

Acquiring Key Competencies at the University

KIT's House of Competence (HoC) Conveys Key Competencies to Students / HoC Organizes Conference on Key Competencies on October 5 and 6, 2017

In the global knowledge society, employees are to have not only expert knowledge, but also communication skills, creativity, high motivation, independence, and adaptability – so-called key competencies. To convey these key competencies during studies and to conduct pertinent research, Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT) established the House of Competence (HoC). On the occasion of its 10th anniversary, HoC will organize a conference on October 5 and 6. It will focus on necessary key competencies, on how they can be conveyed at universities, and which priority or importance the respective institutions have within the university.

“Apart from conveying technical or scientific competencies, personal development and acquisition of key competencies are major elements of studies at KIT. The House of Competence is a central institution of KIT, which does not only impart key competencies, but also conducts research in this area and assumes important tasks in quality assurance and further development at the national level,” Professor Dr. Alexander Wanner, KIT Vice President for Higher Education and Academic Affairs, says.

At the conference on October 5 and 6, participants will discuss the following topics in four panels: How can learning processes during stressful university studies be supported? How can training of interdisciplinary methods be professionalized? Which standards have to be set for scientific writing in order to prevent plagiarism? And how can students develop awareness of their own health under examination pressure?

“Centers of key competencies all over Germany know very little about these subjects. Corresponding research is urgently required,” Michael Stolle, Director of HoC, says. “For further professionalization, we have to combine teaching and advising services with own research.” HoC conducts research in the areas of psychology, sociology, German studies, education and sports sciences and combines it with technical and engineering sciences.

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In about 100 courses per semester, HoC imparts to students basic rules of presentation and a variety of transverse skills. Future engineers, natural and social scientists learn how to manage and organize projects or how to prepare for the job.

Within the next years, funding programs of centers for key competencies launched by the federation and the states will expire. At a panel discussion, Julika Griem, Vice President of DFG, Horst Hippler, President of the German Rectors' Conference, Stefan Kaufmann, Member of Parliament and Spokesman of the CDU/CSU Parliamentary Group in the Committee for Education, Research, and Technology Assessment, Alexander Wanner, Vice President of KIT, and Margret Wintermantel, President of DAAD, will discuss how these centers can be maintained afterwards and to what an extent they have already become integral constituents of universities.

The discussion will be in German.

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For the program and further information, click <http://www.hoc.kit.edu/professionalisierungsq.php> (in German only).

Being “The Research University in the Helmholtz Association,” KIT creates and imparts knowledge for the society and the environment. It is the objective to make significant contributions to the global challenges in the fields of energy, mobility and information. For this, about 9,300 employees cooperate in a broad range of disciplines in natural sciences, engineering sciences, economics, and the humanities and social sciences. KIT prepares its 26,000 students for responsible tasks in society, industry, and science by offering research-based study programs. Innovation efforts at KIT build a bridge between important scientific findings and their application for the benefit of society, economic prosperity, and the preservation of our natural basis of life.

Since 2010, the KIT has been certified as a family-friendly university.

This press release is available on the internet at http://www.sek.kit.edu/english/press_office.php.