FINNISH EDUCATION EVALUATION CENTRE

Quality management of research and ESG 2015

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Contents

- Quick look at ESG 2015
- Research in ESG
- Finnish Audit model
- Finnish Experiences of QA of Research

Old ESG – Part 1		New ESG – Part 1
1.1 Policy and procedures for quality assurance		1.1 Policy for quality assurance
1.2 Approval, monitoring and periodic review of programmes and awards		1.2 Design and approval of programmes
1.3 Assessment of students		1.3 Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment
1.4 Quality assurance of teaching staff		1.4 Student admission, progression, recognition and certification
1.5 Learning resources and student support		1.5 Teaching staff
1.6 Information systems		1.6 Learning resources and student support
1.7 Public information		1.7 Information management
		1.8 Public information
		1.9 On-going monitoring and periodic review of programmes
		1.10 Cyclical external quality assurance

Main Changes in Part 1

- High number of standards and many more guidelines than before: reflects the focus on institutional responsibility for quality and its assurance
- Some structural changes to make the standards follow more logically student "lifecycle"
- Move from "QA of teaching staff" to "development of teaching staff" to emphasise the importance of constant enhancement, not of once-for-all checking
- LOs and student centered learning have a strong focus, and are mentioned in 5 out of the 10 standards!
- A new standard focusing altogether on student centered learning, teaching and assessment (1.3) - requires a shift in thinking about "what is quality" in teaching and learning.

QA of Research in ESG 2015 1/2

1.5 Teaching staff

Standard:

Institutions should assure themselves of the competence of their teachers. They should apply fair and transparent processes for the recruitment and development of the staff.

Guidelines:

Higher education institutions have primary responsibility for the quality of their staff and for providing them with a supportive environment that allows them to carry out their work effectively. Such an environment

- **encourages scholarly activity to strengthen the link between education and research**

QA of Research in ESG 2015 2/2

1.9 On-going monitoring and periodic review of programmes

Standard:

Institutions should monitor and periodically review their programmes to ensure that they achieve the objectives set for them and respond to the needs of students and society. These reviews should lead to continuous improvement of the programme. Any action planned or taken as a result should be communicated to all those concerned.

Guidelines:

Regular monitoring, review and revision of study programmes aim to ensure that the provision remains appropriate and to create a supportive and effective learning environment for students.

They include the evaluation of:

- **The content of the programme in the light of the latest research in the given discipline thus ensuring that the programme is up to date**

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1. Quality policy ESG 1.1
2. Quality system's link with strategic management ESG 1.1, 1.7, 1.8
3. Development of the quality system ESG 1.1
4. Quality management of the HEI's core duties, incl. essential services supporting these ESG 1.6, 1.7
   - 4a) Degree education ESG 1.2-1.5 + 1.9
   - 4b) RDI & artistic activities
   - 4c) Societal interaction and regional development work
   - 4d) Optional audit target
5. Samples of degree education (3 programmes) ESG 1.2-1.5 + 1.9
6. The quality system as a whole ESG 1.10

Threshold for passing

- Audits employ a set of criteria that is based on **a scale of four development stages** of quality management
  - absent
  - emerging
  - developing
  - advanced

FINEEC AUDITED

- The development phase **for each audit target is determined individually**, including each degree programme audited
- The audit team can propose that the institution passes the audit if **none of the targets are 'absent' and if the quality system as a whole is at least 'developing'** – Final decision made by the Higher Education Evaluation Committee

Self-evaluation

Description: What goals have been set for the operations and what are the key quality management procedures used to achieve them? How do different parties (personnel groups, students, external stakeholders) participate in the quality work and how is participation supported?

Evaluation: Assess:

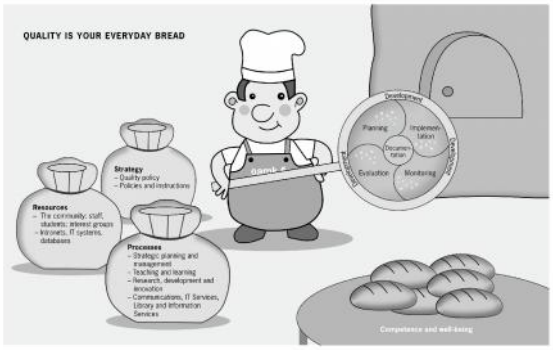
- the functioning of quality management procedures and their impact on the development of research
- the comprehensiveness, usability and utilisation of the information produced by the quality system in the development of research
- the roles and involvement of different parties in terms of quality work, as well as the workload
- the functioning, workload and effectiveness of the quality management of key support services.
- Summary: Summarise, in table format, the key strengths and areas in need of development in quality management.

General features of quality systems

- Most HEIs use **the Deming cycle** as the conceptual framework of quality management
- Almost all institutions are run as **process-based** organisations
- All HEIs that passed the audit have a quality manual or respective document
- Most of the HEIs have hired **specific quality personnel** – active national networks
- As a rule, **the management** in HEIs is **highly committed** to quality work
- **Students** are **widely involved** in the institutions' quality work
- Specific procedures such as internal audits and joint events **to foster quality culture**
- Quality management of research generally quite well taken care of
- **Definition of strategic research profiles and goals, process descriptions, project management guidelines, databases, feedback systems, various internal and external evaluation and rewarding systems, annual reporting, implementation plans**

Specific **quality system brands**

For example, a Quality Bakery of the Oulu University of Applied Sciences:



QA of Research in University of Helsinki

Strategic Plan: profile, strategic objectives and development areas, specifies necessary areas of responsibility and measures to be taken in order to reach the strategic objectives.

- Rank among the 50 leading universities in the world
- Allow sufficient time for research
- Continue the profiling of research
- Allocate resources to both recognised spearhead projects and new initiatives
- Be a responsible social force
- Offer research results for the benefit of society
- Make increased use of research-driven innovations

International Advisory Board, scientific advisory boards on faculty, department and institute levels

Faculties, departments and research stations and independent institutes define their own objectives and key research areas in greater detail. The mission of the faculties is to engage in research and doctoral education of a high international standard.

Research Affairs in Central Administration collaborates closely with the faculties and independent institutes in preparing the guidelines that steer and support research at the University.

Research Funding Services, Capacity Building in Exploitation and Research Funding, Legal Service and Business Collaboration, Innovation services.

Research Council: research policy, research careers, research infrastructures, allocations of university funds, prioritisation of external funding, focus areas and doctoral education with Academic Affairs Council.

The Research Infrastructure Committee: preparation of guidelines research infrastructure policy, priorisation of the centrally managed funding allocation for research infrastructures, applications addressed to external funders.

The Innovation Committee: assists the Board and the rector the in innovation activities and financing of research spin-offs.

Faculty level: Research process descriptions, project management guidelines, as well as personnel welfare guidelines in place. Publications, expert assignments and societal activities are documented in the University's **TUHAT Research Database**.

Quality and success indicators:

- The amount of ERC funding and the number of ERC projects
- The ratio of national competitive research funding to the University's overall funding
- The number of level 3 scientific publications
- The number of Academy research fellows and professors
- The time spent on earning a doctorate (median)

The status and state of research is investigated annually in connection with **annual reporting**. The research **is evaluated every six years** in connection with the research assessments of the University of Helsinki by **international peers**, discipline-specific evaluations conducted by the Academy of Finland, the evaluation statements of peer reviewers, FINEEC.

Quality management of reseach

- The institutions in both sectors define strategic research profiles, describe their processes, put project management guidelines in place, take care of the research infrastructure as well as personnel welfare and gather feedback from personnel, students and external partners.
- Publishing in high-quality publication forums and success in national and international competition for research funding serve as efficient indicators of the quality of research.
- For example, universities of applied sciences have appropriate procedures for integrating research, education and working life; this is something that universities could really benefit from.
- Universities, in turn, have long-established procedures for evaluating the quality of research, which universities of applied sciences could utilize as well.

Thank you for your attention!