CHE–QUEST

An Analysis Tool for Diversity Management
at Higher Education Institutions

Study-related Diversity

Brief description of a methodology and
identified student types

QUEST was developed within the project *Vielfalt als Chance* (*Diversity as an Opportunity*). The project is being realized by CHE Consult and supported by the Bertelsmann Foundation.

Bertelsmann **Stiftung**

EDITORIAL

The student body is becoming more heterogeneous. Diverse life situations, talents, family and social backgrounds, aims and needs among the students – one can no longer speak of "the students". Diversity creates complex and more confusing situations. However, it also creates potentials for successful teaching – providing diversity is seen and used as a chance. In order for this to become possible at all it is necessary to not just acknowledge, but to also manage diversity.

CHE Consult is working on the topic *Diversity Management for Universities* in two large projects: *Vielfalt als Chance*, supported by the Bertelsmann Foundation and *Ungleich Besser! Verschiedenheit als Chance* (*Unparalleled Better! Heterogeneity as an Opportunity*), in cooperation with the Stifterverband für die Deutsche Wissenschaft (Donors' Association for German Science). The project *Ungleich Besser! Verschiedenheit als Chance* is all about developing the fundamentals for an audit in Diversity Management. Both projects are being dealt with by specially chosen pilot universities, all situated in Germany.

In order to improve both the analytical and descriptive capacities for study-related diversity, CHE has developed a new kind of students' questionnaire which is innovative for Germany: "CHE-QUEST". First and foremost, it is necessary to describe a university's student body based on their varyingly successful forms of adaptation to study conditions and requirements. Our brief description of the methodology and the types of students researched is primarily aimed at university managers as well as other representatives who are committed to the improvement of study conditions and student retention.

We would be pleased to receive your notes and feedback. Just send an email to me: hannah.leichsenring@che-consult.de

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1 INTRODUCTION

For the students' questionnaire, CHE-QUEST, CHE Consult has adopted an approach that is methodically completely new in Germany: The survey recognises the students' various levels of adaptation to both the requirements and conditions of studying and the alignment with socio-demographic characteristics. CHE-QUEST uncovers the strengths and also the deficits for specific groups of students in adjusting to their studies and additionally shows where adaptation – meaning a mutual adaptation process between students and university might succeed, or rather not succeed. CHE-QUEST is capable of demonstrating how certain groups perform in comparison to the other students at either the same Higher Education Institution (HEI) or another altogether. This offers HEIs the chance to verify the frame conditions of the study experience in terms of how they either complicate or facilitate this adaptation and how these conditions could potentially be changed. The aim is to be able to shape studying into a process of mutual adaptation.[1]

About 8,800 students from the following HEIs, partner institutions in the project *Vielfalt als Chance*, took part in an initial round of surveys in November 2010[2:]

- University of Applied Sciences Bremen,
- University of Applied Sciences Hamm-Lippstadt,
- University of Applied Sciences Ruhr West,
- University of Applied Sciences Zittau/Görlitz,
- Bremen University,
- Europe University Viadrina Frankfurt/Oder,
- Technical University Munich,
- Regensburg University.

All students of the respective institutions, including doctoral candidates and exchange students, were invited to participate in this survey.

During the evaluation, it was possible to identify various student types. It is now no longer necessary to classify students at a HEI as either "normal" or "deviating". The complexity of "normality" becomes tangible and can be made the basis for action: What kinds of services and support, as well as methods of teaching and learning, would be helpful? All in all, eight student types were identified: The "Desired Students", the "Lonesome Riders", the "Pragmatists", the "Disenchanted", the "Dutiful", the "Not -Arrived", the "Going-with-the-Flow" and the "In-Need-of-Support" (see 4.1).

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1   For a description of the questionnaire and information regarding its development see Leichsenring/Sippel/Hachmeister: CHE-QUEST – Ein Fragebogen zum Adaptionsprozess zwischen Studierenden und Hochschule [A Questionnaire referring to the Process of Adaptation between Students and University]. Gütersloh, 2011 (obtainable in German online under www.che-consult.de/DiversityManagement).
2   Information regarding the project *Vielfalt als Chance* that CHE Consult is conducting on behalf of the Bertelsmann Foundation can be found (mostly in German, English publications in preparation) on the internet under URL www.che-consult.de/DiversityManagement.

2 FIVE HYPOTHESES

The questionnaire was developed on the basis of the following fundamental theses:

ONE

The success of the complex process of studying is not only decided upon by accomplishing academic demands. An element of this also lies in coping with different social requirements, and both fields influence, explicitly as well as implicitly, the requirements students need to fulfil in order to successfully complete their studies.[3] In the German Higher Education system the impact of non-academic study aspects on the successful completion of studies is being blatantly underestimated.

TWO

Students differ in the approaches which determine their abilities to fulfil the requirements and conditions of their studies. Among other factors, this depends to a great extent on the very different personal resources they can rely on – these are, for example, previous experiences, family support, self-assurance etc. In contrast to that, the study programs at HEIs are directed towards expectations of normality, which to a continuously decreasing degree, apply to the evermore heterogeneous student body.

THREE

Certain target groups within the student body need specific offers of support or structures to be able to start a course of study (e. g. parents, disabled people, foreign students, working/employed persons). However, whether or not these students will be successful in their studies does not just depend on the offers and structures made available to them (by the university or other sources), but is ultimately decided by the students' approach to their specific study conditions and how they deal with these.

FOUR

Studying needs to be looked at as a process of mutual adaption between students and the university. The students' adaptation to the relevant existing conditions and requirements of a course of study shows only one side of the mirror: Additionally, the existing conditions at a HEI need to be checked as to how they could be shaped so that students – or perhaps even just certain groups within the student body – can tackle the requirements of studying more successfully.

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3   see Tinto, Vincent (1993)[2]: Leaving College – Rethinking the causes and cures of student attrition.

FIVE

Success in studies is the most important orientation tool to measure the university's ability to adapt to new target groups. The more successfully HEIs recruit groups that have so far been under-represented, the more relevant it will be to look at key figures regarding successful studies. The study success of the under-represented target groups in particular is determined by how well missing personal resources can be compensated by the university during the course of study, and how well the university is able to recognise and implement new impulses originating from the target groups in order to make their study success – meaning individually achieving the best possible degree – more likely.

3 DESIGN OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire, CHE-QUEST, consists of three parts. The first two parts deal with socio-demographic and psychometric aspects. The third part of the survey offered the project HEIs the opportunity to put forward questions specific to their universities. These questions were directed at the universities own students only and referred to offers and structures of the respective university (this part is not being dealt with here).

3.1 COLLECTED SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

The data collected in part one has not simply been confined to the six traditional categories of diversity (gender, age, sexual orientation, ethical background, religion, disability), but instead includes university-related aspects (e.g. course and study type, and performance parameters, such as school leaving grades and self-assessment of school performance) as well as criteria for the personal living conditions of students (employment, housing conditions, contact with former social environment, parent-hood etc.).

3.2 PSYCHOMETRIC PART OF CHE-QUEST

In part two, 74 items are presented, each representing a particular behaviour. The participants of the survey are requested to evaluate themselves for each behavioural trait based on a scale from 0 to 100 percent. Initially the psychometric QUEST items are factorised, i. e. the items with similar answers are put together into factors by means of statistical methods. This leads to the establishment of the ten QUEST-factors (see below). Both the validity and reliability of these factors have been confirmed in the testing phase.[4]

The higher the figures, the greater the level of adaption to the requirements and conditions of the scientific university study programmes. However, low figures do not indicate, for example, an "inability to study" but rather signify discrepancies between the (partially implicit) requirements and conditions at the university, and the students' conduct, expectations, interests and objectives.

THE TEN QUEST FACTORS

FRAME OF MIND	IDENTIFICATION WITH THE HEI
DETERMINATION	EXPECTATIONS
THEORY ORIENTATION	SOCIAL INTEGRATION
EXTRAVERSION	ACCEPT ASSISTANCE
DILIGENCE	INTRINSIC MOTIVATION

4   see Leichsenring/Hachmeister/Sippel 2011.
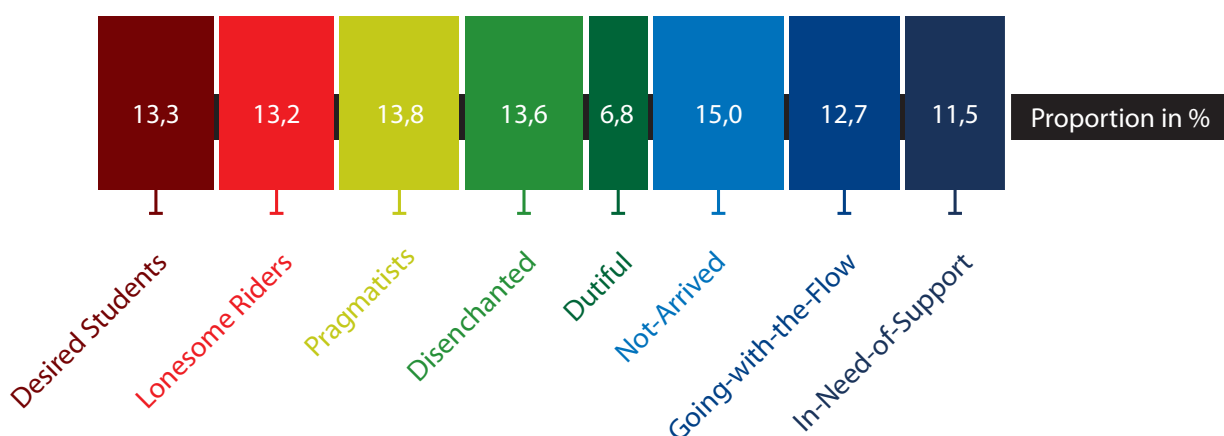
4 Study-related Diversity

In a second move, the results of the survey were subjected to a cluster analysis, thus identifying eight groups of candidates, who show a high degree of similarity with each other as far as psychometric questions are concerned, and who, at the same time, differ from the other groups. Even though the students in these groups are, of course, individually different, their most important collective characteristics allow for the formation of eight polarised types of students, which have been named as follows:

-   The "Desired Students",
-   the "Lonesome Riders",
-   the "Pragmatists",
-   the "Disenchanted ",
-   the "Dutiful",
-   the "Not-Arrived ",
-   the "Going-with-the-Flow" and
-   the "In-Need-of-Support".

Thus, the types of students represent a typology of reactions to the facts of studying. Various kinds of adaptation to this can be identified. For each and every type of student significant socio-demographic data, i. e. data that these groups show to a more than accidental degree, can be stated.

QUEST-Students' Groups
OVERVIEW PROPORTION IN PER CENT

Desired Students	Lonesome Riders	Pragmatists	Disenchanted	Dutiful	Not-Arrived	Going-with-the-Flow	In-Need-of-Support	Proportion in %
13,3	13,2	13,8	13,6	6,8	15,0	12,7	11,5	

Through these categories, which extend far beyond the less helpful groupings of age, gender or migration background, the student body can be described in a way that illustrates a study-related diversity and unveils the typical difficulties in adapting to study.

This analysis makes it quite clear that difficulties in the adaption process are by no means insurmountable but that this process can be supported by the university, e.g. through improved communication, adaptation of the study structures or even the didactics. Therefore, study-related diversity can provide impulses for an improvement, an enrichment of the university. A key prerequisite, however, is greater information and a better understanding of the successes or failures in adapting to study conditions.

The following table discloses some of the overall characterising qualities of the students, including the Standard Deviation (SD) and the average subjective study success probability.[5]

TABULAR OVERVIEW
All in all 8,792 cases could be evaluated.
The order follows the average *subjective study success probability* of the student types.

	Frequency		Age		Proportion of women	CHE-QUEST Total value		School leaving grade		subj. study success propability	
	number	%	AV	SD[6]	%	AV	SD	AV	SD	AV	SD
Desired Students	1.173	13,3	23,73	4,68	50,5	8,79	0,39	1,98	0,66	96,16	8,51
Lonesome Riders	1.160	13,2	23,50	4,57	44,5	7,70	0,37	2,04	0,63	92,28	11,51
Pragmatists	1.214	13,8	22,50	2,86	49,1	7,83	0,36	2,13	0,62	91,40	12,23
Disenchanted	1.197	13,6	22,69	3,16	64,2	7,58	0,40	2,05	0,64	88,86	14,44
Dutiful	598	6,8	24,27	4,55	60,9	6,69	0,47	2,04	0,68	87,04	16,59
Not-Arrived	1.322	15,0	23,46	3,59	57,5	6,38	0,65	2,16	0,65	82,44	21,59
Going-with-the-Flow	1.118	12,7	22,52	3,20	45,0	6,52	0,45	2,26	0,59	80,81	18,15
In-Need-of-Support	1.010	11,5	22,93	3,74	45,0	5,75	1,04	2,22	0,66	73,65	25,24
All in all	8.792	100,0	23,14	3,84	54,1	6,55	0,99	2,11	0,64	86,79	18,06

5   The respondents were asked to assess on a scale from 0-100% how likely a successful completion of study was from their point of view. It is only natural that the respondents especially used the top quarter of the table (a subjective probability of under 75% already suggests a considerable uncertainty regarding a successful completion of their studies).
6   SD = Standard Deviation stands for the corridor in which two thirds of the respective group are located. This corridor also comprises the average value +/- the Standard Deviation.

The types of students can, on the one hand, be characterized according to the factors' characteristics but, on the other hand, through significant aspects resulting from the sociometric data which complete the image of the types of students.

The results of the psychometrics have been individually illustrated in a diagram and will be presented later in the report: The factors are listed in separate lines. The average value of each type of student is marked and noted in each line. The grey stripes highlight the part of each factor that accounts for the middle third of all participants. The column "Relation" illustrates whether the average value of the respective student type lies above (green), below (red) or in the middle segment. Apart from some basic characteristics (proportion of women, age, school leaving grade, subjective study success probability), explanatory texts for the respective type highlight the significant socio-demographic characteristics. In the comparison of student types, particularly high or particularly low values have also been illustrated.[7]
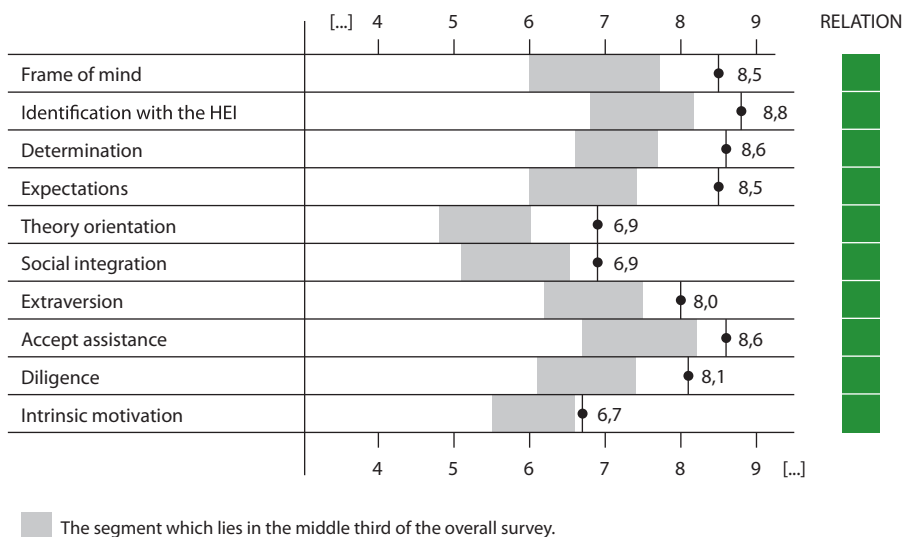
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[7]   Unless otherwise stated, the significant values reach α =0.01, meaning they are significant on a level of 1%. Significances point out that a correlation (e.g. spreading characteristics across several groups) is more than coincidental; in this case the probability of a coincidence is 1%.

4.1 THE "DESIRED STUDENTS"

The QUEST total value amounts to 8.79 (SD 0.39 (total 6.55, SD 0.99)). This type of student shows positive deviations for all QUEST factors. These students are prepared to deal with the facts of studying in a special way. 13.3% of the respondents showed this kind of profile. 50.5% of this group are female (in total: 54.1%). On average, the respondents are 23.73 years of age (SD 4.68 (in total: 23.14, SD 3.84)). The respondents reached an average school leaving grade of 1.98 (SD 0.66 (in total: 2.11, SD 0.64)) and estimated their subjective chance of successfully completing their studies highly: 96.15 on average (in total: 86.79, SD 18.06)).

The „Desired Students" know the requirements of their study very well and are capable of fulfilling them extraordinarily. It can be expected that this type of student possesses a strong willingness to actively take part in students' life. In many respects this type of student demonstrates a high level of self-sufficiency and commitment. The high school leaving grade is an indicator for a high performance potential. But this group should not necessarily be identified as a group of extraordinarily talented students. It simply described those who are able to handle study conditions particularly well, which in itself can have a positive impact on study performance.

The Desired Students

	[...]	4	5	6	7	8	9	RELATION
Frame of mind					● 8,5			
Identification with the HEI						● 8,8		
Determination					● 8,6			
Expectations					● 8,5			
Theory orientation			● 6,9					
Social integration			● 6,9					
Extraversion				● 8,0				
Accept assistance				● 8,6				
Diligence				● 8,1				
Intrinsic motivation			● 6,7					

| | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | [...] |

The segment which lies in the middle third of the overall survey.

The „Desired Students" are goal-oriented in their studies and yet, at the same time, are involved in numerous activities outside their study courses. The present conditions at HEIs seem to be optimally designed for the "Desired Students". Quite obviously, structures, selection procedures and information material seem to be directed at these students. However, this group in fact represents just 13% of the respondents, whilst 87% demonstrate different patterns of adaptation.

4.2   THE "LONESOME RIDERS"

This type of student performs unexceptionally in all aspects, with two exceptions: The value for *frame of mind* is significantly high, but in contrast to that, the below-average value for the factor *social integration* is significantly low. The value for *expectations* is above the middle third but does not have any significance in the comparison between the students' groups (i. e. the spread of this value is too high). The *QUEST total value* for this type of students is 7.70 (SD 0.37 (in total: 6.5, SD 0.99)).

The Lonesome Riders

		RELATION
Frame of mind	● 7,9	🟩
Identification with the HEI	● 7,9	🟨
Determination	● 7,3	🟨
Expectations	● 7,7	🟩
Theory orientation	● 6,5	🟩
Social integration	● 4,9	🟥
Extraversion	● 6,4	🟨
Accept assistance	● 7,5	🟨
Diligence	● 7,3	🟨
Intrinsic motivation	● 6,0	🟨

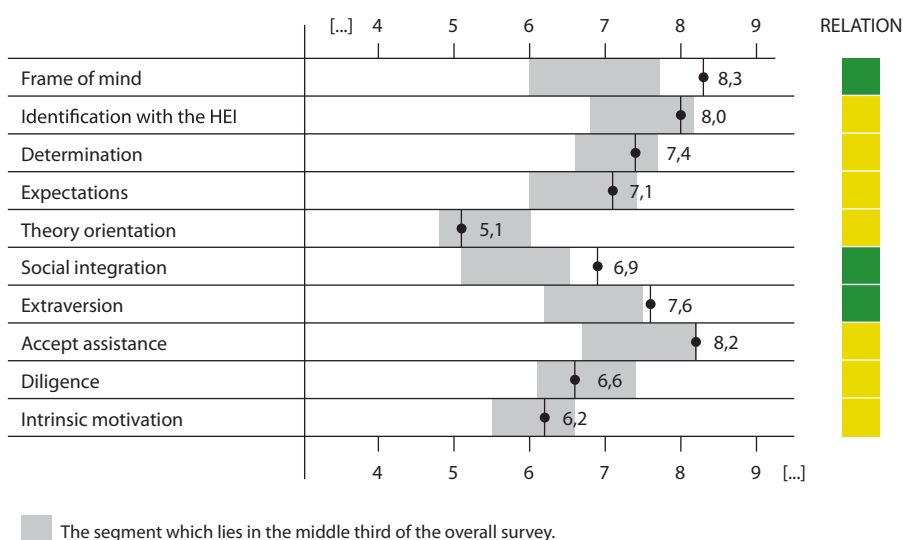The segment which lies in the middle third of the overall survey.

13.2% of the respondents can be assigned to this type of student, 44.5% of these being women (in total: 54.1%). The average age is 23.5 years (SD 4,57 (in total: 23,14 with SD 3,84)) and the average school leaving grade is 1.98 (SD 0.66 (in total: 2.11, SD 0.64)). The respondents of this type are 92.28% sure that they will successfully complete their studies (SD 11. 1 (in total: 86.79, SD 18.06)).

The „Lonesome Riders" know quite well what they have got themselves into with their studies and obviously manage the requirements for scientific studies very well. The low value for *social integration* points to a "life outside university" which, from the university's point of view, can be quite problematic (little participation in university activities, bad availability on campus etc.). However, from the students' perspective, this does not lead to adaptation disadvantages, as is shown in the high level of the *subjective study success probability* and the high values for the factor *frame of mind*. So, this type represents a deviating, yet successful way of adapting to study conditions. This kind of adaptation is found more frequently in men than women and is also more likely in persons who focus on one subject. Hardly any persons with mental illnesses are represented in this group.

4.3   THE "PRAGMATISTS"

The "Pragmatists'" performance is above-average or average for all factors, but show a relatively strong practice orientation, as the low value for *theory orientation* indicates. The reverse conclusion indicates that for this group the practical relevance in the course of their studies is comparatively important. The comparatively low value in *diligence* and the markedly above-average value in *frame of mind* prove to be significant. The QUEST total value lies at 7.83 (SD 0.36 (in total 6.55, SD 0.99)) and thus slightly higher than for the "Lonesome Riders". 13.8% of the respondents can be assigned to this type with 49.1% of this group being female (in total: 54.1%). The average age of this group is 22.5 years (2.86 SD (in total: 23.14 with SD 3.84)) and the average school leaving grade is 2.134 (SD 0.62 (in total: 2.11, SD 0.64)). The group's self-assessment of its study success probability is estimated highly at 91.4% (12.23 SD (in total: 86.79, SD 18.06)).

The Pragmatists

		RELATION
Frame of mind	8,3	
Identification with the HEI	8,0	
Determination	7,4	
Expectations	7,1	
Theory orientation	5,1	
Social integration	6,9	
Extraversion	7,6	
Accept assistance	8,2	
Diligence	6,6	
Intrinsic motivation	6,2	

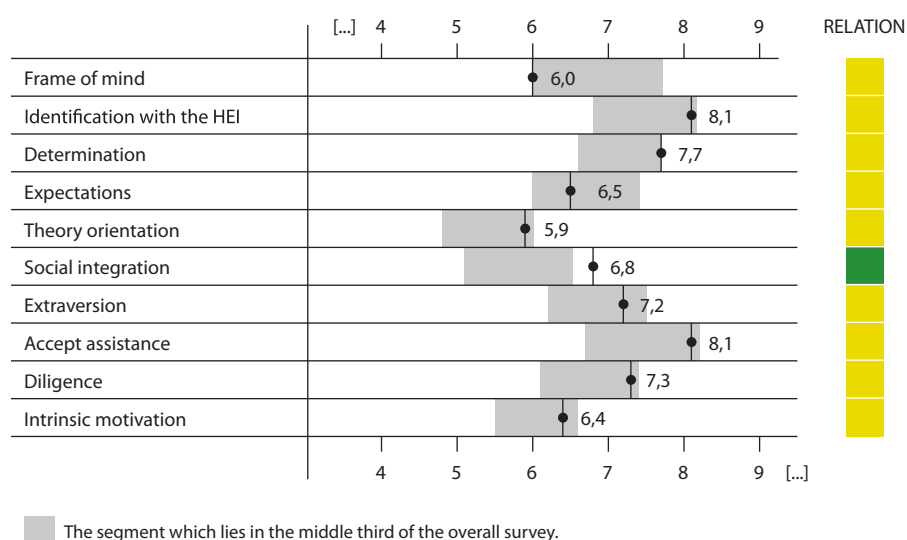The segment which lies in the middle third of the overall survey.

The „Pragmatists" show a relatively strong practice orientation, are well integrated socially at the university and very active in the field of sports. All in all, the results show that the students of this type can adapt very well to the conditions and requirements of university study: The low values in *theory orientation* and *diligence* do not have any negative impact on the other factors. Rather noticeable is the low share of students originating from diverse cultural backgrounds. This type of student is reminiscent of "typical students at a University for Applied Sciences" and in fact, this type of student is slightly disproportionately represented at Universities of Applied Sciences. But apparently, in certain practice-oriented study courses at universities this kind of adaptation meets with a matching disciplinary culture.

4.4   THE "DISENCHANTED"

This type achieves high or even above-average values on nearly all factors. The value for the factor *social integration*, which also lies above average, is particularly significant. The same applies to the factor *expectations*: The group achieves a slightly below-average value that is only just still in the middle third. For *frame of mind* the "Disenchanted" show significantly low values. The *QUEST total value* amounts to 7.58 (SD 0.39 (in total: 6.55, SD 0.99)). 13.6% of the respondents can be assigned to this type with 64.2% of this group being female (in total: 54.1%). On average, these respondents are 22.69 years old (SD 3.16 (in total: 23.14 with SD 3.84)), and they have achieved an average school leaving grade of 2.046 (SD 0.63 (in total: 2.11, SD 0.64)). They estimate their *study success probability* to be 88.86% (SD 14.44 (in total: 86,79, SD 18.06)).

The Disenchanted

The segment which lies in the middle third of the overall survey.

Even though the "Disenchanted" are particularly well-equipped in almost all aspects of their adaptation to study, the value for *frame of mind* is remarkably low. Further analyses suggest that the high proportion of women in this group is no coincidence. Overall, women seem to be suffering more frequently from the study situation than men.[8] It might come as a surprise that the share of students in this field who engage themselves voluntarily or politically with the university, is especially high – on the other hand, the reason for this engagement could be that this group feels less comfortable in their studies or that it is even unhappy with their study situation.
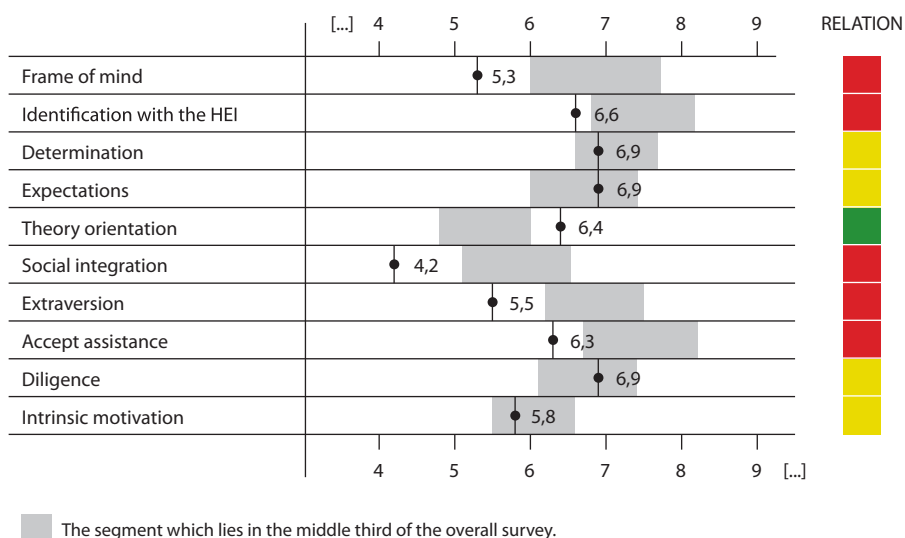
8   Judged by on average low values on the factor of frame of mind. We will pursue this topic further in another
        publication about the differences between female and male students (in preparation).

This type of student shows that, despite the best prerequisites, the adaption process can be difficult or even fail. This results in the necessity to create better conditions that could result in the successful adaptation of these students. At first glance, it may not be easy to recognise how an improvement can be made. It seems that instead of confronting one big problem, the issue lies in confronting numerous singular aspects. These could, for example, include the presentation and perception of the university prior to the studies or the situation in the courses. In any case, these aspects lead to the students feeling uncomfortable, preventing the students from developing without constraint.

4.5   THE "DUTIFUL"

This type of students achieves a significantly high value for *diligence*. Alarming, however, are the significantly low values for *frame of mind* and *social integration*. The QUEST total value is 6.69 (SD 0.47 (in total: 6.55, SD 0.99)). This group is only about half as large as the other types of students: 6.8% of the respondents, 60.0% of them being female (in total: 54.1%). The average age is, at 24.27 years, rather high (SD 4.5 (in total: 23:14 with SD 3.84)). The respondents of this group have achieved a good school leaving grade of 2.041 (SD 0.68 – in total: 2.11, SD 0.64), but with an estimated 87.04% study success probability (SD 16.59 (in total 86.79, SD 18.06)) they range only just above average. The respondents of this group are disproportionately enrolled, among others, in the faculty of medicine/health sciences (10.2%, in total: 5.3%).

The Dutiful

	4	5	6	7	8	9	RELATION
Frame of mind		5,3					
Identification with the HEI				6,6			
Determination				6,9			
Expectations				6,9			
Theory orientation			6,4				
Social integration	4,2						
Extraversion		5,5					
Accept assistance			6,3				
Diligence				6,9			
Intrinsic motivation		5,8					

The segment which lies in the middle third of the overall survey.

The good values for the factors *theory orientation*, *expectations* and *diligence* for the "Dutiful" suggest that these students are capable of involving themselves in the academic requirements of university studies and are not overstrained in this respect. But, in the less academically-orientated factors this type delivers inferior results. This means that in many aspects this type of student is not well adapted to the study situation.

Additionally, the socio-demographic data refer to a large number of obstacles or even upheavals of different kinds that concern the respondents of this group disproportionately and, furthermore, complicate the study adaptation: it is quite possible that, above all, the results for individual persons of this type present a snapshot influenced by such an upheaval, and that in the course of time, a different adaptation pattern with higher values in further factors will take shape.
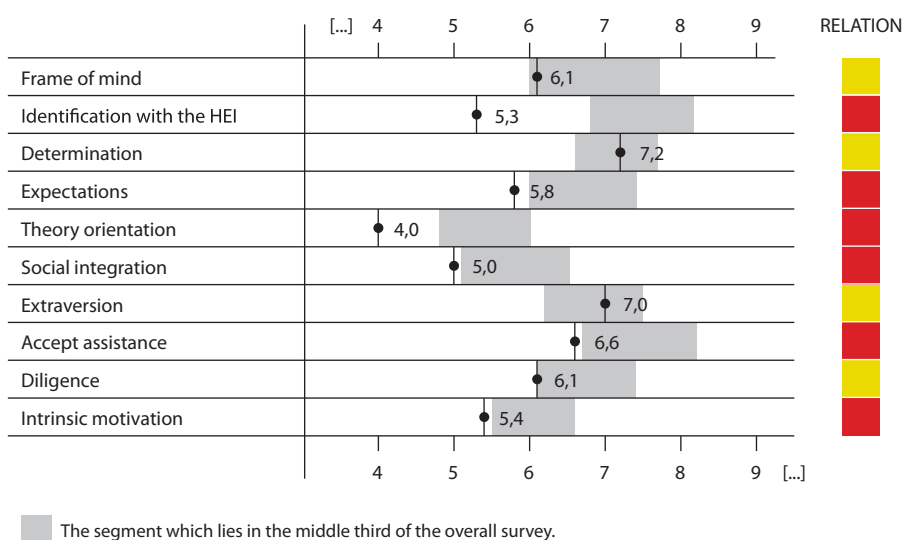
The below-average values for *frame of mind* can be interpreted as a call for the HEIs to offer this type of student more support in order to handle the study conditions – especially in times of upheaval – more easily. The aim must be to alter the conditions in such a way that students, despite their manifold burdens, have a better chance at the university of finding their way towards study success. This is of particular concern for those with a heavy burden, such as employment and physical or health restrictions – particularly those with psychological disorders. These persons, apparently, also have a tendency towards more unfavorable adaptation patterns even if they show a high degree of academic affinity. It is the university's challenge to take the academic ambitions of these groups of people seriously despite their non-university burdens and to offer them help in developing their qualities in the course of their studies.

4.6   THE "NOT-ARRIVED"

The student type the "Not-Arrived" has a very goal- and practice-oriented approach to studying: For the factor *determination* a significant, good value is shown. Also significant is the value for *theory orientation*. The total QUEST value is 6.38 (SD 0.66 (in total: 6.55, SD 0.99)). 15% of the respondents can be assigned to this type with 57.5% of them being female (in total: 54.1%). The average age is 23.46 years (SD 3.59 (in total: 23.14 with SD 3.84)), the average school leaving grade is 2.156 (SD 0.65 (in total: 2.11, SD 0.64)), thus only slightly below the overall total.

The respondents in this group estimate their s*tudy success probability* to be 82.44% (SD 21.59 (in total 86.79, SD 18.06)) which is below the average, too. This type of student is disproportionately enrolled in subjects of education (9.4%, in total: 5.9%): 20% are enrolled in a teacher training programme (in total: 11.7%).

The Not-Arrived

			RELATION
Frame of mind	6,1		yellow
Identification with the HEI	5,3		red
Determination	7,2		yellow
Expectations	5,8		red
Theory orientation	4,0		red
Social integration	5,0		red
Extraversion	7,0		yellow
Accept assistance	6,6		red
Diligence	6,1		yellow
Intrinsic motivation	5,4		red

The segment which lies in the middle third of the overall survey.

The "Not-Arrived" are comparatively determined, i. e. they know what they want to achieve and which steps to take to reach their aims. But this meets with little correlation among the other dimensions, (e. g. in the field of *diligence*). Other aspects, such as socio-demographic ones, which could be associated with *determination* (like a certain closeness between job and studies or the later profession, studying at the university of their first choice) are not particularly pronounced. This is surprising insofar as a disproportionate part of this group has already undergone vocational training.

This type of student has clearly also struggled to "arrive" at their university, as demonstrated by the low *identification* rate with the university. The reason for this might possibly be that the respondents are highly practice-orientated but that they – unlike the "Pragmatists"- cannot implement this orientation sufficiently into their studies. This might be caused by the disproportionate share of teacher training and other state examination courses such as law and medicine as well. Indeed, there is a special kind of practice orientation but this often collides with the scientific orientation of the specialized courses.

This presents an image of a group who ultimately knows what they want but clearly need increased incentives and support in order to understand how their studies can be used to reach these goals. This poses the question: What would be conducive to increase the identification with the studies, and thus create the prerequisites for a more active participation? Still, as 15% of the respondents can be assigned to this type of students, HEIs should feel challenged to find additional ways of approaching and involving these students. Another question that arises: How can this type of student be assisted to find themselves so as to achieve more active participation? Such a change is necessary so that the students can actually "arrive" at the university.
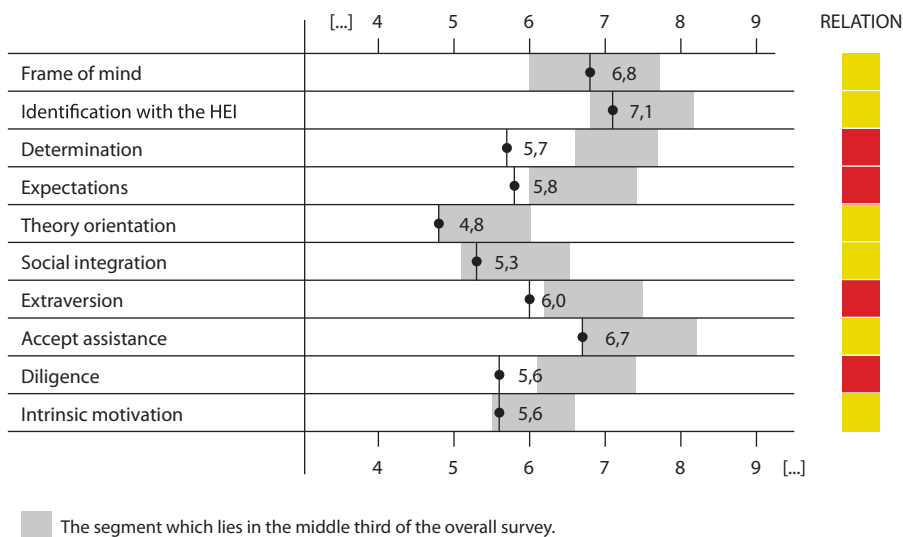
4.7 THE "GOING-WITH-THE-FLOW"

This type of student delivers below-average or slightly below-average results on all factors. The average value for *frame of mind* is significant – the less successful adaptation (QUEST total value 6.52, SD 0.45 (in total 6.55, SD 0.99)) apparently does not have a negative impact on the *frame of mind*. 12.7% of the respondents can be assigned to this type, only 45% of them being women (in total: 54.1%). The average age lies at 22.52 years (SD 3.20 (in total: 23.14 with SD 3.84)) and the average school leaving grade at 2.26 (SD 0.59). This is, indeed, the worst average school leaving grade.

Even though it is only slightly worse than the total value (in total: 2.11, SD 0.64), the share of those who see themselves in the middle third (50.4%, in total: 40.2%) or even in the lower third (8.8%, in total: 6.4%) of the school's performance range is particularly high. 40.3% (in total: 52.9%) stated that they belonged to the upper third – compared to the other student types this is a small share. The average *subjective study success probability* was estimated at 80.81% (SD 18.15), significantly lower than the average for the whole survey (in total: 86.79, SD 18.06) and in turn corresponds with the rather low total QUEST value.

This type of students does not react positively at all to the study situation. Also the assessment of their own efficiency for both school performance and estimates for personal study success are not particularly positive. However, neither aspect leads to the students feeling uncomfortable: For *frame of mind* they reach a value that almost corresponds with the average result of the whole survey.

The Going-with-the-Flow

	[...] 4	5	6	7	8	9	RELATION
Frame of mind				6,8			
Identification with the HEI				7,1			
Determination			5,7				
Expectations			5,8				
Theory orientation		4,8					
Social integration		5,3					
Extraversion			6,0				
Accept assistance				6,7			
Diligence			5,6				
Intrinsic motivation			5,6				

The segment which lies in the middle third of the overall survey.
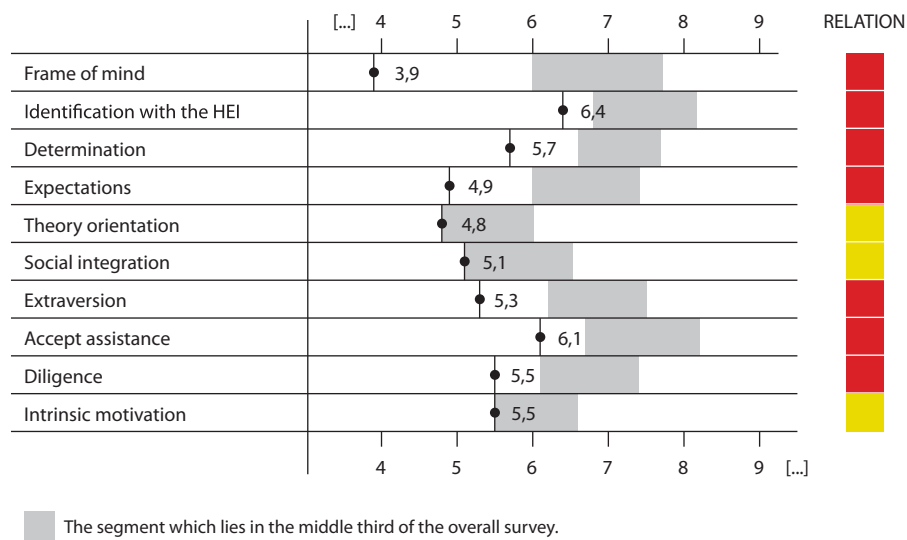
Little has changed in the lives of these students since finishing school: they represent one of the youngest student types and have acquired very little training or professional experience prior to commencing their studies. Furthermore, a disproportionate amount of these students tend to continue living with their parents. Non-university activities are of low incidence.

The results for this type of student point towards an increased risk of failure in the course of studies. The decision ultimately lies with the HEI: will they continue to stand by idly or will they make increased efforts to find ways to strengthen and support the students' self-confidence and active participation in the sense of "student engagement"? Possibilities for creating more "meaning" could include illustrating more strongly the connection between studying and professional practice later in life, or highlighting the importance of research and science for the development of society and personal advancement.

4.8   THE "IN-NEED-OF-SUPPORT"

These respondents performed below-average on all factors. The QUEST total value consequently shows only 5.75 (SD 1.04 (in total: 6.55, SD 0.99)). 11.5% fall into this category with 45% of them being women (in total: 54.1%). The average age is 22.93 years (SD 3.74 (in total 23.14 with SD 3.84)). The respondents in this group have achieved an average school leaving grade of 2.22 (SD 0.66 (in total: 2.11, SD 0.64)) – thus performing slightly better than the "Going-with-the-Flow". These students estimate their study success probability at only 73.65% (SD 25.24 (in total: 86.79, SD 18.06)), 2% of this group even stated that the probability for successfully completing their studies was 0%.

The In-Need-of-Support

	[...] 4	5	6	7	8	9	RELATION
Frame of mind	3,9						
Identification with the HEI			6,4				
Determination			5,7				
Expectations		4,9					
Theory orientation		4,8					
Social integration		5,1					
Extraversion		5,3					
Accept assistance			6,1				
Diligence		5,5					
Intrinsic motivation		5,5					

The segment which lies in the middle third of the overall survey.

First of all, it must be stated that some of the respondents in this group deserve respect for putting up with the strain of university studies in the first place. Many arrive at university burdened with challenging pre-determined factors, such as their state of health, their school success or their family background or current situation. This could suggest that a decision to embark on a course of study is not necessarily based on a positive one, but rather is taken to avoid pursuing other opportunities they may not yet have the confidence to undertake. The university can act as a kind of shelter for students of this type, who may still feel apprehensive about tackling the requirements of a professional training or employment. For the institution this translates into a special responsibility for these students.

For some of those who have learned German as a foreign language, this fact proves to be disadvantageous – not only regarding understanding in courses but also in view of the social and more informal aspects of the studies. A university that strives to discover the intellectual potential of this – by no means small – group must develop fundamental concepts to enable these students to integrate more easily into their studies.

5 EVALUATION

A university study programme consists of more than courses and examinations. It is desirable that interdisciplinary competences are developed too, to encourage the students' self-sufficiency, broaden their personal horizon, support the development of personality and inspire reflection. However, it is disputed and not altogether clear what sort of role HEIs are to play in this. Teachers at German HEIs too often only feel responsible for direct teaching matters. What is more, at present, they have limited possibilities to acquire an insight into how the students respond to their study environments. If HEIs wish to better discover the potentials of their present and future students and offer new forces of innovation, greater provisions are required that exceed the mere isolated support measures or advisory services.

It is also necessary to work on comprehending the process of becoming an academic in all its complexities and to identify the "set screws" for the enhancement and differentiation of successful study methods.

In principle, a large range of measures – from practical support offers, such as day care centres to new didactical conceptions – are taken into consideration. In order to be able to evaluate the appropriateness and the advantages of different basic approaches, new methods of analysis need to be developed. This is the prerequisite for reaching a better insight into the students' perception and their individual worlds of experience as well as developing study design options. CHE-QUEST and its evaluation based on student types is helpful in that it does not categorise students into "normal" and "deviating" groups lead by prejudices but rather that it acknowledges the complexity of "normality" and makes this realisation the basis for decisions and actions.

It is important not to separate the manifold requirements and burdens students are facing into "within" and "outside" the university. Such a separation is impossible because these two components influence each other. The university should verify which of these aspects can and should be taken into consideration – not least in light of the university's strategic aims. The option of merely accepting "Desired Students" into a university is not a realistic one. Only through the studying process, when students are actually confronted with these conditions, can it be determined who is actually able to deal with the existing conditions, when the students are actually confronted with these conditions.

Moreover, were such an approach possible, if HEIs just focused on the "Desired Students", many potential intellectuals would remain undetected. In order to raise these potentials, academic education must be closely linked with the social reality. Conditions at HEIs need to be designed in such a way that the adaptation process proceeds as successfully as possible for as many students as possible. Better utilization and development of existing potential should contribute to increase the number of successful study completion and the general level of performance.

6 PERSPECTIVE

In order to provide HEIs with in-depth views into the situation and self-assessment of their students, and at the same time offer suggestions for the better management of diversity, the CHE-QUEST survey 2010 will be further evaluated. The additional evaluation will investigate how different target groups – for example women, students with a migration background, family obligations, or health problems or physical handicaps – cope with adapting to academic study. In this respect the evaluation also aims to provide HEIs with an insight into the respective groups level of heterogeneity, and to identify the possible starting points for a change in managing these groups.

At the beginning of 2012 a second survey round with CHE-QUEST will be conducted. For the first time, HEIs not currently involved in the project *Vielfalt als Chance* will be offered the opportunity to participate as associate project members. The results will be available in summer 2012.

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