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CULIK – A Network for Curriculum Development and (Self-) Qualification

CULIK stands for “Curriculum- und Qualifizierungsnetzwerk Lernfeldinnovation für Lehrkräfte in Berufsschulfachklassen für Industriekaufleute” and can be translated as: Network for curriculum development and qualification in the field of innovation of learning areas for teachers in the dual system (students become *merchants* in industry).

The central idea of the project which started in November 2001 and lasts for 3 years is self qualification in a team of teachers in the context of collaborative curricular developmental work as a combination of organisational and individual learning with the help of ICT.

The reason or the need for this project are new curricula for vocational schools in the dual system with a new concept: learning areas (“Lernfelder”). Teaching within learning areas means that the topics are structured along central work and business processes instead of subjects. There are given only thematic units with defined goals, contents and time that can be used, oriented to professional tasks and working processes; there are no more systematic subjects like business administration or accounting, no textbooks and no experiences with the whole concept. What is necessary is teamwork among the teachers to develop these learning areas – the process of curriculum development has been transferred strongly from the government and the specialist to the institutions and the teachers. On the institutional side there can be seen a strong tension between curriculum development, organisational development and staff development.

Within this Lernfeld-concept CULIK concentrates on the specific branch of *merchants* in industry and has a focus on the collaboration of different groups and teams (of teachers) with the help of ICT. The Internet was chosen as the place to support and combine the different areas of exchanging material, of communication and co-operation; the goal is the collaborative development of the curriculum within a network! We use a web-page (www.culik.de) for presenting the project and the partners to the public and an Internet platform (BSCW = Basic Support for Collaborative Work) for the communication and the collaboration within the project.

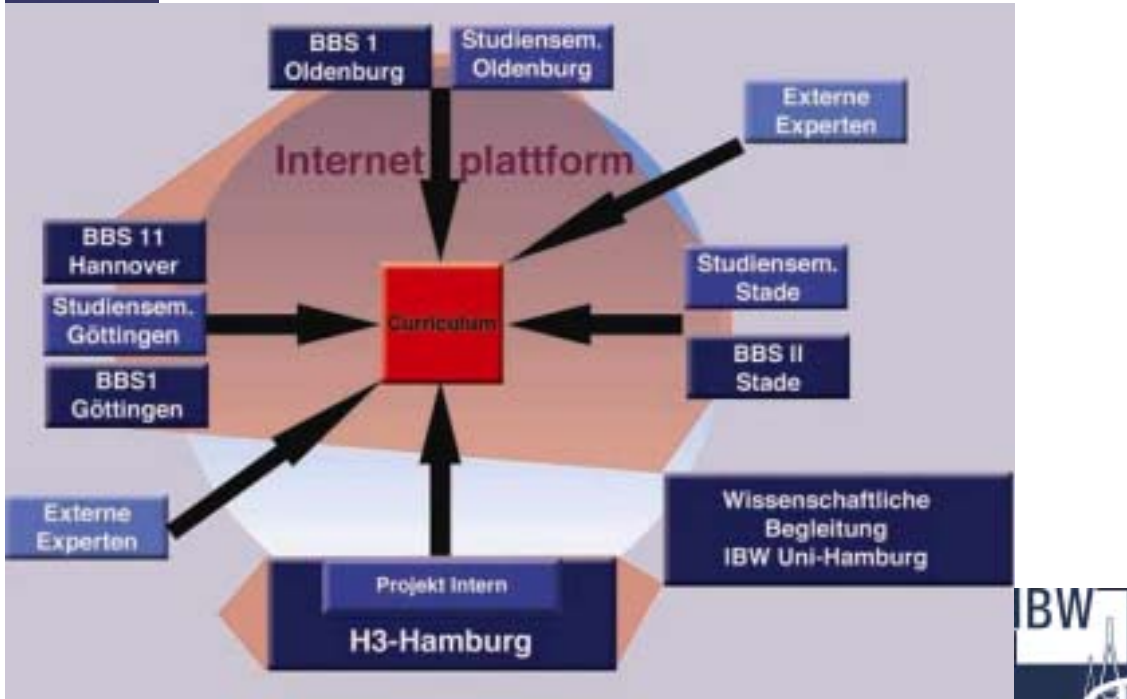


Figure 1. The partners within CULIK brought together on the Internet platform.

The partners come from two different countries in Germany: In Lower Saxony there are four vocational schools (in Göttingen, Hannover, Oldenburg and Stade), three so called “Studienseminare” (places of further education – “2nd phase” – for graduated teachers) in Göttingen, Oldenburg and Stade, and the NLI (Niedersächsisches Landesinstitut) as project leader. In Hamburg it is the vocational school H3 Schlankreye (for merchants in industry) as partner and project leader with a team of six teachers and five more as supporters. The Institute for Vocational and Business Education (IBW) at the University of Hamburg is responsible as scientific and research partner for both countries.

The partners and the structure on the Internet platform can be seen in figure 1: Hamburg has its own intranet (also based on BSCW) and the task to develop such a platform for the school and the cooperating teachers itself. The teams in Lower Saxony use the platform to work together within the teams, between the teams in school and the Studienseminar, and between all four teams at the different locations. On this level Hamburg gets in as the fifth location within the whole project which means that there are five different cities that bring in their efforts and

work which is discussed and made to one output mainly virtually. The role of the IBW is to administrate the platform, to moderate and to evaluate the process and to give support to all the partners.

The theoretical framework is built on the discussion on the Lernfeldansatz, the orientation on working and business processes, and on curriculum development on the one hand; on the other it is the theory about networks, communities of practice and learning and on CSCL (computer supported collaborative learning).