

PERFECT - Innovative Pan-European Purchasing Curriculum

Dortmund, October 2018. Procurement plays an increasingly strategic role in industry due to its interface function. Purchasing volumes rise significantly and purchasing and supply management (PSM) links global business environments. In addition, PSM is strongly affected by digitalisation and represents data analysts, innovation scouts and horizontal as well as vertical networkers. However, current requirements are hardly taken into account in existing higher education curricula and vocational training programmes. Thus, there is a lack of adequate academic programmes efficiently preparing students for changing roles and expectations. An essential contribution for closing this gap was made in the framework of the project “Purchasing Education and Research for European Competence Transfer” (PERFECT).

In 46 expert interviews from practice, current and future competence requirements were identified. Great relevance is outlined for interpersonal competences. Furthermore, knowledge and competences in the fields of sustainability and technology as well as strategic and holistic thinking grow in importance. These qualitative results were validated empirically by means of a broad survey with more than 500 respondents and weighted according to success relevance. The results of this unique scientific approach are incorporated in the central project result: the innovative Bachelor and Master Degree curriculum. Besides a content description of the single modules of the curriculum, a guidance document for implementation support for interested institutions was developed.

Beyond the curriculum, a Purchasing Competence Assessment Tool for evaluation of one’s own skills with feedback function as well as the Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) “Purchasing & Supply Management Fundamentals“ were developed. These tools are openly available as online resources. Whereas the MOOC addresses the basics of procurement, basic competences can be analysed by means of the assessment tool.

The project results are integrated into current courses of the project partners. Moreover, they shape new developments of study programmes at further interested institutions of higher education and vocational training programmes. Apart from academic education, the PERFECT curriculum can be applied for review and advancement of vocational training in purchasing. The project offers an adaptable and versatile reference approach for the development of empirically validated curricula, which focus on requirements induced by practice. The methodological approach constitutes a general assistance and can be applied to comparable problems and further courses or training programmes.

By combining research, teaching and corporate practice, a large number of students is qualified for the current requirements in PSM related jobs in companies of various sizes and industries. Harmonised teaching content and methods and the strengthened international mobility through international student exchange takes up the needs of PSM as a strategic international interface.

The project (PERFECT) was funded by the ERASMUS+ grant program “Strategic Partnerships for Higher Education“ of the European Union under grant no. 2015-1-DE01-KA203-002174 for a project term from 01.09.2015 to 31.08.2018 and consisted of an international consortium under the leadership of Univ.-Prof. Dr. habil. Michael Henke (TU Dortmund, Germany) and involvement of Prof. Dr. Lydia Bals (Hochschule Mainz, Germany), Prof. Dr. Holger Schiele (University of Twente, Netherlands), Dr. Stephen Kelly (Staffordshire University, UK) and Prof. Dr. Jukka Hallikas (Lappeenranta University of Technology, Finland). Further project information and all detailed results are publically available via the project website www.project-perfect.eu.



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The creation of these resources has been (partially) funded by the ERASMUS+ grant program of the European Union under grant no. 2015-1-DE01-KA203-002174. Neither the European Commission nor the project’s national funding agency DAAD are responsible for the content or liable for any losses or damage resulting of the use of these resources.