

Quality assurance of education and learning

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Based on Tapani Vuorinen (2019)

Finnish Universities Act

- **Mission of the universities**
 - To promote free research and academic and artistic education
 - To provide higher education based on research
 - To educate students to serve their country and humanity
- **In carrying out their mission, the universities must**
 - Promote lifelong learning
 - Interact with the surrounding society
 - Promote the impact of research findings and artistic activities on society

Finnish Universities Act

- **The universities must arrange their activities so as**
 - To assure a high international standard in research, education and teaching
 - In conformity with ethical principles and good scientific practices
- **Membership in the university community**
 - The university community comprises the teaching and research personnel, other staff and students

Code of Conduct in Aalto University community – the members agree to:

- Act honestly and with integrity
- Respect others regardless of their background
- Foster open discourse and the free exchange of ideas
- Mutual trust
- Actively care for the safety and well-being of others
- Respect private, shared and university property
- Use the physical facilities of the university for their intended purposes
- React to any violations in a manner appropriate to their position and duties

Finnish Universities Act

- **Organs of a foundation university**
 - Board – strategy and far-reaching plans
 - Rector (in Aalto President) – operational leader, responsible for the economical, efficient and effective discharge of the university mission
 - Multi-member administrative body (Aalto Academic Affairs Committee) – decides on academic issues on university level
 - Other organs

Finnish Universities Act

- **Organisation of teaching and research**
 - Faculties or other comparable units (in Aalto: Schools)
 - Faculty level multi-member administrative body (in Aalto Schools: School Academic Affairs Committee)
 - Boards of examiners or other comparable units (in Aalto Schools: Degree Programme Committee(s), Doctoral Programme Committee)
 - Director of the unit (in Aalto Schools: Dean)

Finnish Universities Act

- **University personnel**
 - Professors – shall
 - *Carry out and supervise scientific work*
 - *Give education based on it*
 - *Follow developments in science*
 - *Participate in societal interaction and international collaboration in his/her field*
 - Other teaching and research staff
 - Other personnel to execute other tasks

Finnish Universities Act

- **Academic year**
 - Begins on August 1st and ends on July 31rd
- **Normative duration of studies**
 - Three academic years for Bachelor's degree
 - Two academic years for Master's degree
- **The university must arrange teaching and study guidance so as**
 - To enable full-time students to gain their degrees in the normative duration of studies

Finnish Universities Act

- **Objective-setting of the university**
 - Fixed-term agreement with the Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC) on KPIs (key performance indicators):
 - *Quantitative and qualitative targets of pivotal relevance to education and science policy*
 - *Monitoring and evaluation of their implementation in the university*
- **Allocation of government funding**
 - Based on the extent, quality and effectiveness of the operations and other education and science policy objectives in the university

Finnish Universities Act

- **Monitoring and reporting**
 - The universities must provide MEC with data necessary for the evaluation, development, statistics and other monitoring and steering of education and research in a manner determined by MEC

Finnish Universities Act

- **Evaluation**

- The universities must evaluate their education, research and artistic activities and the impact thereof.
- The universities shall also take part in external evaluation of their activities and quality assurance systems on a regular basis.
- The universities must publish the findings of the evaluations they undertake
- Attached to MEC is an independent expert body called the Higher Education Evaluation Council

Teaching and learning evaluation exercise, TEE 2020

- **TEE 2020 identifies needs for future development in education, and make visible and evaluate the achievements (previous TEE 2011)**
- **TEE 2020 serves as a means for supporting the strategic development of education at all degree levels**
- **TEE 2020 observations will be taken into account in the curricula revision for 2022-2024**
- **Focus areas (alignment with the strategic targets in education):**
 - Programme (portfolio) management
 - Anticipation of the future of work and knowledge requirements
 - Competence accumulation in the degree programmes
 - Ways of implementing multidisciplinary in education
 - Fluency in studies

Feedback system in Aalto CHEM

Formal bodies in Aalto CHEM's feedback process

- Degree Programme Committee
 - Professors, teachers, students
 - Development actions of B.Sc. and M.Sc. programmes, quality assurance of teaching, processing of student feedback
- Management Team
 - School + department management, students
 - Annual review of KPIs, feedback surveys, etc.

Formal bodies in Aalto CHEM's feedback process

- (International) Scientific Advisory Group
 - Provides feedback on school's plans, functions and performance
- External Stakeholder Group
 - Education policy representatives of industrial federations and professional associations
 - Provides systematic feedback on education and educational programmes

Means to collect and process feedback

- Informal feedback during teaching events
- Academic advising discussions
- Electronic course feedback system
- Semestral feedback events
 - Feedback from/to students and teachers twice a study year

Means to collect and process feedback

- Teachers' Room & “virtual coffee” events
 - Teachers' feedback + topical discussions for development of teaching and curriculum relative to its learning outcomes and feedback from various sources
 - Discussion on teachers' welfare
- Annual programme reviews
 - Workshop type self-assessment of educational programmes by programme managers, teachers, students and learning services
 - Identification of main development needs

Means to collect and process feedback

- Informal discussions with student association and guilds
 - School's agreement with the association and the guilds
- Meetings with health care and study psychology services
 - General feedback on welfare, workload and transferable skills development
- Career forums
 - Employer feedback on transferable skills development
- Graduate feedback surveys

Course feedback summary

- By responsible teacher of the course
- Concise summary on all feedback
 - Electronic + other feedback from students
 - Numeric evaluation + main observations
- Actions as response to the feedback
 - Proposal for changes to curriculum and teaching arrangements
- Visibility to
 - Students of the course
 - Programme manager/head of the major