduate studies of the University of Kassel
Martin Guist	INCHER-Kassel	Software engineer, specialized in IT-solutions and data management for graduate surveys
Lutz Heidemann	INCHER-Kassel	Deputy team leader, member of a Germany-wide co-operation project of higher education institutions in graduate surveys co-ordinated by INCHER-Kassel
Florian Löwenstein	INCHER-Kassel	Data analyst specialized in graduate surveys
Harald Schomburg	INCHER-Kassel	Team leader: Scientific co-ordinator of various international and national graduate surveys
Ulrich Teichler	INCHER-Kassel	Resource person: Professor at the International Centre for Higher Education Research Kassel. Internationally renowned expert in higher education research.

External trainers:

Heidmarie Hecht	Free University of Berlin	Co-ordinator of the division "graduate studies" at Free University of Berlin; project partner of INCHER-Kassel in a Germany-wide co-operation project of higher education institutions in graduate surveys
N.N.	Technical University of Berlin	Project partner of INCHER-Kassel in a Germany-wide co-operation project of higher education institutions in graduate surveys
N.N.	Humboldt University of Berlin	Project partner of INCHER-Kassel in a Germany-wide co-operation project of higher education institutions in graduate surveys

## Curriculum Vitae of Trainers



### **Choni Flöther**

studied geography, political-, social- and cultural studies at University of Bremen. She finished her doctoral degree in urban sociology at Carl-von-Ossietzky-University Oldenburg in 2009.

Choni Flöther started to work at INCHER-Kassel in 2007. She is currently involved in the graduate studies of University of Kassel (UNIKAB), the German cooperation-project KOAB, in which more than 50 German institutions of higher education jointly conduct graduate surveys, and the Austrian graduate survey ARUFA.

Her work is focused on regional issues of higher education, mobility of university graduates as well as the implementation of graduate surveys.



### **Martin Guist**

already joined the International Centre for Research on Higher Education as a student assistant, when he developed online.QTAFI, a tool to administrate and conduct large scale online surveys. After finishing his studies in Mechanical Engineering at Kassel University in 2006, he started to work at INCHER-Kassel as IT-specialist and data administrator. He is responsible for the realization of online surveys in various national and international research projects conducted at INCHER-Kassel.



### **Lutz Heidemann**

studied Sociology at Dresden University of Technology. His major research interests are methodology and processes of graduate surveys. From 2003 to 2007, he co-ordinated the graduate survey of Dresden University of Technology. Since 2007, Lutz Heidemann works as researcher in the International Centre for Research on Higher Education (INCHER-Kassel). He is mainly responsible for the realization of the project "Study conditions and professional success", a co-operation of more than 50 German

institutions of higher education which jointly conduct graduate surveys co-ordinated by INCHER-Kassel.



### **Florian Löwenstein**

already gained working experience in data collection and management in the statistics department of a market research institution during his studies. After finishing a Master in sociology, psychology and education at the University of Kassel in 2007, Florian Löwenstein joined INCHER-Kassel for the international research project Changing Academic Profession ("CAP"), which examined the nature and extent of the changes experienced by the academic profession. In the framework of the "CAP"-project, Florian Löwenstein was responsible for managing the international data set of 20 participating countries. At the same time, he started to work in the tracer study project "KOAB", a co-operation of more than 50 German higher education institutions co-ordinated by INCHER-Kassel. He steers the data collection, data entry and data analysis for the tracer studies conducted by the co-operating institutions in the project.



### **Harald Schomburg**

trained as a social scientist, is the key researcher of the International Center of Higher Education Research (INCHER-Kassel) in areas of higher education and employment, survey methods and quantitative data analysis. He played a major role in the longitudinal study on the impact of study conditions and provisions on careers and job assignments in Germany and in the survey on the relationships between higher education and employment in 11 European countries and Japan (CHEERS Project). Since 2007 he is the team leader of the German graduate tracer study "Study Conditions and Professional Success" - a large scale survey in which more than 70.000 graduates participated. For more than a decade, he was active in consultancy and conducting training programmes for scholars and administrators wishing to undertake graduate surveys as a feedback for their own university. He wrote two handbooks on the methods of undertaking graduate surveys and conducted training programmes in Africa, Asia and Latin America.



### **Ulrich Teichler,**

Born in 1942; study of sociology at the Free University of Berlin (Dipl.-Soz. in 1968); researcher at the Max Planck Institute for Educational Research, Berlin (1968-1978); guest researcher at the National Institute for Educational Research, Tokyo, Japan (1970-1972); dissertation on higher education and social selection in Japan (Dr. phil. of the University of Bremen, 1975). Professor at the University of Kassel since 1978, former director for altogether 16 years - of INCHER-Kassel (previously Centre for Research on Higher Education and Work), former dean of faculty (for one year), and vice president of the University of Kassel (for two years). Professor on part-time or short-term basis at the Northwestern University, Evanston/Illinois, U.S. (1986-1992), College of Europe, Bruges, Belgium (1994-1996) and Hiroshima University, Japan (2004); visiting professor of the Open University, UK (2007-); other temporary teaching assignments in Argentina, Austria, Germany and Norway; special honours and prizes at universities in Argentina, Costa Rica, Sri Lanka, Syria and the U.S.; extended periods as research fellow in Japan and the Netherlands; altogether visits of about 80 countries.

Key research areas: higher education and the world of work, international comparison of higher education systems, and international cooperation and mobility in higher education; additionally research on education and social selection, the academic profession, access and admission, continuing professional education, and evaluation in higher education. Former or current co-editor of various academic journals, e.g. Higher Education (1990-2009), "European Journal of Education", and "Das Hochschulwesen". Expert and consultancy activities for UNESCO, OECD, World Bank, Council of Europe, European Commission, various national governments and various international and national university organisations. Member, and from 1998-2004 member of the Board, of the International Academy of Education (1992-), member of the Academia Europaea (1992-) and coordinator of the expert group "Higher Education, Research and Culture in European Society" (HERCULES, 2003-2009), former chairman of the Consortium of Higher Education Researchers (CHER) (1988/1989 and 1992-1998), former president (1998-2002) and distinguished member (2003-) of EAIR, Vice-President (1986-) and Fellow (2008) of the Society for Research into Higher Education (SRHE). Award of the Research Prize by CIEE (1997), the Comenius Prize by UNESCO (1998), and the ERASMUS Special Prize 2008 by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD). Doctor honoris causa of the University of Turku, Finland (2006); sponsor of the Ulrich-Teichler Prize for the best doctoral and master theses in Germany on higher education (2008-).

More than 1,000 academic publications; recent books: Hochschule und Arbeitswelt (2003), Universitaet auf dem Pruefstand (co-ed., 2003), Graduados y empleo (2005), Hochschulstrukturen im Umbruch (2005), Hochschulsysteme und Hochschulpolitik (2005), EURODATA: Student Mobility in European Higher Education (co-ed., 2006) Higher Education and Graduate Employment in Europe (co-autor, 2006), Reformas de los modelos de la educación superior

(2006), *The Formative Years of Scholars* (ed., 2006), *Yôroppa no kôtô kyôiku kaikaku* (2006), *Careers of University Graduates* (ed., 2007), *Die Internationalisierung der Hochschulen* (2007), *Higher Education Systems* (2007), *Wege zur Professur* (co-author, 2007), *Universities as Centres of Research and Knowledge Creation: An Endangered Species?* (co-ed., 2008), *Higher Education and the World of Work* (2009), *The Professional Value of ERASMUS Mobility* (co-author, 2009), *Sistemas comparados de educación superior en Europa* (2009). *Festschriften in honour of U. Teichler: Higher Education in a Globalising World* (ed. by O. Fulton and J. Enders, 2002), *Hochschule im Wandel* (ed. by B.M. Kehm, 2008).