

## **General information on modularisation**

ZHW degree programmes will be modularised as of the winter semester 2003-2004. Incoming students will earn a university of applied sciences degree in accordance with the new examination regulations on modularised studies.

## **Harmonisation in Europe**

The point of departure for modularising university courses is the idea of a common European university area designed to promote student mobility and qualifications relevant to the work market. Student performance and diplomas should be easy to understand and compare internationally. As of the winter semester 2003-4, the ZHW will reorganise degree programmes as far as possible under current legislation. In general, university of applied sciences degrees will be awarded.

To make it possible to compare student performance, an achievement point system (ECTS credit points) will be introduced. These changes were established in the Bologna Agreement of the European Community, to which Switzerland is a signatory. The Bologna Agreement is to take effect in Switzerland by 2010 at the latest.

## **What is modularised instruction?**

A module is a self-contained learning unit lasting one semester. A module description includes learning goals, content, prerequisites, and the type of student performance required (for example, 2 tests and a final examination). Different degree programmes may offer certain modules jointly. This creates greater flexibility within the university and more options for students.

Students can study for one or more semesters at another university in their own country or abroad and can earn ECTS credit points for their studies there.

## **What's different for incoming students?**

Studies at the ZHW are made up of an assessment year (first year) and the main study period. Registration and administrative procedures are mainly carried out online. Modules have replaced individual courses. All degree programmes now have new curricula and new examination regulations. Students receive ECTS credit points for their work.

ECTS credit points earned at one partner university are valid at other partner universities. One ECTS credit point is approximately equivalent to 30 hours of student work per semester (class time + independent study). In full-time study, 30 ECTS points per semester are expected, which is equivalent to 1,800 working hours per year. Credits are awarded only if the work done in a module is satisfactory.

Typical curricula have an average of approximately 30 lessons per week. Instruction has been entirely modularised, that is, previous class types no longer exist. Instruction includes the entire range of teaching methods: in addition to instruction in module groups, exercises, and practical work, there are also lectures combined with learning tasks. This means more independent study for students (both guided and unguided). Consequently, students take more responsibility for organising their studies.

Study planning is done individually; consequently, there is more choice. All degree programmes have advisors for students.

As of winter semester 2003-4, incoming students are expected to have laptop computers. Students must provide laptop computers for themselves. The Schools specify the type of computer to be used. The ZHW supports students in the acquisition of laptops.

### **Qualification principles for modularised studies**

After the first year of study (assessment year) and prior to the last semester of main study, there are examinations covering the work done in the modules. Students must receive overall passing grades to be admitted to the main study period, where there are also examinations for the modules selected. Studies can normally be continued even if a student does not pass a particular module. If a student fails a module examination, s/he can take it again at the re-examinations, which take place once a year. After completing the final examinations in their last year, students proceed to the practical work for their undergraduate dissertations.

#### Information

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