

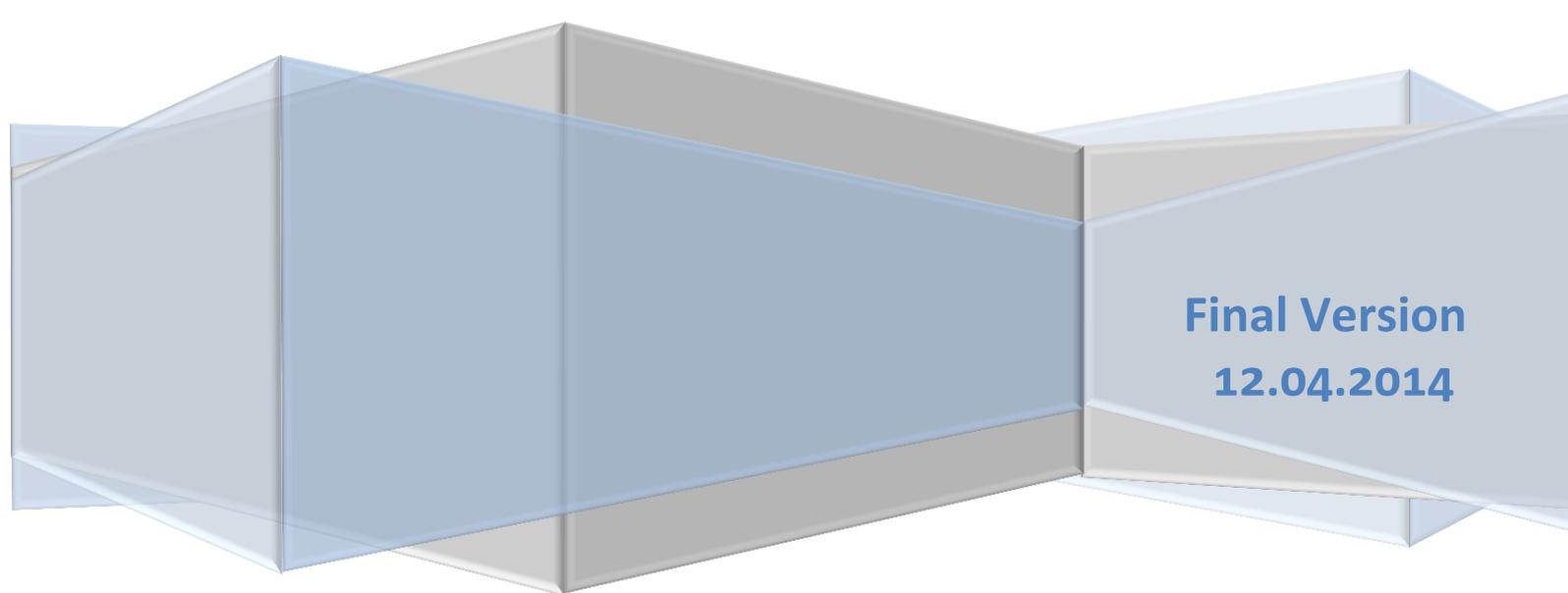
Annex 4 – Template for Reporting Feedback regarding the piloting exercise – testing a specific tool



Piloting the Toolkit

Identification of Specific(s) Tool(s)

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Executive Summary

The piloting activities aimed to gather experiences in the usage of different tools and instruments out of the draft- toolbox.

The QUADRO team of Berlin School of Economics and Law has chosen the tool “self-reflection of students”, the questionnaire for evaluation of teaching and learning, and the instrument “group discussion” for evaluating teaching and learning. This selection for the piloting has been made for different reasons: The first reason was to use for the evaluation of teaching and learning two different approaches, a questionnaire and a group discussion in order to check and compare the effectiveness of both tools. The self-reflection questionnaire for students was chosen because this tool was new to BSEL staff and no experiences had been made yet with similar tools.

Both tools and the instrument were tested with BSEL students, studying business administration majoring in banking. Besides the collection of quality assurance data in the course, the students were asked to give their feedback about the feasibility of the tools and the instrument themselves. The process of choosing the instrument / tools, the process of testing them as well as the given feedbacks are described in the following chapters (1 & 2).

Additionally, in national consultations the experts from the training institutes who already gave input for the analysis of the current situation regarding quality assurance in the banking and financial services sector in Germany (WP 2) were asked to provide their feedbacks about the toolkit. The results from the experts feedback may be found in chapter 3.

Exercise nr. 1: Testing “Student’s self-reflection”

Introduction

The tool “student’s self-reflection” was chosen for piloting because a need was identified to check the quality of the learning process and the opinion of students on the achieved learning result in their own perspective, in view of their contribution as learners. For this purpose the learning process and progress from bachelor students majoring in business administration/banking was surveyed in their 6th semester during the conduction of a bank specific simulation game, called TOPSIM.

Methodology for applying the tool

After having chosen the tool for self-reflection of learners, this tool was translated into German and adapted to the specifics of the simulation game module: Question number 5 in the toolkit questionnaire was removed („How much time do you on average spend on studying every day?“) because on one hand the reflection of the learning process should only refer to the simulation game and on the other hand the simulation game took place on two consecutive days, lasting 7 hours each day.

Besides the questions already included in the original questionnaire a chapter for the evaluation of the tool itself was added (please see the table below).

Reflection of the tool

Please provide your feedback to the questionnaire. Your response helps us to improve the tool “questionnaire for self-reflection”.

Please fill in to what extent you agree on the following statements.

For this purpose please mark the relevant figure with a cross.

(5 – I strongly agree / 4 – I agree / 3 – neutral / 2 – I disagree / 1 – I strongly disagree / 0 – no comment)

1	<i>The self-reflection questionnaire is very suitable to assess the personal learning progress.</i>	5	4	3	2	1	0
2	<i>The survey for self-reflection should be conducted more often during studies.</i>	5	4	3	2	1	0
3	<i>The length of the questionnaire is appropriate.</i>	5	4	3	2	1	0

4	<i>Filling in the questionnaire was difficult.</i>	5	4	3	2	1	0
5	<i>The questionnaire should have a smaller extent.</i>	5	4	3	2	1	0
6	<i>The anonymized findings of the self-reflection of the learning process should have an influence on the design of the current course.</i>	5	4	3	2	1	0

Altogether the survey regarding the learning process was conducted in three different groups of students, each group having approximately 16 students. The questionnaire was filled in by the students at the end of the first day of their simulation game. The most important findings of the survey were anonymized announced the next day by the teacher who was leading the simulation game. Mainly discussed were difficulties and obstructions during the learning progress (question 2 / 3) and approaches to reduce gaps in the learning progress (question 7).

The actual questionnaire for self-reflection of the learning process was complemented through a second reflection at the end of the simulation game module. At this point statements on the satisfaction with the learning process and an eventual development were briefly requested. Additionally, learners were asked to give their opinion on how far the feedback of the teacher who acted as game leader regarding the findings of the first survey was beneficial to them.

The second questionnaire is listed below.

2. Self-reflection

To the Module BK-501 simulation game TOPSIM Banking

Please think carefully and answer honestly. Your opinion is important to improve the course simulation game TOPSIM Banking and with it your learning result.

General Data

Male

Year of Birth _____

Female

Course _____

2. Reflection of the learning progress

1. **After finishing the module I am satisfied with my learning progress.**

(1 – I am not satisfied at all / 4 – I am very satisfied)

1 - 2 - 3 - 4 -

2. **Since the last survey my perceived (felt) learning progress got:**

better- the same - worse -

3. **The feedback and the consideration of the first self-reflection findings increased the quality of the course:**

(5 – I strongly agree / 4 – I agree / 3 – neutral / 2 – I disagree / 1 – I strongly disagree / 0 – no comment)

5 - 4 - 3 - 2 - 1 - 0 -

4. **Other comments**

Results obtained

The most important insights to the tool itself are:

1. Survey		<i>I strongly agree</i>	<i>I agree</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>I disagree</i>	<i>I strongly disagree</i>	<i>No comment</i>
1	<i>The self-reflection questionnaire is very suitable to assess the personal learning progress.</i>	3	14	11	15	3	1

2	<i>The survey for self-reflection should be conducted more often during studies.</i>	5	19	9	12	2	
3	<i>The length of the questionnaire is appropriate.</i>	23	20	2	2	1	
4	<i>Filling in the questionnaire was difficult.</i>		6	7	9	24	1
5	<i>The questionnaire should have a smaller extent.</i>		1	3	12	27	5
6	<i>The anonymized findings of the self-reflection of the learning process should have an influence on the design of the current course.</i>	7	19	10	4	4	2
2. Survey		<i>I strongly agree</i>	<i>I agree</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>I disagree</i>	<i>I strongly disagree</i>	<i>No comment</i>
7	<i>The feedback and the consideration of the first self-reflection findings increased the quality of the course.</i>	3	8	17	8	2	9

The responses of students show, that the content, the length and the structure of the self-reflection questionnaire regarding the learning process seem to be suitable. The evaluation, if the questionnaire is principally appropriate for the purpose to reflect the own learning process, does not show a unique conclusion. The reason for the different opinions might be the missing experience in dealing with a tool of self-reflection, because such tools were not used during courses studied before.

During piloting a discussion of the findings from the first survey regarding the learning process was intended. This is also supported through the opinion of the students. They predominantly find it useful to consider the anonymized findings in the further design of the course. The students were insecure about how far this feedback might help to increase the quality of the course. A possible reason for the uncertainty might be found in the shortness of the module (two consecutive days).

Exercise nr. 2/ 3: Testing “Evaluation of teaching and learning”

- With a questionnaire (tool)
- By using a group discussion (instrument)

Introduction

With the chosen tool and instrument for “Evaluation of teaching and learning” the quality of the learning process and in addition the quality of the output of the learning process should be surveyed.

Contrary to the tool of self-reflection, which puts the own learning process of the student into focus, the tool “Evaluation of teaching and learning” concentrates on the quality of the course and the performance of trainers. It therefore is a tool for an external assessment, conducted by the learners.

Methodology for applying the instrument

Both, the tool and the instrument were applied in a banking practice workshop, by applying a questionnaire and a group discussion). The aim was to find out, in how far these two different approaches of evaluation reveal differences in the assessment results of the courses’ and trainers’ quality.

The first step was the adaptation of the toolkits’ questionnaire to the specifics of the practice workshop. In detail question 13 (exams) was left out, because there are no exams required at the end of that workshop. Also question 18 (opportunities to contact the teacher) was skipped, as in a three-day workshop the opportunities to contact the trainer in between lecturing times do not play any role.

Afterwards the adapted questionnaire was used as the basement for designing a guideline for a group discussion to evaluate teaching and learning, thus aiming for the same goal as the questionnaire. Besides including the themes of the questionnaire the guidelines were completed with questions for the evaluation of the special instrument “group discussion”.

The guideline for evaluation of teaching and learning with the instrument “group discussion” is presented below:

Guideline:

1. Explanation of the background and the procedure of the workshop evaluation
 2. Evaluation of the workshop
 - a. **General evaluation of the workshop** (was it interesting (2)/ did it meet the expectations / was it difficult (3))
 - b. **Evaluation of the workshops content** (improved level of knowledge and skills (1)/ integration of theoretical and practical parts (7)/ contributed to the achievement of the aims of the curriculum / preparation for the theoretical semester (8))
 - c. **Evaluation of the learning conditions** (study materials (4,5), availability of resources required for the learning process (6))
 3. Evaluation of teachers
 - a. **Evaluation of procedure and methods** (content is logically structured (1) / speed (3) / time management (9) / workshop was conducted to the full extend (10))
 - b. **Evaluation of relationship teachers & students** (involvement of participants (2)/ answering questions (5)/ support with autonomous work (6)/ learning climate / relation teachers & students (7, 8))
 4. Other comments / suggestions
 - a. Which themes regarding the evaluation of the workshop and the teachers were not yet considered in the discussion? Which suggestions for the improvement do you have?
 5. Evaluation of the instrument
 - a. To what extend do you consider the instrument group discussion as suitable for the evaluation of a workshop or for teachers?
 - b. You already know the evaluation with a questionnaire from the last workshop. Which instrument should we preferably use in future and why?
-

The 15 participants of the workshop were divided into two groups after a brief introduction to the procedure of the evaluation. The survey by questionnaire took place with five participants at the same time as the group discussion which was conducted in another room with six participants. The group discussion lasted 30 minutes.

Results obtained

Comparing the results obtained from piloting the tool questionnaire for evaluation of teaching and learning and the instrument group discussion aiming to evaluate the same course, it gets obvious, that the content assessment of the workshop and the teachers is pretty similar in both approaches. The participants of both groups were mainly satisfied with the quality of the workshop and the teachers (I (strongly) agree).

The assessment results achieved by applying the questionnaire, demonstrate that apart from a basic satisfaction in the examined themes of the questionnaire only two suggestions for the improvement were given – respondents were asking for a better combination of the theoretical part with the practical part of the course and for a stronger active involvement of the students in the teaching and learning process.

The assessment of teaching and learning in the group discussion was more differentiated. Although the quality of the workshop and the teachers here was also assessed as satisfying, differences in the expectations and the satisfaction of the participants were named and positive as well as negative points were illustrated more precisely.

The missing integration of the theoretical part and the practical part, as stated in the responses to the questionnaire, was also quoted in the group discussion and discussed controversially by the students. Additionally the section “Other comments / suggestions” was used more frequently and very solution-orientated proposals for improvement were made.

Concerning the feasibility assessment of the tool and instruments used and the form of inquiry (questionnaire / group discussion) most participants (4) attributed the group discussion to be more suitable, because points of criticism are more likely to be addressed. In the opinion of the participants they are more motivated to explain negative comments in detail when they are questioned by way of discussion. Furthermore it was stated, that assessment and evaluation, when conducted as a group discussion, are more helpful to reflect about the evaluation process itself. In general the students recommend to use the group discussion instrument rather than the questionnaire for the evaluation of teaching and learning in the workshop. But they also pointed out, that the size of the group in the discussion should not exceed the prior number of participants as the discussion would get too long and wordy considering the variety of opinions. Two participants determined a benefit in the anonymity of the questionnaire. Taking these doubts about anonymity into account, it might be useful in general to let outsiders and not teachers conduct the group discussion.

National Consultations

Introduction

The national consultations were organized to gain feedback from stakeholders active in the field of training and education in the banking and financial sector about the whole toolkit. To prepare the stakeholders for the national consultations a management summary (designed as a powerpoint presentation in German language) and the toolkit itself were send to them beforehand via e-mail.

Stakeholders involved

The Stakeholders from the Commerzbank, Going Public, Sparkassenakademie, the German Banking Institute as well as a representative from the bbw (Bildungswerk der Wirtschaft in Berlin und Brandenburg) university for applied science (a provider for vocational training and education in the banking sector but also beyond) were invited to participate in the national consultations.

The stakeholders representing the opinion of the Financial Services Sector were Commerzbank and the German Banking Institute as well as the Sparkassenakademie as VET providers. The stakeholders from Other Sectors were Going Public, which is a company belonging to the media sector and the bbw university, offering training not only in the FSS but also in all other industries.

The national consultations were therefore held with most of the partner organizations who were already involved in the surveys for the national reports about the state of affairs to assure quality in training and education in the banking and financial services sector. As these partners had been informed previously about the content and the aim of the QUADRO project they were highly interested in the toolkit as an outcome of the project.

The consultations were organized by the BSEL-team of the German partner in the QUADRO project who participated as well.

To structure the consultations and to make the answers comparable the document - Annex 3 - Example of Structured Interview, Feedback regarding the "Quality Assurance (QA) Handbook and Toolkit" - was used.

Results obtained

During the consultations the following results were obtained:

- a) Clarity and comprehensibility of the of the proposed QUADRO quality assurance framework

The stakeholders completely agreed, that the proposed QA framework is clear and easy to understand. The structure was described as useful.

Nevertheless one of the stakeholders made the suggestion to insert the levels (micro, meso and macro level) as headlines in the toolkit document. This would help the readers to recognize the connection between the table and the text in the toolkit document.

Another recommendation was to give a short definition of the term “meso level,” because this term is not very common in banks and banking training organizations for instance.

- b) Adjustment of the QA framework to the reality of the training provision within the FSS

With reference to the different levels (micro, meso and micro level) the toolkit was described as universal by one stakeholder. It might therefore be used also in the banking industry and in other sectors.

Areas of improvement were stated for instance in the inclusion of bank specific quality assurance characteristics such as quote of trainees who get a permanent job at the bank after finishing a training for instance or the salary level. (Commerzbank) The question was raised too, how it might be possible to compare the jobs and positions graduates get after completion of a training course. For example: Is a position in a bank comparable with a position someone reaches in another company, e.g. a banker as a controller at a utility company? How could that be considered in a quality assurance framework?

The stakeholder from the media company (Going Public) pointed out that the criteria for the output assessment on the micro level were not clear enough. It should be defined, what the criterion “career” means: What dimension of career is meant by this point? Is a vocational training only successful if it has a positive influence on the career? What happens, if a training activity improves the quality of performance on the job but has no (direct) effects on the career? Is it not useful then? The importance of the agreement on goals for vocational education was determined (employer, training provider and participants). These goals should be workable to make an assessment possible afterwards.

Another point missing was the comparison of curriculum on the input level. (Sparkassenakademie). To attain comparable qualifications in the banking industry (as demanded by the German consumer protection organizations) it would be a helpful quality assurance criterion.

The last feedback (bbw university) regarding this point was that the QA framework is useful but the specification on the FSS industry was not noticeable. BBW concluded that the QA framework and toolkit could be used and are pretty usable in other sectors outside FSS industry, too.

c) **Summary Strengths and weaknesses of the QA framework**

Industry	Stakeholders	Strengths	Weaknesses
FSS	Commerzbank	Good structure, width of the view	Rethinking of operationalization might be helpful as well as addressing stakeholders in banks by using bank specific terms
FSS VET provider	Sparkassenakademie	Structure	Extent / length
FSS VET provider	German Banking Institute	Clear, inspiring, supportive	Detailed information might be missing because of its compactness
Media	Going Public	Clear and neat structure, simple guideline for companies to design checklists for single topics and to improve their operational organization by that.	Is the content of the handbook synchronized with the requirements of other quality assurance activities such as LQW for instance? Do companies have to implement two different quality assurance programs if they want to use both?
VET provider	Bbw university	State of the art, modern and suitable.	The term “output” is not described detailed enough. Outcome should be complemented, because it is more in the focus nowadays.

d) **Usefulness of “of ready-to-use instruments and tools”**

The compilation of “ready-to-use instruments and tools” was considered to be helpful. Two stakeholders (bbw university, Going Public) pointed out that the instruments and tools might be helpful for beginners in quality assurance but not as much for companies or training organisations, which have standardized QA processes or certifications in place already.

e) **Other instrument(s) or tool(s) to be included**

The following tools and instruments were named, which should be included additionally:

- Self-reflection with a stronger focus on competencies
- Comparison of grades in centralized examinations (e.g. nationwide)
- Quality assurance tools for E-learning
- Comparison of curricula applied in the banking and financial services sector
- More data regarding the concrete transfer of training content into performance on the job
- The feedback of the contracting companies should be considered more intensively when it comes to the output analysis – which key figures does a company look at to measure the success of a training activity?
- Content, framework curriculum and goals of a training activity should be included as instruments, e.g. in the input phase
- Proofs and certificates of the educational background, qualification and professional experience of the trainers are missing and should be included (input phase)

f) Planning to use the instruments / tools in own organization

The question, how the consulted stakeholders plan to use the toolkit or individual tools in their own organizations, was answered by two stakeholders in the way that they already use most of the instruments / tools suggested in the toolkit. For instance one stakeholder referred to his 120 pages report regarding LQW certification (a QA-system which is quite popular in German speaking countries and applied by several training organizations). Additionally a computer based feedback would be appreciated by this stakeholder.

Other stakeholders answered, that they will use the toolkit as a support to rethink which partners may be qualified to cooperate with and to use it as support for deciding on cooperation partners. It will also be used to compare the tools / instruments already in use with new tools / instruments which might be tested.

Another interviewed person answered (Sparkassenakademie) that she is not responsible any more for quality assurance issues in her previous organization but forwarded the toolkit to all employees for information.

g) Selection of instruments / tools to use in own institute

The following instruments / tools were named as the ones which might be used in the stakeholders institutes:

- Questionnaire for self-reflection of learners
- Evaluation of teaching and learning by group discussion
- Eventually instruments for quality assurance of E-Learning

It was considered too, to use the instruments / tools for general statements on (applied) studies and their quality as well as for guaranteeing that the expectation of the learners will be met.

h) Optimization of tools and instruments to increase their implementation and use

One stakeholder asked for getting access to digital templates of certain tools in order to use them individually (e.g. by inserting the institutes own logo).

It was also asked for an executive summary and standardization of instruments / tools because there were doubts what will happen if the instruments / tools will lead to different results in different training departments.

The consulted stakeholders also suggested, that concrete benchmarks could be established to show the quality of the institutes own training programs in comparison with other providers. A “promise” on the quality could be given to the learners when establishing measurable quality standards or rankings.

The stakeholders declared their wish to get forms, checklists and interview guidelines for the implementation. A list with software products which should help to plan, manage and bill these quality assurance processes would be very helpful as well as a user-friendly computer-based program which gives recommendations on how to apply the different tools or instruments.

i) Benefits for other people

From the stakeholders points of view other people could benefit in the following ways:

- Learners would benefit from good & better quality of the training activities.
- Standardized processes provide a certain security to the stakeholders and avoid mistakes.
- Others may benefit from the experience of third parties.
- They may compare training offers.
- A comparability of the trainings and their grades should be given (EQF). Therefore a voluntary ranking would be recommended.
- Standardized quality levels could increase mobility in Europe.

- Application of QA tools should help saving time and money in institutes.
- Transfer of Know-How.
- Easier use of instruments / tools.

j) Further recommendations or suggestions

One stakeholder suggested to broaden the scope of the tools to allow for a gap-analysis. (DiBw)
Another one recommended to use the instruments / tools, to check the results and to adapt the toolkit if necessary. (Commerzbank).

The stakeholder from the bbw made the following comments on the toolkit:

The consistency of the quality assurance framework and the tools could be improved. This might for instance be done in using a matrix with 3 x 3 fields.

The criteria of tools and instruments could be described in more detail.

The compilation of tools and instruments reflects a good general level for quality assurance; in some parts further detailed tools and instruments could be attached.

Conclusion

The piloting exercise of the tools and instruments (self-reflection of learners; evaluation of teaching and learning with the help of a questionnaire and a group discussion) asked for a few amendments of the chosen tools in order to reflect the special conditions of the context in which they had been tested and the special needs of the tested group. The implementation of the piloting exercise went easy, the results were interesting and the tools & instrument were assessed as good, too.

The students reflected that the group discussion is more suitable in their situation, because points of criticism are more likely to be addressed; they are more motivated to explain positive and negative comments in detail when asked directly. On the other hand this instrument is applicable only for a small group as the discussion would get too long and wordy considering the variety of opinions when having lots of students in a group. Additionally a group discussion is not anonymous it should not be conducted therefore by the teacher or trainer who had held the course. It might be useful to let an outsider moderate the group discussion.

In the national consultations it was stated by the stakeholders that the quality assurance framework with the attached toolkit is a helpful instrument for quality assurance within the banking and financial services sector as well as in other sectors. It was assessed as clearly structured and easy to understand. The stakeholders gave precious feedback on how the quality assurance framework and the toolkit could be improved even more, although not all their suggestions might be addressed directly within the QUADRO project because of limitations in budget and time. Institutes using own quality assurance processes and tools might find a number of tools not particularly new, but training providers and companies with less experience may benefit from the whole range of the suggested tools and instruments.

Relevant points which were missing are for instance: Quality assurance tools for E-learning and comparison of curricula. Whereas it should be possible for the QUADRO partners, to consider the first point by including some tools for quality assurance of e-learning courses, it goes beyond the project to make a comparison of the curricula, which are applied by banking training organizations in Germany or even to make such a comparison between different European Member States.

Several stakeholders would appreciate to get online forms and checklists of the tools and instruments, which are included in the toolkit in order to allow for download and individualized instant use.

It is up to the QUADRO partners to check, in how far this feedback from the stakeholders can be taken into account in a sustainable way.

Annex: List of stakeholders

NATIONAL CONSULTATIONS

Date: March 2014

Venue: Berlin School of Economics and Law

Name	Organization	Signature
Dr. Albrecht Loehr	Commerzbank AG	
Prof. Dr. Liane Buchholz	Sparkassenakademie	
Prof. Dr. Henrik Schuett	German Banking Institute	
Prof. Dr. Angelika Grunwald	BBW-Hochschule Berlin	
Frank Rottenbacher	Going Public	
Prof. Dr. Erwin Seyfried	Berlin School of Economics and Law	
Ewa Traenkner	Berlin School of Economics and Law	
Tatjana Rabe	Berlin School of Economics and Law	