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Leibniz
Universität
Hannover

HOW TO APPROACH DOUBTS ABOUT YOUR STUDIES

Tips and methods
of reflection

Student Advisory Services

Study doubts – What options do I have?

Many students struggle with doubts at a certain point of their studies. The reasons can be manifold: perhaps the degree programme is completely different from what was assumed in advance or the topics are not as interesting as expected. There may be learning difficulties, organizational challenges, communication problems with fellow students and/or lecturers or simply motivation problems. Private problems can also affect studying.

If doubts persist for a longer period of time or keep coming up, it is worth taking a closer look at the causes so that support can be sought in good time. Doubts can be a valuable impulse to make helpful changes. With this brochure, we would like to give you tips and initial methods for reflection.

- **STEP 1**

Talking about doubts and problems

- **STEP 2**

Getting to the bottom of the causes

- **STEP 3**

Exploring options – What possibilities do I actually have?

- **STEP 4**

Change yes/no? How do I make a good decision for myself?

- **STEP 5**

My next steps

LET'S GO!

Step 1



Talk about doubts and problems

If you have recurring doubts or problems during your studies, be brave and get support. It may take some effort at first to talk about it, but you will soon realise that you are not alone with your questions. An overview of all service institutions within the University of Hanover can be found on the following website:

→ uni-hannover.de/en/studium/advice-support/problems-at-university



Step 2



Get to the bottom of the causes

To achieve positive changes, it is important to become aware of where your dissatisfaction and doubts are coming from. Sometimes this is relatively obvious. In other cases, however, the causes are not obvious at first glance, but rather diffuse or subconscious.

You can use the following questions for initial self-reflection:

WHAT LED TO MY CHOICE OF STUDY?

What wishes and goals did I have at the time I chose my degree programme?

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What alternatives did I have and how did I inform myself overall?

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What was the deciding point for me choosing my study programme?

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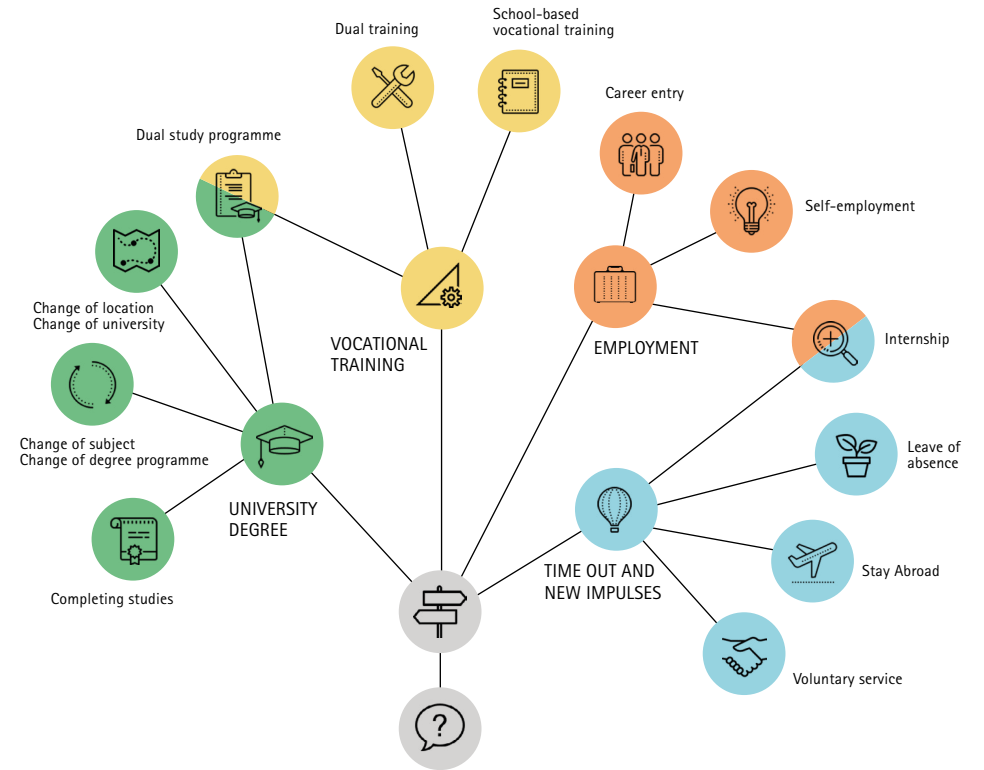
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Step 3

Exploring options – What possibilities do I actually have?

Students, who are struggling with their studies, often have the feeling of being stuck. However, there are usually a variety of options:



NOTES:

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● **OPTION 1: COMPLETING UNIVERSITY DEGREE**

- Completing the previous studies, with support e.g. from learning counselling at ZQS, PTB, course advice, student advisory service
- Changing the degree programme
- Continue studying the same or a similar degree programme under different conditions at another university or an university of applied sciences
- If you would like more practical experience during your studies, studying at a university of applied sciences and/or a dual study programme could be an alternative

● **OPTION 2: SWITCH TO VOCATIONAL TRAINING**

- Dual study programme: vocational training plus study degree programme at the same time
- Classic dual training
- School-based vocational training

Information about vocational training in Germany is published at: make-it-in-germany.de

● **OPTION 3: GO STRAIGHT TO WORK**

- Searching for suitable career opportunities with the help of career services (e.g. with a bachelor's degree without a master's degree)
- Self-employment: looking for opportunities to start your own business with the help of LUH's start-up service

● **OPTION 4: TAKE TIME OUT (INTERRUPTION OF STUDIES) TO GATHER NEW IMPULSES**

- leave of absence, e.g. to focus on your own physical and/or mental health (with a medical certificate)
- A longer internship
- Honorary, voluntary work
- Stay abroad (as a semester abroad or self-contained)
- Interruption of studies, (temporary) withdrawal

● **OPTION 5: SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT**

Maybe you can think of completely different or additional options. Then feel free to note them here:

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Which options suit me the best at this moment?

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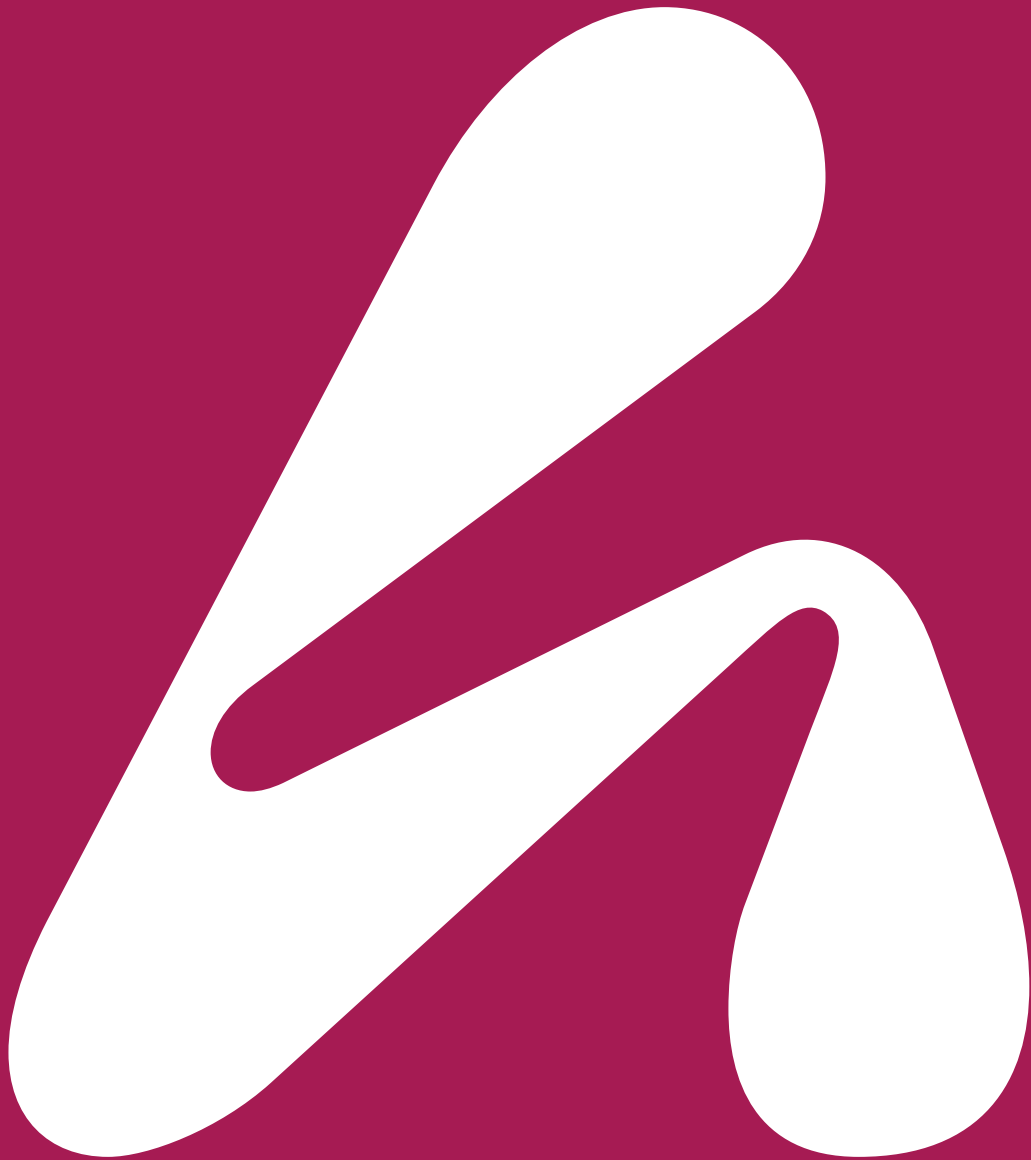
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→ uni-hannover.de/en/studium/advice-support/problems-at-university



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Change yes/no? How do I make a good decision?

Every person is unique, so unfortunately there is no one-size-fits-all solution. But: Important signals that you should get support are

- The purpose of your studies/career path is not (or no longer) recognisable
- It is no longer fun at all over a longer period of time, your motivation is gone
- You have long-term performance problems that do not improve even with support
- Physical and/or psychological symptoms occur (stomach ache, headaches, motivation problems...)

How do you notice your doubts about studying?

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WHAT CAN HELP IN THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS??

- Decision-making takes time. It is completely normal to think in different directions and be unsure at first. Take enough time for the decision-making process and set yourself a realistic time limit by which you want to have made your decision.
- Take good care of yourself! If you are not feeling well at the moment, seek support before making important decisions.
- Get enough information - but remember that you can't know everything in advance.
- Talk to others! Talking to people you know, like-minded people or the student counselling service can help you to sort out your own thoughts and gather options and ideas.
- Take a look at your interests and abilities as well as your previous experiences and wishes for your future.
- Take a closer look at your previous motives for choosing or sticking with your degree programme.
- When and how did you last make a good decision for yourself? What helped you to do so?

INTRINSIC AND EXTRINSIC MOTIVATION

INTRINSIC MOTIVATION

I do something for its own sake:

- because I enjoy it
- because it seems meaningful to me
- because it interests me and makes me curious

EXTRINSIC MOTIVATION

I do something because of external reasons, such as:

- good salary
- high reputation
- My social environment expects it of me
- Assumed job security

Motivational psychology differentiates between internal (intrinsic) and external (extrinsic) motives for our actions.

My intrinsic motives for choosing/sticking with my degree programme so far are:

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My extrinsic motives for choosing/sticking with my degree programme so far are:

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Ideally, both intrinsic and extrinsic motives are decisive for a decision. In the long term, it often becomes problematic when extrinsic motives clearly predominate or there is no intrinsic motivation at all, e.g. when a degree programme is chosen only because the parents want it or because a good salary is expected. However, it can also be problematic if a decision is based on intrinsic motives but leads to major conflicts in the external environment, e.g. if the family is completely against the chosen degree course.

Step 5



My next steps

WHAT GOAL DO I WANT TO ACHIEVE?

Describe as specifically and positively as possible what you would like to achieve (e.g. I would like to make a study choice, I would like clarity, I would like a change).

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What stands in my way? What do I have to overcome?

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What do I have to do first?

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Who or what can help me?

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What do I need to do next?

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CONTACT

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