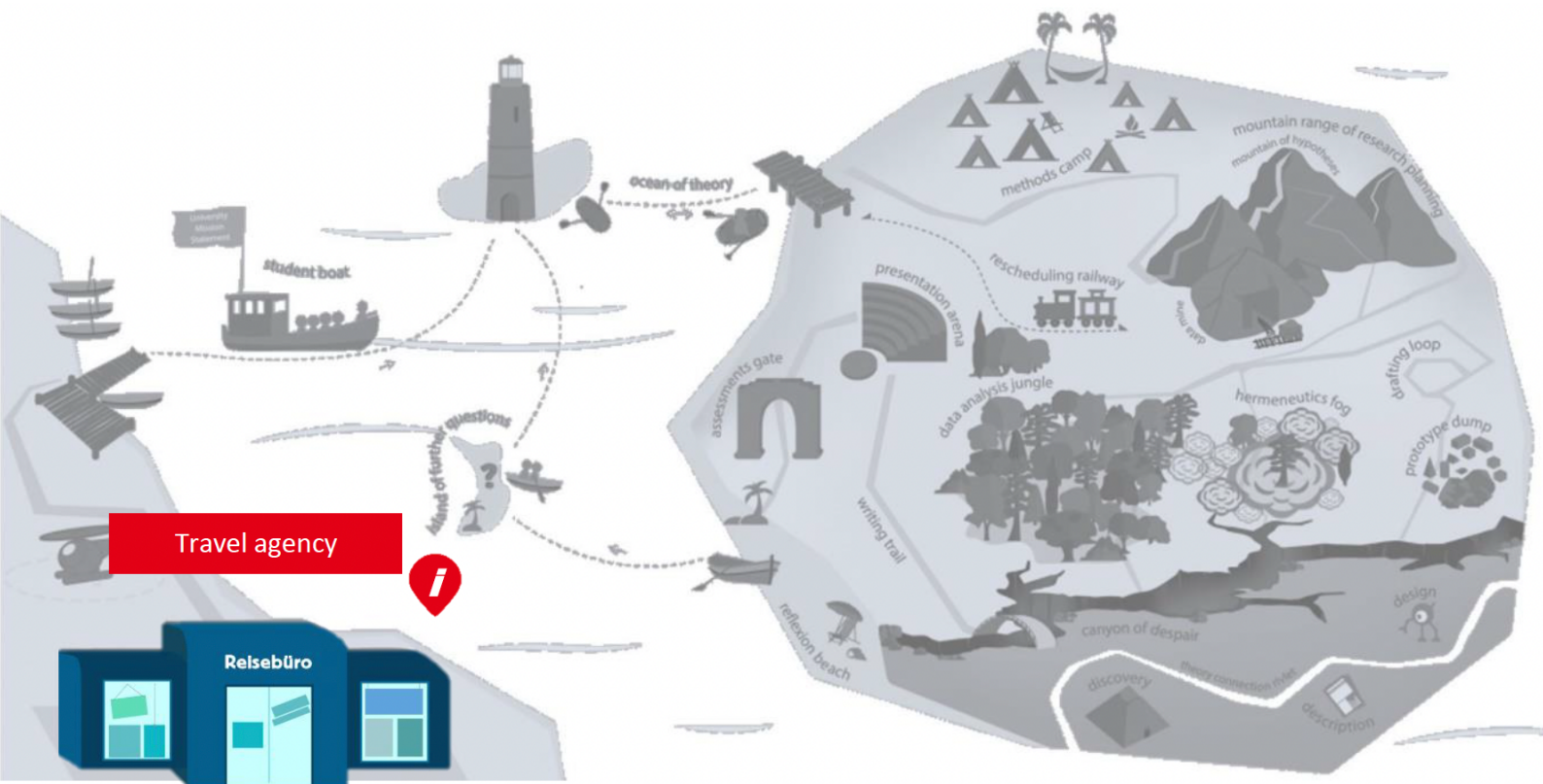




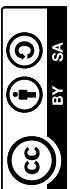
## Support brings work

Vignette #20



### KEYWORDS:

SUPERVISING ASSISTANCE



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GEFÖRDERT VOM

## #20: Support brings work



The following text sequence or vignette describes a situation in the context of a teaching that aims at research-based learning. The situation described challenges you as a teacher and may require you to act directly. The aim of the vignette is to allow you to think about what you are doing in such a situation or how you could prevent it. But you may also consider the situation to be problem-free and more conducive to learning. Either way you can preventively familiarize yourself with possible challenges and reflect upon your own evaluations and impulses for action.

The situations described are taken from interview data with coordinators of research-based learning projects and have been sharpened for the purpose mentioned above. The most common challenges in teaching courses to promote research-based learning have been selected and converted into vignettes.



### Support brings work

**After a busy start in the last term the head of the institute has now agreed to offer four small positions for student tutors. The advertisement was successful, there were quite a lot of applications and you had the impression that you had chosen the most suitable ones. However, in the first small team preliminary meeting it became clear that the expectations of the job are as far apart as the competences of the future student tutors. You now have one week to prepare the team for their task. Now all you have to do is think: how?**

**Keywords: Supervising assistance**



### Reflective questions

The situation described above is a typical challenge that you could face if you implement research-based learning in your teaching. The following questions of reflection serve as impulses to look at such or similar situations from different perspectives and then to come to different decisions:

**What were the requirements for the student tutors when applying?**

**For which tasks do you expect support from student tutors?**

**What skills do your student tutors need to have?**

**What expectations could student tutors have?**

**Who can support you in the training of student tutors? Are there perhaps online trainings?**

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## Attitudes and actions

In the following, attitudes as well as preventive and intervening actions in the situation described are presented. First of all, attitudes are described which have an impact on whether and how to react. Then actions are presented. They are practical examples of how teachers at universities deal with the situation in a preventive or intervening manner. In addition, indirect measures are listed which involve a more subtle approach yet may have a strong impact.

### Preventive actions

Preventive actions prevent the situation described or rather makes them less likely. There is – of course – no guarantee of avoiding such conflicts.

### Request a letter of motivation

**You demand a letter of motivation from the applicants in which they should explain their skills and abilities as well as their expectations of the job.**

Benefit of the action: An insight into the ideas of the student tutor clarifies the need for preparation or sorts them out if necessary.

### Students of teacher education as student tutors

**You explicitly address students of teacher education in your advertisement for the student tutor positions.**

Benefit of the action: Students of teacher education acquire – at least in part – already during their studies skills that are required for tutorial supervision. In addition, they have an increased motivation to try out these skills, as the situations in tutoring are similar to those in their career choice.

### Intervening actions

Interventions are usually carried out „when the milk has already been spilled“. These are therefore acute reactive measures:

## Conduct a qualification workshop

**You set a date for the training of the future student tutors. Possible topics are: research-based learning, didactic methods, dealing with difficult people, moderating a discussion process, securing work results, role changes in groups, observations and guidelines for the semester.**

Benefit of the action: You can prepare the student tutors specifically for their tasks and achieve a comparable level. In this way, you can help to ensure that the tutorials have a common quality standard in good time before the start of the term.

## Highlight research-based learning

**In the student tutor training, but also already in the call for applications, you address the specifics of research-based learning and what consequences this has for the practical work in the tutoring sessions.**

Benefit of the action: If you emphasise the competences needed in the context of research-based learning, skill requirements but also opportunities become clear from the beginning.

## Use external trainers

**You engage external trainers to qualify the student tutors. „External“ means that you do not carry out the qualification yourself. You can hire „external“ coaches for this purpose, but it would also be conceivable to ask the center of teaching and learning at your university to carry out the training.**

Benefit of the action: You are confident that trained specialists will take over the further training of the student tutors. In addition, you will have free resources for other things.

## Using e-student tutors

**Instead of using tutors in presence lessons, you can also use „e-tutors“. These have specific areas of responsibility which they can carry out online, for example proofreading or the student tutors are available online for specific questions.**

Benefit of the action: All processes between the students and the e-tutors are documented and you can make adjustments directly in the process. At least at the beginning of the project, the transparency gives you security. In addition, the e-tutors can also reassure themselves at a low threshold with questions based on concrete examples.

## Participate in a tutor-led session yourself

**If necessary, you will sit in on a session and, if necessary, conduct a pre- and post-tutorial discussion with the student tutor.**

Benefit of the action: By attending the session led by the tutor, you will be able to see how things are going and, if necessary, provide support with specific questions during the follow-up discussion.

## Indirect (accompanying) actions

In addition, indirect measures are listed which involve a more subtle approach yet may have the same impact.

## Conduct regular meetings with student tutors

**You set up a jour fix with the student tutors, for example once a month.**

Benefit of the action: The date can be used for an exchange among each other and with you as well as for further training (in small workshops) if necessary. In addition, you will gain insight into the current problems or where the student tutors need support from you.

## Evaluate the student tutor training

**You stay close to the student tutors and regularly ask them if there is anything missing for their job that they would like to learn in a further training.**

Benefit of the action: On the one hand, you are relieved by the knowledge that you can still „deliver later“ if necessary. On the other hand, you will learn about the actual needs of the student tutors.