

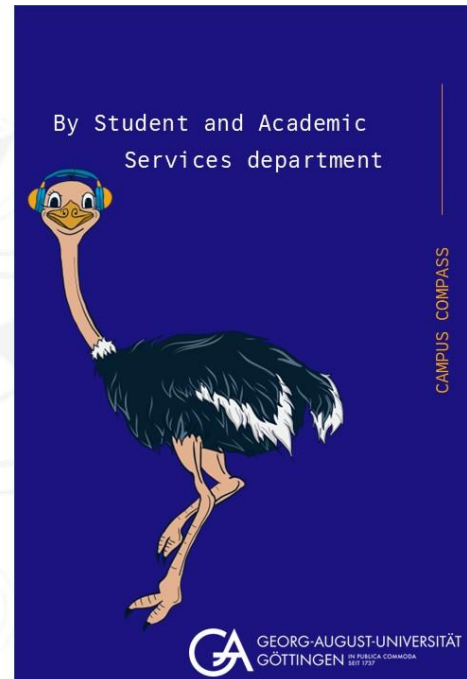
Campus Compass – Episode 07 – Recognition of examination and study achievements

CAMPUS COMPASS

Recognition in studies... once learned, always learned, or not?

What does recognition actually mean and how do you apply for it correctly? Further tips and information

Episode no. 7



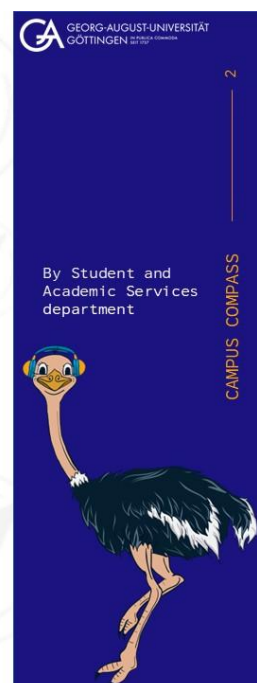
Welcome to Campus Compass – your guide to university life. Hi and welcome to a new episode of **Campus Compass**! I'm your host, Paulina, and I am delighted to have you back.

Today we continue with Episode 7 and the recognition of examination and study achievements – for example, when changing subjects or spending a semester abroad.

DISCLAIMER

This information refers to bachelor's and master's degree programmes at the University of Göttingen to which the General Examination Regulations (APO) apply. Different legal bases apply to state examination and doctoral programmes as well as degree programmes at other universities, and regulations may vary. Framework conditions are constantly evolving. All information in this podcast should therefore be checked against the University's current regulations.

www.uni-goettingen.de/apo



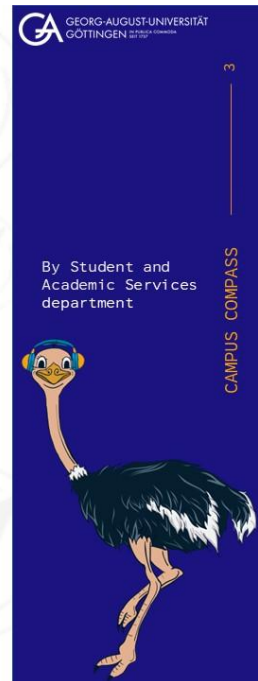
As in most episodes, here comes the disclaimer, which you can read for yourselves. Just press pause now.

For more information about APO, scan the QR code or visit www.uni-goettingen.de/apo

Let's start with a brief definition – then we'll look at typical recognition scenarios.

What is recognition?

- Skills acquired outside the current degree programme earn credits for the current degree programme
- Examples of skills that can be recognised include exam results or skills acquired through work experience
- Proof required (e.g. transcripts, module descriptions)
- Review by the university
- If there is **no significant difference**: recognition of the achievement
- Achievement is considered to have been completed as part of the degree programme – no need to retake the exam



So, what is recognition? Recognition means that you have acquired skills outside your current degree programme – for example, at another university, in vocational training or at work – that are also relevant to your studies. If these are recognised, you do not have to take another exam for them.

For example, passed exams or knowledge and experience gained in practice can be recognised. It is important that you can prove your competence.

The university will then check whether the skills you have acquired essentially correspond to what you would have to demonstrate in your current degree programme or whether there is a **significant difference**.

If no significant difference is found, recognition will be granted. In concrete terms, this means that the respective achievement or skill will be **credited** to your degree programme as an achievement and you will not have to complete it again.

Significant difference

- The question of the "significant difference" is complex
- The following factors are taken into account, among others:
 - learning outcomes,
 - quality and level of education, and
 - workload/credit points
- More information is available from the nexus project of the German Rectors' Conference:

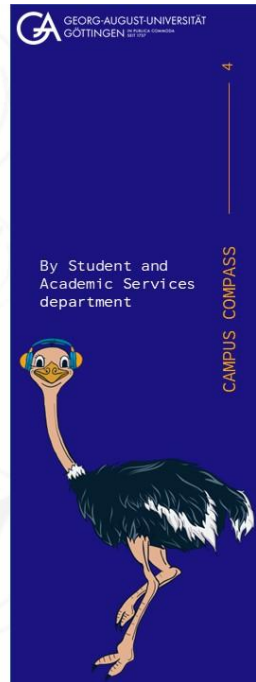
www.hrk-nexus.de/themen/anerkennung/materialien-zu-anerkennung-und-anrechnung/

In practice, however, this can be more complicated – especially when it comes to the question of what constitutes a 'significant difference'. Among other things, this involves learning outcomes, the quality and level of education, and the number of credits awarded.

If you are interested in more details, you can read about it in the nexus project of the German Rectors' Conference:

www.hrk-nexus.de/themen/anerkennung/materialien-zu-anerkennung-und-anrechnung/

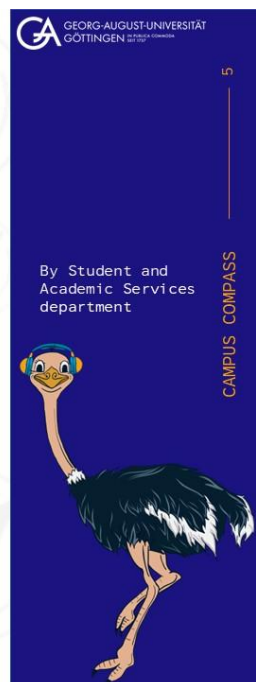
Tip: Take a screenshot – many mobile phones recognise links in images and you can copy them directly. This saves you having to type them out.



Recognition and credit transfer

- Recognition and credit transfer – difference:
 - Credit transfer** for identical modules or if recognition has already been granted to other students in the past
 - Recognition** for external or similar modules/skills; if recognition is granted, the achievement/skill is credited.

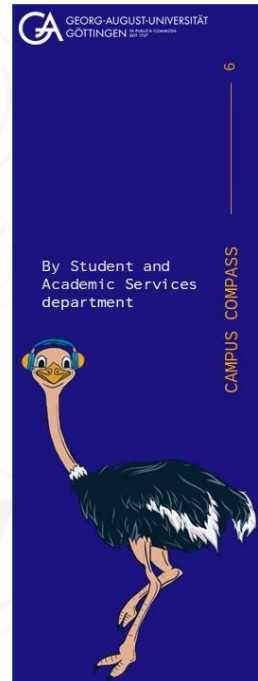
Definitions of terms are not standardised across Germany, in some cases, terms are used differently.



I will be using the two words "recognition" and "credit transfer" frequently; to avoid confusion: identical modules from another degree programme at the University of Göttingen and modules for which other students have already successfully applied for recognition will be credited. Modules or skills from outside the university or similar modules from another degree programme at the University of Göttingen can be recognised upon application and subsequently credited.

Application for recognition and supporting documents

- Recognition is only granted upon application
 - Applications can be submitted individually according to competencies/modules
 - Proof is required for the recognition to be assessed
 - Usually: summary of Achievements and module description
 - The more complete the application, the better the basis for decision-making
 - Previous positive recognition decisions regarding credits/competencies can be directly transferred
- FlexNow can be used to check whether the credits have already been recognised



Recognition does not happen automatically – you have to apply for it.

This means that if you change universities because you perhaps struggled at your first university and did not achieve the grades you wanted, you can start over at your new university and complete all modules from scratch.

Or you may want to have credits from your previous studies recognised. This is also possible if the credits are relevant to your new course.

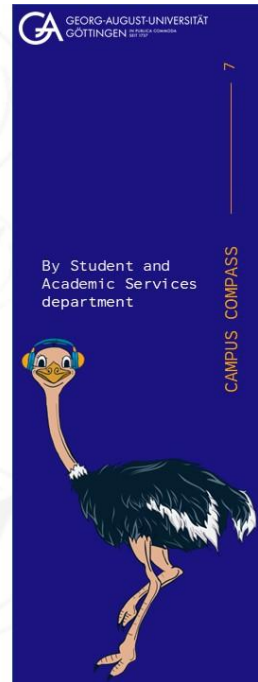
You decide whether and for which modules you apply for recognition.

In order for the university to be able to check this, a few pieces of evidence must be enclosed with your application for recognition. For credits earned at a university, this includes a corresponding transcript of records and a module description.

In addition, the university can directly credit competences if you apply for recognition and other students have previously applied for recognition of this competence and received a positive decision. You can check whether this is the case in FlexNow – at least for exams taken at foreign universities. You can find this at FlexNow > Statistikportal FlexStat > Anerkennungen.

Recognition in practice

- The date of application is free to choose
- Recognition can only be applied for if the corresponding module has not already been passed at the University of Göttingen
- The number of credits awarded is the number specified by the University of Göttingen (not necessarily identical to the number at other universities)
- If recognition is refused, you are entitled to a reason (e.g. by e-mail)
- Seek advice – contact details at the end of the episode



In practice, it is important for you to know that you are free to choose when to submit your application. This means that after changing your subject or university, you can first concentrate on your studies and then decide whether you want to have modules recognised or not. However, you must note that recognition is only possible if the corresponding module has not already been passed at the University of Göttingen.

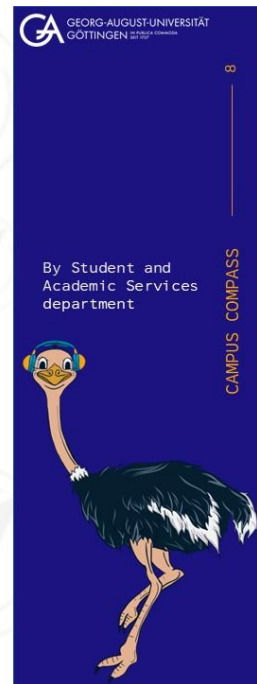
Another important point is that you will be awarded the number of credits specified for your degree programme at the University of Göttingen. This is not necessarily identical to the credits for the original module.

And: if your application is rejected, you have the right to be given a reason – preferably in writing or by email. Don't be afraid to ask questions or seek advice. We will provide you with contact details at the end of this episode.

And when exactly does recognition and credit transfer become relevant? Here are some common scenarios you may encounter.

Change of subject – identical modules

- Within the university: automatic transfer of identical modules
- Modules can be compulsory or compulsory elective modules
- Previous examination attempts are transferred
- Grade improvement in transferred modules is therefore not possible

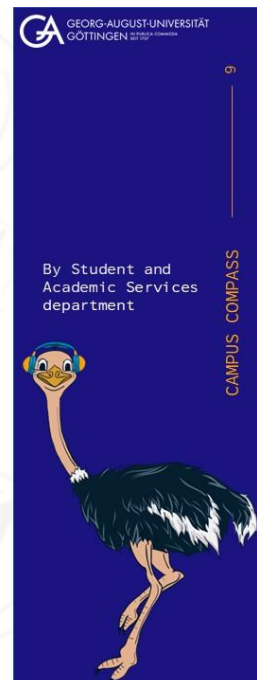


Let's start with changing subjects: If you change your subject within the University of Göttingen, there are individual modules that are designated as elective or compulsory modules in both degree programmes. These are then automatically transferred. But important: Failed attempts are also credited.

This also means that you **cannot reset your exam attempts** and improve your grades – at least in these modules.

Change of subject – similar modules

- For similar modules: Application for recognition required – university checks whether there is a significant difference
- Recognition may lead to placement in a higher semester
 - Advantage for degree programmes with restricted admission in the first semester
 - Application must be submitted before transfer



The situation is different if a module from your previous subject is **not identical but very similar** in content to a subject in your new degree programme. It must have a different module name, but the learning objectives and skills to be acquired must essentially be the same.

In this case, you can submit an application for recognition, and the university will check whether there is a significant difference.

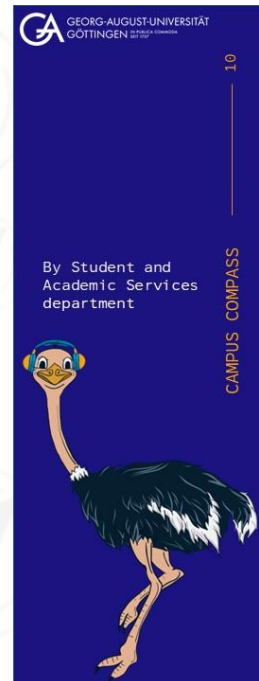
Through recognition, you may even be able to enter directly into a higher semester.

This can be helpful if the degree programme has restricted admission in the first semester but not in the higher semesters.

In such a case, you must apply for recognition **before transferring** to the new degree programme in order to have enough credits to be placed in a higher semester.

Change of university

- Option to have external achievements recognised or to restart
- Requirement: broad alignment of learning objectives and skills
- Recognition may accelerate the course of study
- Limitation: max. 50% of examination and study achievements acquired outside the University of Göttingen



If you change universities, the process is similar:

You can decide for yourself whether you want to apply for recognition of your previous exam results – or whether you want to start again from scratch.

Here, too, the more credits you get recognised, the sooner you can start a higher semester or finish your degree faster.

But please note: The University of Göttingen only recognises credits from external universities up to half of the credits required for the respective degree programme.

Semester abroad

- Planning is crucial.
- Determine courses in advance and record them in the learning agreement.
- Preliminary review by the university.
- Changes abroad: immediate consultation with the international study advisory service and adjustment of the learning agreement.
- In case of differing grading systems: conversion or entry 'passed'.

Let us now turn to recognition for semesters abroad.

When spending a semester abroad, good preparation is essential.

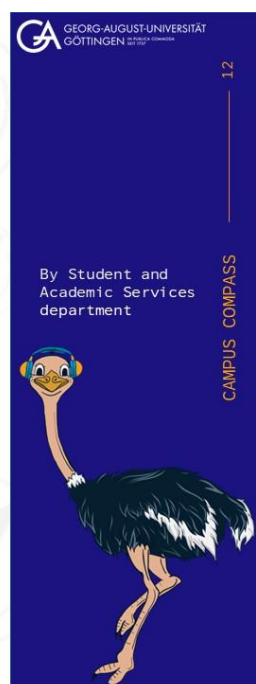
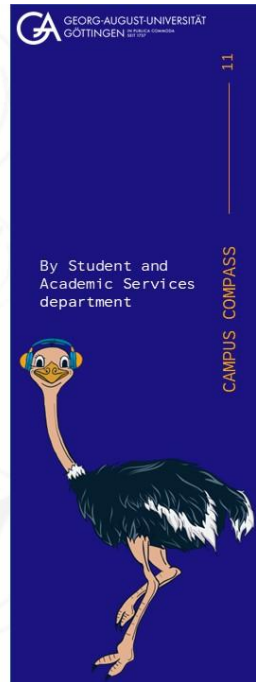
It is best to decide in advance which courses you want to take abroad – and have this confirmed in a learning agreement. The university will then check in advance whether the credits or skills can be recognised.

If you suddenly have to take different courses abroad, contact the international study advisory service responsible for your degree programme at the University of Göttingen as soon as possible. The learning agreement can then be adjusted and you can switch to alternative courses.

After your semester abroad, your grade will usually have to be converted into the grading system used here. If this is not possible, or if you did not receive a grade, "passed" will be entered.

Non-academic skills

- Professional or non-university skills can also be recognised, e.g.:
 - Training replaces compulsory internship during studies
 - Further training replaces study module if content is the same
- Higher requirements for equivalence; it is not 'no significant difference' that applies, but 'equivalence'
- Examination is carried out carefully and more restrictively
- The burden of proof lies with the applicant
- Extensive documentation required



Last but not least, we come to non-university achievements.

Skills acquired through training or work experience may also be recognised under certain circumstances. Here are two examples, but there are many possibilities:

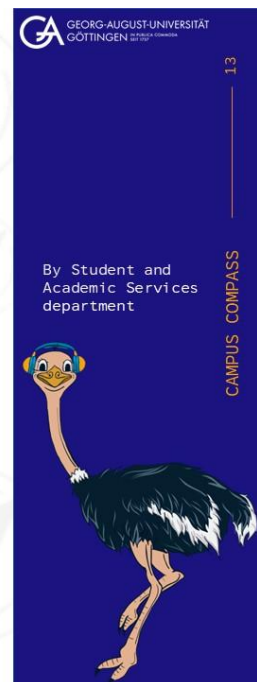
- Does your degree programme include an internship, but you already completed relevant training before starting your studies? Then you can apply to have this recognised instead of the internship.
- Or: Have you completed further training in project management – and now you are required to take a module on this subject? Here, too, it may be worth submitting an application if the content overlaps.

More information and advice

Further information can be found in § 13 of the General Examination Regulations.

Please contact:

- Change of subject: (Subject) Student Advisory Service of the faculty
- Semester abroad: International Student Advisory Service of the faculty
- If you are unsure or have doubts about whether the right decision has been made: Ombudsperson



However, non-university achievements are often assessed more strictly. This is not just a matter of "no significant difference", but of equivalence – i.e. an even closer match. In plain language, this means that the university will assess your achievements very carefully and less generously.

And: In this case, the burden of proof lies with you. This means that you must be able to document and demonstrate that your experience truly meets the requirements of the programme.

If one of these scenarios applies to you, be sure to check Section 13 of the General Examination Regulations. It contains a lot of details. And if you still have questions or disagree with a decision made by the University, simply contact one of the offices listed below:

For a change of subject:

(Subject) Study Advisory Service in the faculties

For a semester abroad and learning agreement: International Student Advisory Service in the faculties

In general: Ombudsperson, if you have doubts about whether the right decision was made.

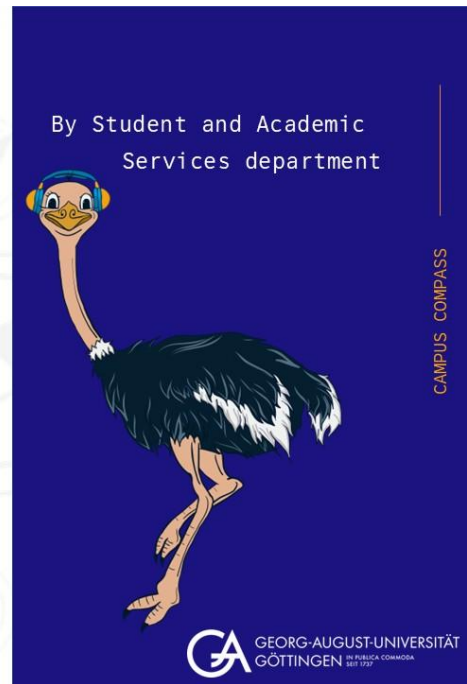
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THANKS FOR LISTENING!

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT:

www.uni-goettingen.de/kritik

OR SIMPLY SCAN THE QR-CODE.



Thank you for listening, I hope this episode was helpful to you.

Campus Compass was set up by Silja-Katharina Haufe, the Ombudsperson for students and responsible for Complaint Management at Göttingen University. If you would like to find out more about her counselling and her work, simply listen to our episode no. 1 or visit the website. Simply scan the QR code or enter www.uni-goettingen.de/kritik.

See you next time – at Campus Compass – your guide to university life.