Strengthening alternative access routes through validation of non-formal and informal learning

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What are we talking about today?

Validation of prior learning

Accessing higher education

Competences students got outside highschool are validated as entrance requirements for university studies.

Crediting towards study programme

Competences, students got outside HE are credited towards courses or moduls. Time of study can be reduced.
What are we talking about today?

Validation of prior learning

Accessing higher education

Crediting towards study programme

Formal learning

non-formal learning

Informal learning

formal learning

non-formal learning

Informal learning
## Definition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Formal Learning</th>
<th>Non-formal learning</th>
<th>Informal Learning</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A learning process that takes place in an organized and structured context, which is designed to support the learning. This process is typically to attain a qualification, normally in the form of a diploma or certificate of qualification.</td>
<td>A more or less designed learning process that does not directly result in a formal qualification or certification.</td>
<td>A learning process that is either incidental to the learner's situation, or organised primarily by the individual learner for his or her own purposes without the goal to get a formal qualification.</td>
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</tbody>
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What kind of access routes do we have?

**Formal learning**

- Access with school-leaving qualifications (Abitur oder fachgebundene Hochschulreife, Matura)
- Access with foreign secondary school-leaving qualifications
- Access with vocational training qualification
# Access with vocational training qualification in Germany

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General higher education entrance qualification</th>
<th>Subject-specific higher education entrance qualification</th>
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<tr>
<td>Candidates who completed <strong>advanced vocational training qualifications</strong> (e.g. master craftsman qualifications in the craft trades, certified senior clerk and technician qualifications) enjoy the status of “general higher education entrance qualification” which can be used to apply for any course of higher education study in Germany.</td>
<td>Candidates who have completed at least a <strong>two-year course of vocational education and training</strong> and have at least three years of <strong>occupational practice</strong> may present themselves to institutes of higher education for an aptitude test in a subject of study which is professionally related to their occupation.</td>
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### Alternative routes to higher education - Austria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alternative university entrance examinations - Studienberechtigungsprüfung, Berufsreifeprüfung, Lehre mit Matura</th>
<th>Professional qualification in the specific field</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TVE Diploma Examination (especially for persons who received dual education) &amp; university entrance qualification examination (limited to a specific degree programme or group of studies).</td>
<td>Access to universities of applied sciences sector (Fachhochschulen) admission requirements may include professional qualification in the specific field.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Percentage of students who come on alternative access routes (Germany):

![Graph showing the percentage of students who come on alternative access routes in Germany from 2010 to 2015. The graph indicates a trend of increasing percentages over the years.](image-url)
Access routes through validation of non-formal and informal learning

- In Germany there is almost no way to get access via validation of non-formal and informal learning.
- Less than 3 percent get access with vocational training qualifications, which, by definition, are formal competences.

And:

A higher education entrance qualification is the pre-condition for the admission to higher education institutions, but there is no guarantee that the person can study the subject of his/her choice. The decision is made by the individual institution on the basis of set criteria.

The situation in Austria it is different, because anyone with an entrance qualification can study the subject of his/her choice (with exceptions). That results in rather high drop-out rates in some subjects.
Why are non-formal and informal alternative access routes not successful?

Possible reasons:

• Legal restrictions: There is only a small legal path to informal access: Continuing education Master programmes, which are very rare.
• Lack of interest and reservations of the universities because they have too many students, who access on the formal path.
• Increasing attractiveness of higher education and decreasing attractiveness of vocational training, so that many more young people take the formal route to higher education.
The shift from more vocational training to more higher education

Since 2009 -
More students in higher education institutions than in vocational training institutions.

Deutlich mehr Studierende als Auszubildende
Zahl der Studierenden und Auszubildenden in Deutschland (in Mio.)

Quelle: Statistisches Bundesamt

2006 2007 2008 2009 2010 2011 2012
Auszubildende 2,09 2,13 2,15 2,11 2,05 2,39 2,51
Studierende 2,01 1,97 2,04 2,13 2,23 2,01 1,98
Too many university students?

Prof. Dr. Nida-Rümelin: „Akademisierungswahn“

Prof. Dr. Burckhart: „Wir haben zunehmend große Studierendenkohorten, die nicht wegen eines wissenschaftlichen Studiums kommen, sondern zur Berufsvorbereitung…. Studiengänge dürfen nicht noch stärker an Berufsbilder herangeführt werden. Stattdessen sollte man verstärkt Neigung und Eignung darauf prüfen, wer wirklich akademische Bildung anstrebe - und wer sich eine Ausbildung erhoffe an der Uni, sie nicht bekomme und womöglich abbreche.“
Businesses in Germany are complaining loudly that they cannot find enough young people to fill their apprenticeships.

Nachwuchssorgen

Betriebe finden keine Lehrlinge mehr


16.04.2015, von DIETRICH CRETZBURG

Studenten-Rekord – Ist das wirklich gut für uns?

Veröffentlicht am 25.11.2015 | Lesedauer: 4 Minuten

STUDENTENZAHLEN AUF HÖCHSTSTAND
Anzahl der an deutschen Hochschulen eingeschriebenen Studierenden, jeweils im Wintersemester (in Millionen)


2009 war die Differenz noch sehr knapp, aber seither ist sie jedes Jahr gewachsen. Das zeigt unsere Infografik, die das Statistikportal Statista für ZEIT ONLINE mit Daten des Statistischen Bundesamts erstellt hat. 2012 studierten über 2,5 Millionen junge Menschen an einer Hochschule, aber nur 1,98 Millionen hatten einen Ausbildungsvertrag.
The current situation in Germany

<table>
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<th>Higher education system</th>
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<td>• Increasing complaints about lack of preparation for academic studies</td>
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<td>• Student demand more job orientation and practical orientation during their studies.</td>
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<td>• High drop-out rates.</td>
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<th>Vocational apprenticeship system</th>
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<td>• Growing problems finding qualified candidates for apprenticeships.</td>
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<td>• University graduates take the jobs from people with vocational qualifications.</td>
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Consequence: Neither the higher education institutions nor the businesses are interested in fostering alternative access routes.
What might be a solution?

Access on the basis of competences and not on the basis of school-leaving qualifications.
From the Abitur as a ticket to university to the selection of students by each university on the basis of what they have learned.

How do Austrian experts think about these aspects?

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<tr>
<th>Expert position:</th>
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<td>Ao.Univ.-Prof.i.R. Dr. Hans Pechar</td>
<td>Univ.-Prof. Mag. Dr. Peter Schlögl</td>
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Conclusion

• Fostering alternative access routes is not only a matter of changing attitudes and commitment.
• In an aging society with growing competition between higher education and vocational training bigger solutions are necessary.
• Instead of strengthening alternative access routes through validation of non-formal and informal learning universities should select their students on the basis of competences.
• A new entrance policy raises new quality questions: The main goal should be the diversity conscious university, which maintains permeability without reducing the established quality standards.
Thank you for your attention!

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