

International Tutors´ Qualification Program:

A consecutive success

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The winter semester 2022/23 edition of the international Tutors´ Qualification program turned out to be a success, once again. This teaching offer in English language started in the winter semester 2021/22 with the NIDIT project (after a pilot phase in summer semester 2021) and has been attracting the attention of multiple international students and tutors enrolled at the JLU.

This winter term, however, the program exceeded the initial expectations of the organizers and managed to break records: more participants (an average of 14 students in each session), regular attendance in all courses as well as more students and tutors who concluded the program and obtained their certificates (14 in total). Two decisive factors contributed to this achievement. Firstly, the participation of the Tutors´ Qualification in the orientation week for international students (*InfoTisch*) organized by the JLU´s International Office helped on advertising the program to a broader spectrum of interested people. Furthermore, the fact that the program was held for the first time in a compact form also captivated many students: during one month and a half, participants had the chance to learn the basics of tutoring in the German academic context and develop their didactical, communicational, digital and cultural teaching skills. Theory and practice went therefore hand in hand in different courses, workshops and live sessions conducted online from the 11th of October until the 24th of November 2022. Besides the Introductory Training Course and the practical coaching session, which mainly focused on didactical aspects, the program offered international students and tutors the opportunity to get in contact with highly important topics in Higher Education such as gamified teaching, intercultural awareness and effective presentation skills.

During the whole period, the program profited from a great academic and cultural heterogeneity. Students from different countries (e.g. Egypt, India, Sri Lanka, Spain, Iran, Turkey, Colombia or China, just to name a few) shared their teaching experiences as tutors or their ideas for their future tutoring activities in an intercultural, dynamic learning environment. Interdisciplinarity played here also a major role: participants belonged to different faculties and fields of studies (from

Agricultural Sciences, Nutritional Sciences, and Environmental Management, to Language, Literature, Culture, Medicine, Biology, Chemistry or Law Studies, as well as Engineering). This is an aspect which enriched the program enormously and resulted in lively discussions and a permanent open, fruitful exchange between students eager to learn more about teaching methods and practices, as well as digitalisation and internationalisation in tutorial courses. Within the partnership enabled by the NIDIT project, the program could also count with the participation from an international student from the THM, the University of Applied Sciences of Mittelhessen, and this way intensify the cooperation between both institutions at the level of the Tutors´ Qualification.

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At the end of the program, all students had the chance to give feedback on this experience: “[The international Tutors´ Qualification] has been a fantastic educational, and practical [training] about tutoring”, “[a]ll the didactic principles and methods [learnt in this program] will accompany us in our future teaching” or “I had never been officially given a position of tutor in my life, thus I was really nervous at the beginning about whether I would be able to deliver what the students were expecting from a tutor. Luckily, the Tutor’s Qualification [...] came to my rescue. The training helped me identify the qualities that I already possessed and helps me align them with the qualities of a tutor” were some of the comments participants wrote us. Based on this very positive feedback, the international Tutors´ Qualification may look brightly into the future and this program can carry on fulfilling its mission of qualifying international students to be successful tutors in the German academic context.

Last but not least a word for the protagonists of this achievement: the Tutors´ Qualification at the JLU thanks heartedly all the international students and tutors for their active work and wishes them all the best in their courses of studies and academic careers.