



# UNIVERSITÄT KOBLENZ · LANDAU

In 2009 the Graduate School "Teaching and Learning Processes" (UPGrade) was founded at the University of Koblenz-Landau. It is financed by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG), Germany's largest research funding organisation. On August 1, 2015 it will be awarding

## **1 Doctoral Fellowship (0,65 EGr. 13 TV-L) in Educational Science**

for the third cohort of researchers, initially for a period of 2 years at the Landau campus.

The objective of the Graduate School "Teaching and Learning Processes" is to promote young scientists in the field of process-oriented and outcome-oriented educational research. Interdisciplinary projects bring together the fields of educational psychology, empirical educational science and diverse teaching methodologies, leading to high-quality doctoral dissertations. The Graduate School offers a curriculum that is oriented to international research, encompassing courses in theories and methods, research seminars as well as the attendance of national and international conferences. In addition, the programme provides for a research stay at an institution abroad for a period of several weeks.

**The PhD fellow work in the following project: External feedback on student achievement in English as a basis for developing teaching and learning processes. Project leaders: Prof. Dr. I. Hosenfeld, JProf. Dr. C. Juchem-Grundmann**

Alongside an outstanding academic record, applicants should have research experience (e.g., have worked as research assistant or conducted an empirical degree thesis). Ideally, they should have dealt with relevant topics during their degree programme or in projects. Essential criteria are an interest in empirical research, an orientation with regard to current research topics and findings, the ability to read and critically reflect on scientific texts (also in English) as well as the ability to express themselves clearly and concisely. Experience abroad, teaching experience and academic publications are an advantage, but not a prerequisite.

Applications must include: letter of application describing motivation and research interests of the applicant; curriculum vitae (including information on academic publications), copies of certificates of academic qualifications.

More detailed information about the project and the selection procedure can be found at the following address: [www.uni-ko-ld.de/karriere](http://www.uni-ko-ld.de/karriere)

In cases of equal suitability, aptitude and academic record, female candidates will be given preferential treatment, providing females are underrepresented in the Graduate School. This is not valid if there are preponderant reasons to give preference to another candidate, in spite of taking into consideration equal opportunities.

Applications from severely disabled people with equal qualifications will be given preferential treatment.

Candidates must submit their application by **July 19, 2015** quoting the reference **number 89/2015** via e-mail to [bewerbung@uni-koblenz-landau.de](mailto:bewerbung@uni-koblenz-landau.de)

When the recruitment process has been completed, your documents will be destroyed in order to ensure data privacy. We will not send an acknowledgement of receipt.

[www.uni-ko-ld.de/karriere](http://www.uni-ko-ld.de/karriere)

## INFORMATIONEN TO 89/2015

1. Project Description .....	<b>Fehler! Textmarke nicht definiert.</b>
2. Application and selection procedure.....	4
3. Expectations of the PHD Students during their membership of the Graduate School .....	4
4. Curriculum of the DFG Graduate School .....	5
5. The Research Programme.....	5

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### 1. Project Description

**Supervisors: Prof. Dr. I. Hosenfeld, JProf. Dr. C. Juchem-Grundmann**

#### **External feedback on student achievement in English as a basis for developing teaching and learning processes**

**Objective and question.** Feedback from external measurements of student achievements, such as comparative testing, provides teachers with information on the extent to which learners have reached the set learning goals and standards. Hence, external feedback may form a solid basis for the evidence-based development of teaching and learning processes. (cf. Standing Conference (KMK), 2006). This project explores how maximum benefits to improve the planning of learning processes can be leveraged from respective feedback.

**Theoretical background.** Developing teaching and learning processes on the basis of empirical evidence is a main component of the learning process of teachers and is therefore grounded in the reciprocal aspect of pedagogic interaction, as set out in the model proposed by Bronfenbrenner and Morris (2006). Furthermore, according to Helmke's model of utilizing learning opportunities (2012), the teacher sets the main conditions for pedagogic processes in the classroom by planning and respective implementation. The evidence-based development of teaching can be split into four phases. (1) First, the teacher searches for relevant evidence concerning the respective group of learners (e.g., his or her class). This evidence can, for example, be available in the form of external feedback. (2) Secondly, the teacher needs to comprehend this feedback and interpret the findings with regard to what he or she needs as essential information (cf. Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Most importantly, the teacher needs to consider the feedback as meaningful and relevant. For this purpose, the teacher requires competences in research methods (Shank & Brown, 2007) as well as knowledge about the curriculum. (3) Depending on the individual findings derived from the external feedback, the teacher starts planning lessons for his or her teaching. In this way, individual underlying assumptions concerning the learning processes of students and the impact of specific support measures can be captured indirectly. (4) Finally, the planned lesson is implemented and possible evidence on whether the goals have been reached can then provide a foundation for a similar additional cycle. For each phase, the necessary conditions as well as the professional teacher competences that result in a successful implementation can be described (Altrichter, 2010; Dederich, 2011) but up to date, there have been few empirical studies on the complex interplay.

**Relevance.** The project explores the development of teaching specifically regarding respective adaptation to the level of student competence. Unlike in regular scenarios, student achievement is measured externally here, providing external feedback (e.g., in the context of comparative testing in grade 8). External feedback of this kind is part of the strategies identified by all the German federal states to develop educational quality and places new demands on teachers.

**Methodological approach.** Teachers are provided with externally generated feedback based on an assessment of student achievement that is oriented towards the educational standards of English as a school subject. In a next step, they are asked to draw conclusions, select teaching measures to improve achievement for subsequent learning scenarios, and explain why they have selected these measures. In addition, different influencing factors, such as teachers' personality traits, their skill in dealing with empirical data, pedagogical content knowledge, and facets of professional competence are collected. Finally, the relation between characteristics of feedback, the above-mentioned influencing factors, and the adequacy of the resulting plans is examined.

**Possible dissertation topics.**

- The influences of capability-based teacher characteristics on the reception and use of external feedback from achievement measurements in the class context.
- The influences of personality traits of teachers on the reception and use of external feedback from achievement measurements in the class context.
- The influences of characteristics of external feedback from achievement measurements in the class context on reception and use.

**Literature**

Bronfenbrenner, U. & Morris, P. A. (2006). The bioecological model of human development. In R. M. Lerner & W. Damon (Eds.), *Theoretical models of human development* (p. 793–828). Hoboken, New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Altrichter, H. (2010). Schul- und Unterrichtsentwicklung durch Datenrückmeldung. In H. Altrichter & M. Boni, & E. Meyer-Renschhausen (Hrsg.), *Handbuch Neue Steuerung im Schulsystem* (p. 219–254). Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften.

Dedering, K. (2011). Hat Feedback eine positive Wirkung? Zur Verarbeitung extern erhobener Leistungsdaten in Schulen. *Unterrichtswissenschaft*, 39 (1), 63–82.

Hattie, J. & Timperley, H. (2007). The power of feedback. *Review of educational research*, 77(1), 81–112.

Helmke, A. (2012). *Unterrichtsqualität und Lehrerprofessionalität. Diagnose, Evaluation und Verbesserung des Unterrichts* (4th ed.). Seelze: Klett-Kallmeyer.

Education Ministers' Conference (KMK; 2006). Ständige Konferenz der Kultusminister der Länder in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland. *Gesamtstrategie der Kultusministerkonferenz zum Bildungsmonitoring*. Munich: Wolters Kluwer.

Shank, G. & Brown, L. (2007). *Exploring Educational Research Literacy*. New York, NY: Routledge.

## 2. Application and selection procedure

Please submit your application and uncertified copies of your certificates without a folder/transparent envelopes, as the documents will not be returned to you due to cost considerations. When the recruitment process has been completed, your documents will be destroyed in order to ensure data privacy. We will not send an acknowledgement of receipt.

An application should contain information about the following points:

- Name of the project that the applicant is applying for (including the reference number)
- Letter of application describing motivation and research interests of the applicant
- Detailed curriculum vitae
- Uncertified copies of certificates of academic qualifications

If the applicant has qualifications/experience in the following fields, please specify:

- Professional experience in research
- Experience abroad
- Publications
- Own research experience

The following criteria are applied in the selection procedure:

- Quality of the outline of the PhD project in the abstract
- Performance in the university degree(s) and overall academic record
- Fluency in English – written and spoken
- Possible professional experience in research
- Possible experience abroad
- Possible publication experience
- Possible own research experience
- Other qualifications, e.g. prizes, awards

In cases of equal suitability, aptitude and academic record, female candidates will be given preferential treatment, providing females are underrepresented in the Graduate School. This is not valid if there are preponderant reasons to give preference to another candidate, in spite of taking into consideration equal opportunities.

Applications from severely disabled people with equal qualifications will be given preferential treatment.

## 3. Expectations of the PHD Students during their membership of the Graduate School

- Completion of the doctoral programme, including oral defence of the dissertation, within a period of three years
- Regular presence (min. 4 days)
- Regular and active participation in courses offered by the Graduate School
- Intensive familiarisation with research methods, enabling PhD students to plan, implement and analyse an own study
- Two written contributions to a journal or book - one national and one international publication - together with a supervisor, if possible with the peer-review process
- Active participation (poster or presentation) in at least two national and two international conferences
- Several weeks in a research group focusing on a related topic at a university abroad
- Documentation of work progress in several work reports and research colloquia

#### **4. Curriculum of the DFG Graduate School**

The curriculum of the DFG Graduate School is spread over six semesters with an average of five hours of instruction per week. The instruction is performed by supervisor tandems as team teaching in order to enhance interdisciplinary dialogue. The courses are partly held in English.

The curriculum encompasses theory courses, methods courses, research workshops and the “teaching and learning” lecture series:

- Theory courses. The PhD students are taught the fundamental scientific theories and subject-specific theories of educational research, in particular teaching research.
- Methods courses. The doctoral students learn about the relevant research methods for the research of teaching and learning.
- Research workshops. Tandems are set up between the PhD students and supervisors, who regularly present the concept, method and/or findings of their dissertation projects (depending on the current status of their work) and discuss them with the members of the Graduate School.
- “Teaching and learning” lecture series. Renowned experts of the discipline are invited to public lectures to report on their current research activities.

#### **5. The Research Programme**

The objective of the DFG Graduate School “Teaching and Learning Processes” is to promote young scientists in interdisciplinary projects. These combine the fields of educational psychology, empirical educational science and diverse teaching methodologies in both process-oriented and outcome-oriented research of teaching and learning processes. Experienced teachers with an interest in research collaborate with university graduates to promote the transfer between the theory and practice of teaching. The link between the subject-specific and practical teaching expertise of teachers and the knowledge of research methods of psychologists and empirical educational scientists aims to generate synergy effects and foster specialist expertise. The researchers explore both interdisciplinary and subject-specific aspects of instruction.

The research programme of the DFG Graduate School aims to create a link between process-oriented and outcome-oriented research in the field of teaching. As a result, the general and subject-specific diagnostic skills of teachers come to the fore, which not only consider the cognitive learning abilities of pupils, but also take into account their motivational and emotional state and – given the widespread heterogeneous social composition of school classes – their linguistic and cultural background.