

# 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 1<sup>st</sup> and ends on July 31<sup>rd</sup>
- **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