



FINNISH EDUCATION  
EVALUATION CENTRE

# AUDIT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF TURKU 2015

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Dan Derricott  
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# ABSTRACT



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## **Authors**

Jari Niemelä, Fiona Crozier, Christian Buettner, Dan Derricott, Merja Saarela, Sirpa Moitus & Matti Kajaste

## **Abstract**

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The Finnish Education Evaluation Centre has conducted an audit of the University of Turku. Based on the audit report, the Higher Education Evaluation Committee has decided to require the institution to undergo a re-audit. In its current state the quality system of University of Turku does not fulfil the national criteria set for the quality management of higher education institutions, and thus the system cannot be said to correspond to the European quality assurance principles and recommendations for higher education institutions.

The object of the audit was the quality system that the University of Turku has developed based on its own needs and goals. The freely selected audit target chosen by the university was Support resources/practices to enhance student engagement. The following were regarded as key strengths of the quality system:

1. The atmosphere and quality culture is supportive of quality work, and the level of commitment of many of the actors has a positive impact on the continuous development of the quality work.
2. The Teaching and Learning Council is a dynamic body and one which provides leadership within quality management and has evidently developed and implemented projects relating to the quality system.
3. The introduction of student feedback as a core element of quality management strengthens the quality management of degree programmes.

Among others, the following recommendations were given to the University of Turku:

1. The University should consider an institutional framework of principles for the operation of its quality management procedures which will both assist with institutional oversight and allow for flexibility within the different disciplines and faculties/departments.
2. The University should consider periodically reviewing the quality system as a whole on a 5-7 year cycle. This should involve scrutiny of all parts of the system in order to ensure that the overall system is functioning effectively and to maximise the impact of what is going on so that the whole University can benefit.
3. The University should consider reviewing its curricula every three to four years, to allow a full bachelor's cycle to be completed, would allow for a more holistic review, albeit with smaller changes continuing to be made as they are required between reviews.

The re-audit will concentrate on the development of the quality system (audit target 3), societal impact and regional development work (audit target 4c) and on the quality system as a whole (audit target 6).

**Keywords**

Evaluation, audit, quality system, quality management, quality, higher education institutions, university

# TIIVISTELMÄ

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## **Julkaisija**

Kansallinen koulutuksen arviointikeskus

## **Julkaisun nimi**

Turun yliopiston auditointi 2015

## **Tekijät**

Jari Niemelä, Fiona Crozier, Christian Buettner, Dan Derricott, Merja Saarela, Sirpa Moitus & Matti Kajaste

## **Tiivistelmä**

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Kansallinen koulutuksen arviointikeskus on toteuttanut Turun yliopiston auditoinnin. Auditointiraporttiin perustuen Korkeakoulujen arviointijaosto edellyttää yliopistolta uusinta-auditointia. Turun yliopiston laatujärjestelmä ei täytä korkeakoulujen laadunhallinnalle asetettuja kansallisia kriteereitä eikä sen näin ollen voida sanoa vastaavan eurooppalaisia korkeakoulujen laadunhallinnan periaatteita ja suosituksia.

Auditoinnin kohteena oli Turun yliopiston laatujärjestelmä, jonka yliopisto on kehittännyt omista lähtökohdistaan ja tavoitteidensa mukaisesti. Yliopiston valitsema vapaavalintainen auditointikohde oli Opintoihin kiinnittämisen keinot ja käytännöt. Laatujärjestelmän keskeisinä vahvuuksina pidetään:

1. Turun yliopiston henki ja laatukulttuuri tukevat laatutyötä. Monien toimijoiden sitoutumisella on positiivinen vaikutus laatutyön jatkuvaan kehittämiseen.
2. Opintoasiainneuvosto on dynaaminen elin, joka tuo johtajuutta laadunhallintaan. Se on selvästi kehittännyt ja vienyt eteenpäin useita laatujärjestelmän kannalta tärkeitä hankkeita.
3. Opiskelijapalautteen nostaminen laadunhallinnan keskiöön vahvistaa koulutusohjelmien laadunhallintaa.

Turun yliopistolle esitetään muun muassa seuraavia kehittämissuosituksia:

1. Turun yliopiston tulisi vahvistaa laadunhallintansa periaatteita. Se kehittäisi samalla organisaation laadunhallinnan johtamista kokonaisuutena sekä mahdollistaisi riittävän vapausasteen yksilöllisiin ratkaisuihin eri oppiaineissa, tiedekunnissa ja laitoksilla.
2. Yliopiston tulisi arvioida laatujärjestelmänsä kokonaisuutena 5-7 vuoden välein. Arvioinnin tulisi käsittää järjestelmän kaikki osat kokonaisuuden toiminnan varmistamiseksi sekä vaikuttavuuden vahvistamiseksi.
3. Turun yliopiston tulisi arvioida kaikki opetussuunnitelmansa 3-4 vuoden välein kokonaisen kandidaatin tutkinnon suorittamisen näkökulmasta. Pienempiä muutoksia voitaisiin tehdä myös arviointien välillä.

Uusinta-auditointi kohdistuu korkeakoulun laatujärjestelmän kehittämiseen (auditointikohde 3), yhteiskunnalliseen vaikuttavuuteen ja aluekehitystyöhön (auditointikohde 4c) sekä laatujärjestelmän kokonaisuuteen (auditointikohde 6).

#### **Avainsanat**

Arviointi, auditointi, laatujärjestelmä, laadunhallinta, laatu, korkeakoulut, yliopisto

# SAMMANDRAG

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## **Utgivare**

Nationella centret för utbildningsutvärdering NCU

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## **Författare**

Jari Niemelä, Fiona Crozier, Christian Buettner, Dan Derricott, Merja Saarela, Sirpa Moitus & Matti Kajaste

## **Sammandrag**

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Nationella centret för utbildningsutvärdering har utfört en auditering av Åbo universitet. Utgående från auditeringsrapporten, har Sektionen för utvärdering av högskolorna beslutat kräva att högskolan genomgår en omauditering. För närvarande uppfyller Åbo universitets kvalitetssystem inte de kriterier för kvalitetshantering som ställts upp för högskolorna på nationell nivå, och därför kan kvalitetssystemen inte anses motsvara de europeiska principerna och rekommendationerna för högskolornas för kvalitetssäkring.

Föremålet för auditeringen var Åbo universitets kvalitetssystem, som universitetet tagit fram utifrån sina egna utgångspunkter och mål. Auditeringsobjektet, som universitetet kunde fritt välja, var stödresurserna/rutinerna för att stärka de studerandes engagemang. Kvalitetssystemets viktigaste styrkor är:

1. Atmosfären och kvalitetskulturen stödjer kvalitetsarbetet och det engagemang som många av aktörerna uppvisar har en positiv effekt på det kontinuerliga utvecklandet av kvalitetsarbetet.
2. Rådet för studieärenden är ett dynamiskt organ som tillför ledarskap inom kvalitetshantering och som tydligt tagit fram och genomfört flera projekt i anknytning till kvalitetssystemet.
3. Att införa respons från studerande som ett kärnelement i kvalitetshandlingen bidrar till att förstärka kvalitetshandlingen i utbildningsprogrammen.



Åbo universitet ges bland annat följande rekommendationer för vidareutveckling:

1. Åbo universitet borde förstärka principerna för kvalitetshanteringen. Detta skulle utveckla ledningen av kvalitetshanteringen och samtidigt ge en viss flexibilitet för individuella lösningar i olika läroämnen samt vid fakulteter/institutioner.
2. Universitetet bör överväga att utvärdera sitt kvalitetssystem vart 5:e–7:e år. Utvärderingen borde omfatta en noggrann granskning av systemets alla delar för att säkerställa att systemet i sin helhet fungerar effektivt och för att maximera effekterna av det som pågår så att det främjar hela universitetet.
3. Åbo universitet bör överväga att utvärdera sina undervisningsplan vart 3:e–4:e år från ett helhetsperspektiv, som omfattar kandidatexamen i sin helhet. Mindre justeringar kunde även göras mellan utvärderingarna.

Omauditeringen kommer att fokusera på utvecklandet av kvalitetssystemet (auditeringsobjekt 3), samhällelig influens och regionutvecklingsarbete (auditeringsobjekt 4c) och kvalitetssystemet som helhet (auditeringsobjekt 6).

Nyckelord

Utvärdering, auditering, kvalitetssystem, kvalitetshandtering, kvalitet, högskola, universitet

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# Description of the audit process

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## 1.1 Audit targets

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The target of the audit is the quality system that Turku University has developed based on its own needs and goals. The focus of the audit is on the procedures and processes that the institution uses to maintain, develop and enhance the quality of its operations. In accordance with the principle of enhancement-led evaluation, the higher education institution's (HEI) objectives, content of its activities or results are not evaluated in the audit. The aim is to help the HEI to identify strengths, good practices and areas in need of development in its operations.

The FINEEC audits evaluate whether the institution's quality system meets the national criteria (Appendix 1), and whether it corresponds to the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area<sup>1</sup> (also known as ESG). Furthermore, the audit evaluates how well the quality system meets strategic and operational management needs, as well as the quality management of the HEI's basic duties and the extent to which it is comprehensive and effective. In addition, the audits focus on evaluating the institution's Quality Policy, the development of the quality system, and how effective and dynamic the system is.

The Turku University chose "*Support Resources/Practices to enhance Student engagement*" as its optional audit target. As samples of its degree education, Turku University chose the education leading to bachelor's and master's degrees in Psychology and Doctoral training at the Department of Biology. For the third sample of degree education, the Audit Team chose the Global Innovation Management study programme.

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<sup>1</sup> Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area is available at [www.enqa.eu/pubs\\_esg.lasso](http://www.enqa.eu/pubs_esg.lasso).

The audit targets of the University of Turku:

1. The Quality Policy of the higher education institution
2. Strategic and operations management
3. Development of the quality system
4. Quality management of the higher education institution's basic duties:
  - a. Degree education
  - b. Research, development and innovation activities (RDI), as well as artistic activities
  - c. Societal impact and regional development work<sup>2</sup>
  - d. Optional audit target: Entrepreneurship
5. Samples of degree education: degree programmes:
  - i. Education leading to bachelor's and master's degrees in Psychology
  - ii. Doctoral training at the Department of Biology
  - iii. Degree Programme chosen by the Audit Team - Global Innovation Management
6. The quality system as a whole.

A set of criteria that is based on a scale of four development stages of quality management (absent, emerging, developing and advanced) is employed in the audit. The development stages have been specified for each audit target and they are determined individually for each audit target. The optional audit target is not taken into account when evaluating whether the audit will pass.

## 1.2 Implementation of the audit

The audit is based on the basic material and Self-Evaluation Report submitted by the University of Turku as well as an audit visit to the institution on 28-30 October 2014. The Audit Team also had access to electronic materials, which are essential in terms of the institution's quality management. The key phases of the audit process and the timetable are included in Appendix 2 of this report.

As chosen by Turku University, the audit was conducted in English by an international Audit Team. Prior to the appointment of the Audit Team, Turku University was given the opportunity to comment on the team's composition, especially from the perspective of disqualification.

The Audit Team:

Professor Jari Niemelä, University of Helsinki (Chair)  
Director Fiona Crozier, University College Cork, Ireland (Vice-chair)  
Advisor to the Mayor Christian Büttner, City of Nuremberg, Germany

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<sup>2</sup> Including social responsibility, continuing education, open university of applied sciences education, as well as paid-services education.

Student Engagement Officer Dan Derricott, University of Lincoln, UK  
Research Director Merja Saarela, Häme University of Applied Sciences

Senior Advisor Matti Kajaste, FINEEC, acted as Project Manager and secretary of the Audit Team and Chief

Planning Officer Sirpa Moitus, FINEEC, as the backup for the Project Manager.

The audit visit to the University of Turku was conducted as a three-day visit. The purpose of the audit visit was to verify and supplement the observations made based on the HEI's quality system audit material. The programme of the visit is included as Appendix 3 of this report. The Audit Team drafted a report based on the material accumulated during the evaluation and on the analysis of that material. The audit report was written collaboratively by the Audit Team members and by drawing on the expertise of each team member. Turku University was given the opportunity to check the factual information in the report before the report was published.

# 2

## Organisation of the University of Turku

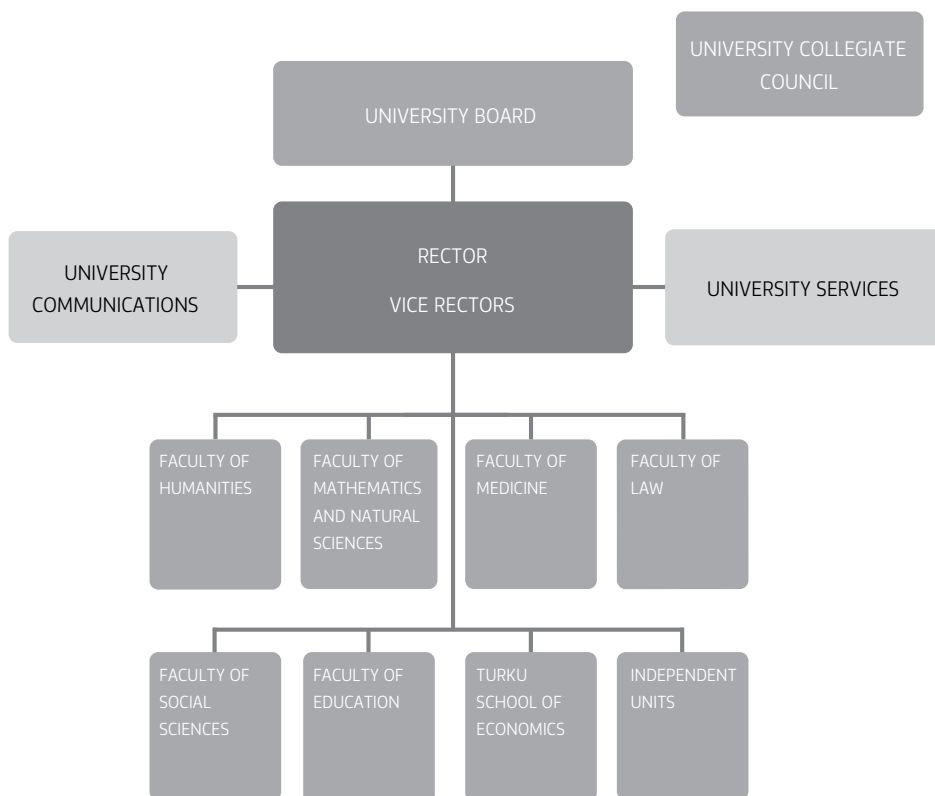
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The Finnish higher education system consists of two complementary sectors: universities and universities of applied sciences. Universities conduct academic research and offer education based on it, while the universities of applied sciences offer more work-related education as well as conducting research and development that support education and regional development. Institutions in both sectors receive most of their funding from the Ministry of Education and Culture, based on their performance. The activities of higher education institutions are governed by four-year performance agreements with the ministry.

Universities offer bachelor's degrees (180 ECTS) as first-cycle degrees and master's degrees (120 ECTS) in the second cycle. After having obtained a relevant master's degree, students can apply for a Doctoral degree. A pre-doctoral Licentiate's degree may be taken before the Doctoral degree.

The University of Turku was established in 1920 and is a university under the Finnish Universities Act. The University has 20,227 students and 3,106 FTE staff members. Turku University is organised into seven faculties as described in Figure 1. The Faculties are:

- Humanities
- Mathematics and Natural Sciences
- Medicine
- Law
- Social Sciences
- Education
- Turku School of Economics



**Figure 1.** Organisation of the University of Turku

Turku University has operations in many parts of Finland. Education is mainly focused on three campuses: Turku, Pori and Rauma.

**Table 1.** Students and staff at the University of Turku

STUDENTS (FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT) *	NUMBER
Bachelor's Degree	7,572
Master's Degree	3,898
Doctoral Degree	856
DEGREES AWARDED *	NUMBER
Bachelor's Degree	1,461
Master's Degree	1,633
Doctoral Degree	162
STAFF (FTE) *	
Teaching and Research Staff (Faculty)	1,757.6
Other staff	1,380

\* Statistics of the Ministry of Education and Culture 2013.



# 3

## The Quality Policy of the higher education institution

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*The objectives of the quality system are clear and goal-setting is inclusive. Many of the actors at different levels of the University show clear commitment to the quality work. The division of responsibilities functions relatively well, but the role of the Quality Contact Persons should be redefined to better enhance quality work. Key persons responsible for quality management (Rectorate, Quality Managers, Quality Contact Persons) are committed but there is variation in the degree of engagement at the faculty and department levels. The University level quality manual is a comprehensive collection of guidelines and rules, but it fails to describe quality management procedures as a system. Not all the faculties have an operations manual and the existing ones are of varying quality. Information needs of the University's personnel, students and stakeholders are taken into account in the University level documentation, but there is room for improvement at the faculty and department levels. Information produced by quality management is systematically documented (e.g. the new data warehouse) within the University but needs to be better communicated to external stakeholders. The Quality Policy is at the **developing** stage.*

### 3.1 Objectives of the quality system

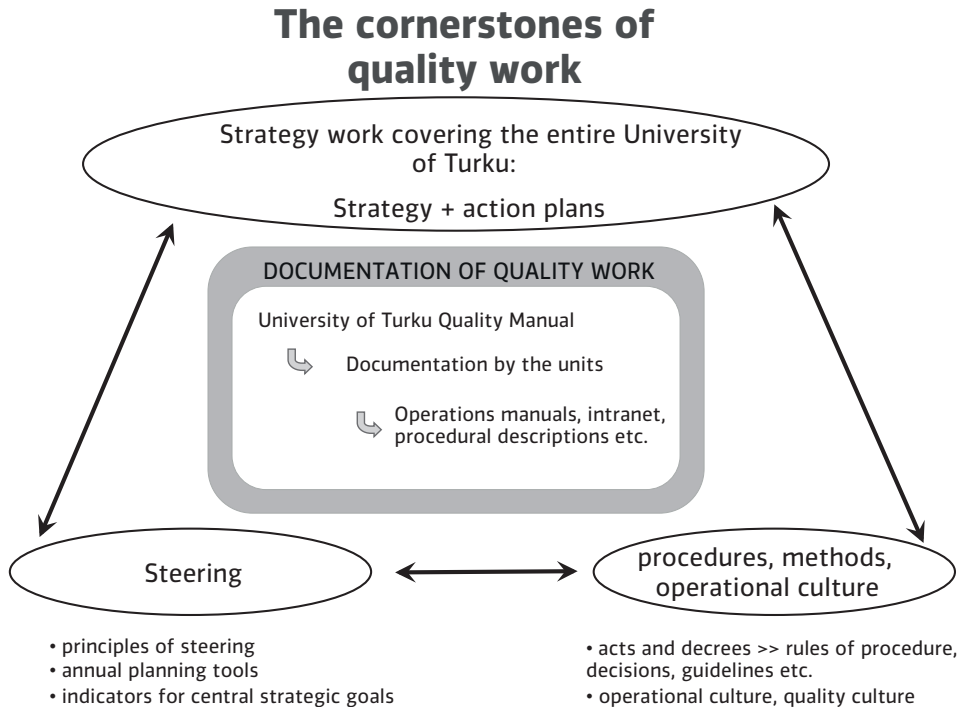
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The Quality Policy of the University describes the principles and objectives of quality management that are independent from the overall University strategy. The quality system is depicted in Figure 2. Interviews conducted during the audit visit revealed that the Quality Policy is functional and understood by most of the interviewees in leading positions. Thus, the Quality Policy of the University provides a basis for the development of the quality system.

According to the Audit Team's assessment the objectives of the quality system are clearly documented and support the strategy of the University. Interviews verified that quality work is indeed used to lead and manage the University at the highest level. An example is the way in which research evaluations are used to guide the prioritization of research areas. However, it is less clear how quality management is used to support the implementation of strategy at the faculty and department levels.

The University of Turku has made the decision to embed quality management deep in its everyday operations. Although there is evidence that quality work is used to lead the University, this embeddedness makes it challenging to lead and govern through quality management. On the one hand, this integration means that quality management is an integral part of annual planning and other administrative processes, but on the other hand it implies that quality management becomes rather invisible to staff and students. Furthermore, as faculties have the freedom to decide whether or not to have an operations manual, there is significant variability among faculties in this respect. These problems are acknowledged by the University's leaders and the issue was discussed during the audit visit (see also Chapter 5).

Although it is not clear from the documentation how the objectives of the quality system were set and how inclusive the process has been, interviews indicated that many different parties were being involved in the goal-setting. For instance, the Extended Management Group (consisting of the Rectorate, Deans and heads of certain administrative units) took part. Also students participated in building the quality system, while interviews with external stakeholders indicated that they were not involved. The Audit Team would therefore recommend that the role of external stakeholders in quality management is defined and that they are better engaged in the quality work (see also Chapter 6.4.).



**Figure 2.** The cornerstones of quality work

## 3.2 Division of responsibilities

According to the documentation the rector has the overall responsibility for the quality system. In practice, however, quality issues are the responsibility of the Vice-Rector for education who chairs the steering group for the University's quality work. The Quality Manager of the University is responsible for coordinating and developing operations related to quality management. The Rector and the Vice-Rectors have demonstrated their commitment to the quality work by personally making annual visits to every department. At the faculty level quality work is supervised by the dean and at the departmental level by the Head of Department. A Quality Contact Person has been appointed to each faculty, department and support unit. As the division of responsibility of quality work follows the normal organization of the University (University, faculty, department), there is a link between quality management and other operations. However, apart from the University Rectorate and the Quality Manager, the leadership of quality work at the different organizational levels should be strengthened. Although Deans and Department Heads are responsible for quality work in their units, there was a considerable degree of variation in their level of engagement. The Audit Team recommends that powers and responsibilities – ownership – of the quality work be clearly defined at the different organizational levels.

The role of the large network of Quality Contact Persons (ca. 100 persons) is somewhat unclear, as acknowledged in the Self-Evaluation Report and verified by the interviews. Therefore, the Audit Team recommends that Quality Contact Persons be better integrated into the quality system so that they can better enhance quality work and share good practices. For instance, the network could be divided into smaller thematic or organizational groups that meet periodically.

The role of the Extended Management Group in quality work could be clarified. In particular, collaboration between the Rectorate and the Deans in quality-related issues could be supported by the Extended Management Group. In addition, the role of Research Council and Teaching and Learning Council in quality work should be strengthened. These bodies have a lot of expertise in issues related to quality management but their specific role appears unspecified.

## 3.3 Documentation and communicativeness of the quality system

The main principles of the quality system are presented in the University's Quality Manual, which is a compilation of existing documents (e.g. Rules of Procedure, Rector's decisions, internal guidelines). According to the Audit Team's assessment, the Quality Manual thoroughly describes various rules and regulations, but it fails to present quality management procedures as a system. For instance, the various procedures to monitor research outputs and outcome of education are presented in the Quality Manual but it is not evident how the information collected is used to promote quality. The Audit Team recommends that the Quality Manual be developed to describe which mechanisms and procedures are used to promote quality and how they form a quality system.

According to the Self-Evaluation Report, faculties are responsible for their own instructions that complement the University-level quality guidelines. Currently, intranet and public web pages are the primary sources for quality documentation, although some units still maintain distinct operations manuals. The use of the intranet has resulted in quality-related information often becoming indistinguishable from the units' regular operations, instructions and guidelines. The difficulty in identifying the quality documentation of the units is discussed in the Self-Evaluation Report. During the audit visit it was acknowledged by the University leaders that relying heavily on the intranet for operational guidelines and rules makes quality work invisible (see also section 3.1.). The relative variability of quality documentation at the faculty level and its variation in quantity and quality was verified by the Audit Team by checking the internet and intranet sites of the faculties. The Audit Team recommends that the quality system should be developed to cover all the operations and administrative levels of the University. Furthermore, the Audit Team would urge the University to consider having all units to maintain their own quality or operations manuals on the intranet in order to make quality work more visible at the level of faculties.

As stated in the Self-Evaluation Report, quality documentation can also be used as material for the orientation of new employees and to promote equal treatment of the personnel, students, and partners, thereby enhancing well-being and quality of operations. The Audit Team found that the Quality Manual of the University provides ample material for these purposes, but again, the faculty-level materials are not as useful.

Overall, the Audit Team found that quality documentation is accessible and usable at the University level for the different parties within the University. However, the quality system and its functions need to be better communicated to staff and students, and in particular to external stakeholders. Interviews by the Audit Team revealed that external stakeholders were largely unaware of the quality management procedures of the University.

### **3.4 Quality culture of the higher education institution**

According to the Self-Evaluation Report, quality culture is synonymous with operational culture and it is one of the three cornerstones of the University's quality management. Operational culture is defined as the atmosphere for developing operations and commitment of individuals and the collective. The Self-Evaluation Report states that the operational culture of the University has been developed to be more communicative and dialogic during the past few years. Examples of this include the establishment of the Extended Management Group, open meetings organised on current topics and the management's blog on the intranet. Although possibilities for open dialogue have increased, it is stated in the Self-Evaluation Report that the culture of participation could be developed further. For example, comments on the management's blog are quite rare, even though the blog is one of the most visited pages on the intranet.

During the site visit the Audit Team found that the atmosphere at the University was supportive of quality work and its further development. The Audit Team was pleased with the state of the quality culture and saw evidence that it was considered important by staff and students. For instance, there is an obvious sense of open dialogue and willingness to use feedback which has a positive impact on quality management. One notable aspect is that students were integrated into quality work and they have equal status in the development of the quality system. The Audit Team considers the integration of quality culture across the whole staff and student body to be a feature of good practice. Overall, the Audit Team was impressed by the level of commitment many of the actors in the departmental level had for the continuous development of their work.

# Strategic and operations management

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*The quality system of the University of Turku has linkages to the strategic and operations management. The communication and interaction between the University Board and the top administration, and also the management of the units and faculties works well and has clear structures. The quality system and the information it produces serve strategic goals and operations management well, and there is evidence that the information is put to use. However, the structure and communication on the operational level is not always clear or visible and should be revised in some parts.*

*Also in terms of management, the system works on the different organizational levels and the managers involved in operations management are committed to joint quality work. Thus, quality management is deeply embedded in the structures, to the extent that it becomes largely invisible. The strategic and operations management is at the **developing stage**.*

## 4.1 Linkage of the quality system with strategic and operations management

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The management of the University of Turku is based on strategies and operating principles at all levels and units. The current strategy for the years 2013 – 2016 will be implemented through annually defined action plans. The concrete definition of the procedure is determined in the principles of steering, latest version of which was approved by the University Board in 2014.

The strategic planning also includes strategy action plans, strategic policy lines, a financial framework, and the agreement procedure with the Ministry of Education and Culture. The strategic planning at the University level will be concretized through yearly defined targets and through the operational planning on the University, faculty and unit level. The annual plan contains the strategic framework, targets, measures and the resources. The strategy 2013–2016 involves the target dimensions (research, education, societal interaction) and requirement factors (staff and networks, finances, infrastructures, smoother operations). The University describes the target dimensions very clearly and categorizes, for example, the research targets in areas of strength and

areas at a developmental stage. UTU defined central measures for these targets in the strategy paper. The University has also set individual indicators to measure and to evaluate these areas. The implementation and the monitoring will be supported by financial monitoring and annual and interim reports and statistics. Furthermore, internal evaluations and external audits and accreditations will be used.

The systematic, top-down strategic steering process is clear at the level of the University Board and the rectors. The board is well linked to the top administration of the University. To stay in contact with the operational level the rectors also conduct yearly visits to the faculties and units with questions posed beforehand to staff and students. On the one hand, this is a good opportunity to receive and to give feedback, and on the other hand it is a good possibility for self-reflection for operational management on the grassroots level. These annual departmental meetings follow the same agenda which is issued to the departments in advance and may reinforce information gathered through the annual planning and reporting process.

A further level of communication is provided by the Teaching and Learning Council, the steering group for the university's quality work and the Quality Management Contact Persons. The Teaching and Learning Council described its role in the University's quality management system as being to recognise and disseminate good practice and to provide a forum for staff and student representatives that develops, tests and implements University-wide procedures. It receives the annual planning reports which assist it to decide on new procedures, projects etc. The Audit Team saw evidence of this role in the systematic development and evaluation of the quality system through, for example, the development of the system for responding to student surveys which was planned, implemented and monitored by the Teaching and Learning Council. Extensive work was carried out and the matter was extensively considered over a period of two years from 2012-2014. The outcome of this analysis is that faculties will be asked to provide more granular information in future, thus closing the loop of action and follow-up. The Teaching and Learning Council was also the forum through which the two-year cycle for the curriculum was developed.

The Audit Team believes that the Teaching and Learning Council is a dynamic body and one which has evidently developed and implemented projects relating to the quality system. An improved communication line between it and the Quality Management Contact Persons could do much to publicise the quality enhancement or improvement side of the quality system through more effective dissemination of good practice and more understanding of the development and implementation of new projects.

In addition to the Teaching and Learning Council, the Research Council plays an important role in quality management. The Audit Team saw evidence of its involvement in the development of the quality system by steering the way in which the quality of research activities is monitored and managed (see also Chapter 6.3). This demonstrates the University's ability to develop the quality system in a meaningful way based on existing organisational structures, such as the two Councils for Teaching and Learning and Research.

The University acknowledges that the steering group for the University's quality work and the Quality Management Contact Persons both struggle to find a role in the quality management system (see also Chapter 3). It states that this is partly to do with the fact that the intranet is now the key means of providing documentation related to quality. The Self-Evaluation Report states that, "A change in the management culture of the University has strengthened and clarified the responsibilities of the units' management." The Audit Team found that this has led to less need for the Quality Contact Persons to check documentation relating to the quality system and to less clarity surrounding their role.

## 4.2 Functioning of the quality system at different organisational levels

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The audit material and the interviews indicated that the Rector and the Board are responsible and very interested in achieving high levels of quality and clear structures of quality management at the University. Also the Heads of Departments, Deans and the Quality Contact Persons in the faculties and units have a significant role, but they seem to have a slightly different understanding of quality management. Reasons for these distinctions lie in the differences between the units, their procedures, their restrictions by law, and national or international standards. Also understanding of quality at the University, i.e. "we do quality in our daily work" has resulted in quality management being very well embedded in the strategic and operations management structure, even to the extent that it has become largely invisible.

The Audit Team is of the view that the University's governance and communication structure could do more to facilitate the quality system and in particular in making it more visible. In its Self-Evaluation Report, the University acknowledges that one of the dangers of making quality a part of everyday work is that it becomes unrecognisable for what it is (see also Chapter 3). The governance structure and the Rectorate's annual meetings with departments ensure that quality is regularly discussed at different levels of the University. However, for example, the deans of the University do not seem to feel they have a sufficient role in the quality system and were unsure about certain processes within the system such as final approval of new study programmes. There was also a lack of awareness amongst many staff about the outcomes of the previous audit in 2008. The Audit Team was provided with a document that set out the recommendations from the previous audit report. However, it was unclear to the team what precise action had been taken against each recommendation. The Audit Team could try to draw its own conclusions on how far the University had responded to the recommendations, but it would have been useful to have a statement against each one, setting out how far the University felt that it had succeeded in responding.

The Audit Team believes that all committees and groups have an active role in quality work, but that a stronger link between University level committees and groups, and the faculties and departments, is necessary with regard to the quality system. There is evidence that communication at the top levels of the University is facilitated by cross-representation on various committees and by the presence of the Extended



Management Group which includes the Deans. However, the Audit Team saw less evidence of communication reaching to the level of Head of Department and below thus reinforcing the University's own concern that its quality work might be invisible. The Quality Management Contact Persons have the potential to provide a significant resource to the faculties and departments in ensuring that the cycle of communication about quality management is more systematic.

Improvements in communication about the system should also lead to better institutional oversight of the variation that currently exists within and between faculties and departments. The University is aware that the considerable variation in practice is a challenge to quality management. For example, the Teaching and Learning Council is aware that the final paper summary and analysis of the information provided by faculties through the annual reporting system on the student feedback system indicated variation in collection methods and in the kind of information provided. Response to and utilisation of survey information also varied. This matter is also picked up in section 5.2 below.

The Audit Team recommends that the University consider the effectiveness of its communications in order to improve the visibility of the quality system, awareness of quality work and enhance the development of the system. In particular:

- a. reconsider the role of the Quality Manager, who attends institutional level meetings and the role of Quality Management Contact Persons to see if communication regarding the quality system and planned developments can be improved;
- b. consider the communication lines between the Quality Manager and the Quality Management Contact Persons and
- c. in the light of the above, reconsider the role of the Quality Steering Group.

The Audit Group recommends that the University considers system of follow-up to monitor the use of feedback in its units. The University should also develop standard measures and indicators to monitor the quality of its operations, and to reduce the amount of separate procedures (for example: student feedback surveys, agreed inquiry periods, etc.) in units and faculties. This would reduce the workload of the Quality Manager and Quality Contact Persons and improve the comparability of the information produced by the quality system.

# Development of the quality system

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*The University has well-functioning procedures for evaluating and developing the quality system. It is able to identify the system's strengths and areas in need of development. The development of the quality system is systematic. However, aspects of the quality system, for example, the introduction of more externality, could be strengthened and the role of some of the actors, for example, the Quality Manager, could be strengthened and clarified. This would improve communication and allow for further dissemination of developments and good practice. Overall, the development of the quality system at the University of Turku is at the **developing stage**.*

## 5.1 Procedures for developing the quality system

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The University's Self-Evaluation Report states that, "The objective of quality management is to support and ensure the realisation of the targets and vision set in the University strategy, and to guide the operations with sufficiently exact and real-time monitoring and evaluation information."

The Audit Team was told that the University's Board is responsible for strategic planning, and that operational management comes from the Rectorate, the Management Group and the Extended Management Group. At the time of the audit, the University was in the process of developing a new strategic plan and was awaiting the outcome of the audit to inform its planning (See Chapters 3 and 8 for further information). Whilst the Audit Team understood the University's desire to await the outcome of the audit, it felt that this was rather a reactive approach. Very little was said in the Self-Evaluation Report on the matter and interviews during the site visit did not contribute to the matter in any detail.

## 5.2 Development stages of the quality system

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The University sees the development of the quality system as being equivalent to the development of the University management and steering systems. The quality system at the University has been developed over a period of time (the original version of

the Quality Manual was approved in August 2007). Work on the quality system was heavily influenced in 2009/10 by the merger with Turku School of Economics and by structural legislative changes that affected all Finnish universities. These necessitated new rules of procedure and the redrafting of many of the University's processes and guidelines. The introduction of the intranet at this time also impacted greatly on quality work, as it replaced the need for departmental operations manuals. The Self-Evaluation Report states that, "this has been a positive change with respect to the availability and ease of use of information." However, it also recognises that, "...it is difficult to make a reliable analysis of the comprehensiveness of quality documentation and areas that might need more attention." Interviews by the Audit Team confirmed this discrepancy.

In 2011, annual planning was introduced to the steering cycle. The Self-Evaluation Report detailed much of the work carried out through this process on financial matters and human resource planning. Whilst the Audit Team heard more about curriculum development, and approval of programmes during the audit visit, these did not feature clearly in the Self-Evaluation Report. Annual monitoring or any kind of periodic review of academic provision were not discussed in the Self-Evaluation Report. A language plan was developed and implemented in 2011/12 to assist in providing a genuinely international environment.

In 2013, a review to rationalise and streamline administrative and support areas took place. The University acknowledges that this was a difficult process, but felt that appropriate results were achieved by the process. However, it does acknowledge in its Self-Evaluation Report that it is a challenge to develop and implement measures through processes like this without the University community experiencing some uncertainty. The Audit Team met with a group of administrative managers who agreed with the general view that quality management procedures and the information they provide had improved over the last five years or so. At the same time, a project began to make the collection and utilisation of student feedback more systematic.

The University aims to keep disruption to departments caused by quality work to a minimum and feels that its key struggle is to 'balance the elements that are common to all with variation necessitated by the differences between the units.' The report of the previous audit (2008) recommended that, "...there should be a concentrated effort to find ways to effectively assure the quality of decentralised activities." Whilst understanding the University's aim, nonetheless the Audit Team believes that the quality system could benefit from further development to help the University overcome some of the challenges that it acknowledges. Major challenges include the invisibility of the operation of the quality system, ensuring the comprehensiveness of documentation for quality work and the operation of the quality management system in a decentralised and varied environment. Another major challenge is to achieve more coherence in the quality system, thus leading to clearer institutional oversight of operations.

Currently the Quality Manual of the University is mainly a collection of rules and procedures. These may be interpreted and applied in a variety of ways. Whilst there is clear evidence of well-functioning aspects of the quality system (e.g. the student feedback system and the annual reporting process), the Quality Manual does not set out the University's quality system as a unified entity; nor does it describe how the various parts of the system are linked and how they communicate with each other (see also Chapter 3). Staff told the Audit Team that they viewed the Quality Manual as a check-list and that the intranet was of more use. This highlights again the challenge of making the quality system visible to staff, students and external partners.

The Audit Team recommends that the University consider the role and function of the Quality Manual as a means of setting out the Quality Policy as it is linked to the University's vision, mission and strategic goals and as a means of setting out a minimum framework of expectations as to how the system should work.

The Audit Team noted with satisfaction the very comprehensive annual reporting system and also the biennial curriculum development process. It was told by a wide variety of academic staff that the latter is beneficial and that the two-yearly cycle is appropriate for the University. The Audit Team concurs with that view; however, at present, there is no further systematic approach to the review of programmes or disciplines as a whole on a cyclical basis. Currently much information is gathered through various processes and there is evidence that feedback is acted upon. However, the Audit Team believes that it would be beneficial for the University to maintain a regular, external overview of its operations, both academic and administrative and gather information across the University that may prove useful on a thematic basis.

The Audit Team recommends that the University considers periodically reviewing the quality system as a whole on a cycle to be determined (normally 5–7 years). This should involve scrutiny of all parts of the system in order to ensure that the whole system is functioning effectively and to maximise the impact so that the whole University can benefit. The review should include input from experts external to the University and provide an overview of operations.

The Audit Team was interested to know about the extent to which the University seeks the views of those who are external to the University of Turku. Currently, externality is provided by the Board, which told the Audit Team that it saw its role as applying 'external checks and balances' to the work of the University. The University also has relationships with a range of external stakeholders with whom it interacts at different levels and with different outcomes (see also Chapter 6.4). In discussions with various groups of staff, in particular the Teaching and Learning Council, it was acknowledged by staff that external input into the work of the Council and its initiatives and projects would be beneficial.

The Audit Team would suggest that the benefits of externality extend beyond the work of the Teaching and Learning Council and recommends that the University consider

how it might benefit from external input into the work of relevant committees and councils and also into processes such as the curriculum development process. The Audit Team recommends that the University consider staff from other Finnish universities, other relevant Finnish stakeholders and externals who can bring an international dimension to the University's deliberations as a means of providing an additional perspective to its considerations.

Overall, the University of Turku has well-functioning procedures for evaluating and developing the quality system. It is able to identify the system's strengths and areas in need of development and its development is systematic. However, aspects of the system could be strengthened and the role of some of the players in the system could be strengthened and clarified in order to improve communication and allow for further dissemination of developments and good practice.

# Quality management of the HEI's basic duties

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## 6.1 Degree education

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*The University devolves responsibility for managing degree programmes and their quality to its faculties, in line with its approach to quality management. Key components that are used by all faculties are outlined in the Quality Manual. The University also requires each faculty to have an Educational Development Committee to consider matters related to degree programme quality.*

*Overall, the quality of degree education is managed through a collection of functioning procedures and through a quality culture that was clearly evident. This has served the University well but there are several opportunities to make improvements and bring the processes together as a system. These will both help further improve the quality of degree education and help the University assure itself of the quality of degree education. In particular, the University will benefit most from ensuring the information produced by the quality system is more evaluative and draws on a wider range of people. Quality management of degree education is at a **developing** stage.*

### 6.1.1 The objectives for degree education

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The University is pursuing a strategy to deliver 'research-based teaching and a responsible study culture for lifelong learning' by engaging students in a mutually responsible learning process. The University's strategy articulates the features of this as:

- A functional learning process
- Teaching of high quality
- An encouraging and inspiring atmosphere
- Better graduation rates
- Increasing internationalisation
- Graduates to be satisfied with their degrees

The primary focus in the self-evaluation is on speeding up the graduation rate, which in part comes through a commitment to ensuring students achieve 55 credits per academic year. This is partly driven by the University's funding agreement with the Ministry of Education and Culture. This did not feature so prominently in the site visit during discussions with teaching staff and students, but where the Audit Team raised the discussion it was met with mixed opinions of the value and actual priority of such a focus.

### 6.1.2 The functioning of the quality management procedures

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The Audit Team uses the process of approval for new degree programmes as an example of quality management procedures in degree education. The University's Board has ultimate responsibility for the approval of new degree programmes in the fields allowed by the Ministry of Education and Culture. In practice, new programmes are first proposed to the respective Faculty Board, or a designated body, and then reviewed by the University's Teaching and Learning Council before being recommended for final approval by the Board. Programmes are then formally recorded in the University's electronic course database and subsequently marketed to prospective students. The Audit Team found, in discussions with staff, that this process is not always clearly understood and would benefit from clearer communication. There was some ambiguity over the extent to which a programme would need to be modified and deviate from the original specification before it warrants re-approval by the University's Board.

The University uses its steering system, namely the annual planning and reporting tools, to monitor indicators of quality on its degree programmes. These are primarily quantitative indicators such as the number of students graduating per year and the average number of credits achieved per student per year. This data is fed into the University's data warehouse and allows for systematic monitoring at faculty level and by the Extended Management Group and for poor performance to be challenged. Faculties will now also report on student feedback and the actions taking place but this was not fully implemented at the time of the audit.

The University is currently moving towards reviewing its curriculum every two years to allow for a more substantial, reflective and strategic approach. This has been well received by members of the academic community who met with the Audit Team. However, it was not clear how curriculum review fits into the wider quality management system and whether it is informed by annual reporting or would result in programmes requiring re-approval for delivery if they were changed substantially. In order to maximise the impact of curriculum review the Audit Team recommends the University more explicitly requires that it is informed by annual reporting, and to manage the risk associated with changing curricula, the University should articulate the point at which a programme has changed so much that it should be formally approved for delivery by the University. Similarly, the Audit Team recommends the University consider whether reviewing its curriculum every three to four years to allow a full bachelors cycle to be completed, would allow for a more holistic review, albeit with smaller changes continuing to be made as they are required between reviews.

The University's processes encourage a culture of responsiveness and continuous improvement which is positive and has enabled a great deal of progress to be made. There is, however, a lack of more fundamental self-evaluation by departments, faculties and the University outside of this external audit process. Periodic self-evaluation of the quality of degree programmes, which draws on the intermediary annual reports and stakeholder feedback as well as the teaching team's reflections, would allow the University to assure itself that its programmes remain fit for purpose and that its annual quality management systems are working effectively. The departments and senior managers who met with the Audit Team recognised the value of self-evaluation in looking at the bigger picture, identifying strengths and weaknesses, and informing future developments. The Audit Team would recommend that self-evaluation of the quality of degree education and the quality management systems is undertaken by each department's staff and student representatives every three to four years, and that these are discussed with and reviewed by groups of peers in the University, forming a process of periodic review. Self-evaluations and feedback on them can then systematically inform the department's curriculum review work and the University's work to develop the quality management system as a whole. Where curricula are changed significantly during review, and this should be encouraged where it is necessary, or have changed significantly through the collective impact of several minor changes, then the programme should be submitted for re-approval to at least the Teaching and Learning Council.

There are instances of varied practice between faculties which are sometimes unhelpful for students. One example is the variation demonstrated through the Audit Team's discussion of HOPS (personal study plans) which showed that these were understood and used highly variably from once in a student's time at the University to twice a year to ensure that the plan was still on track. Students in those very prescribed areas of study often failed to see the value of HOPS at all. A core requirement for minimum use may assist faculties and students in understanding the value of HOPS whilst leaving some room for variation within the different disciplines.

### **6.1.3 The information produced by the quality system**

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The use of student feedback, collected systematically through institutional surveys, to monitor and improve the quality of degree programmes is good, having been improved a great deal recently. The University recognises that there is still more work to be done on securing the implementation of a refreshed approach and is using the annual planning and reporting system to help achieve this. This is an effective use of one part of the University's quality management system to enhance another part and the Audit Team is reassured that the staff recognise the importance of this development. To enjoy the full benefit of running an institutional survey of student feedback the Audit Team recommends the University, through its Teaching and Learning Council, consider the themes across all faculties and use this to inform further strategic improvements to the curriculum and wider student experience; there was some evidence that this may happen, but it could be more robust and systematic. This could be built upon further by working in partnership with students to implement solutions to identified weaknesses and to collaboratively develop the curriculum and pedagogies.



The introduction of student evaluation data to annual reporting represents an important step towards using more qualitative information in the monitoring and continuous improvement of programmes. There is currently limited use of peer-review, whereby academic peers from other departments, faculties or institutions act as critical friends to monitor and recommend improvements to pedagogies, curriculum and assessment. Similarly, there is not a wholly systematic approach to engaging external stakeholders, such as employers or representative industry bodies, in the evaluation and development of degree programmes outside of those areas where this is required to achieve professional accreditation. Any review of the quality of education is therefore usually internal to the faculty and features no element of external input.

The Audit Team recommends that the University introduces peer-review and systematises the involvement of external stakeholders, together with the evolving use of student feedback, to make the system of monitoring and improving the quality of degree programmes more robust and productive.

#### 6.1.4 The involvement of different parties in the quality work

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Across the provision of degree programmes as a whole, the University's Teaching and Learning Council demonstrates leadership in making wholesale improvements to the systems used to manage quality and directly to quality itself. Members of the Council describe its role as reaching decisions on teaching and learning that are 'acceptable to each of the faculties'. This consensus-led approach is useful for ensuring each faculty is brought into decisions but may also slow down the rate of progress and limit the potential of the Council to lead in this area. The Audit Team recommends the Extended Management Group and the Teaching and Learning Council itself consider how the role of the Council can be further strengthened to allow it to fulfil its potential and more ambitiously pursue the implementation of the University's strategic goals on education (see also Chapter 3). Furthermore, the Audit Team recommends the Teaching & Learning Council consider how it knows whether its decision make an impact in practice, which could come through its own reporting structures and through the quality management system. One example of where the Teaching and Learning Council has demonstrated such leadership is on the use of student feedback to evaluate the quality of education.

The use of student surveys is one strand of the University's approach to working with students although there are many other less formal methods, and these contribute to a healthy working relationship with the student body overall. This is particularly strong where the Students' Union is involved and demonstrates impressive leadership in improving the student experience. To further develop this, and to build on good practice in the Extended Management Group, the Audit Team recommends the University evolves how faculties and support services work with students beyond a consultative approach towards one based on partnership and co-production of quality assurance and enhancement.

### 6.1.5 Support services key to degree education

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Each support service maintains relationships with faculties and supports quality management via day-to-day business relationships. This practice varies between support services and between faculties, however, it is clear that some areas are taking steps to bolster this, such as The Library and ICT who have developed a joint strategy, and the Planning and Development Department through the Extended Management Group and their work on providing and analysing data.

The variability of practice in quality management means that, apart from the Planning and Development Department, the Audit Team could not identify systems for managing the quality of degree education where support services systematically play a role. Thus, the Audit Team recommends that the University gives further consideration to this area, particularly in terms of assuring the quality of learning resources and learning environments - both physical and digital.

The University's approach to managing the quality of its degree programme education is symptomatic of its wider approach to quality management whereby there are several components which do ensure a quality learning experience. However, they appear to operate separately and could be strengthened by being brought together as a system with each component having a distinct function and feeding into other components.

### 6.2.1 Education leading to bachelor's and master's degrees in Psychology

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*The quality management of the education leading to bachelor's and master's degrees in Psychology is systematic and supports planning and implementation of education in an excellent way. Based on the audit material, Self-Evaluation Report and interviews, the degree programme is well structured, and the development of education and quality management is based on active self-reflection and available real-time information on the progress and results of education. There is evidence that the information collected has an impact on the implementation of the education.*

*The quality management of the education leading to bachelor's and master's degrees in Psychology is at an **advanced** stage.*

#### **Planning of education in Psychology**

The faculty is responsible for the quality of teaching, education and its monitoring according to the University strategy. Based on the Self-Evaluation Report and interviews, the Psychology Unit at the University has a team-based form of management. The four teams are based on the thematic subfields of the field of study: cognitive and neuropsychology; developmental and social psychology; clinical and personality psychology; and methodology. Each team has two representatives appointed by the student organisation Fobia ry. Teams have important roles in planning and developing the education as well as in preparing a proposal for the degree requirements and teaching schedules for the academic year. Team's proposals are discussed at discipline-

level meetings, after which the curriculum is discussed in the teaching and research committee of the department. The Faculty Council is responsible for the final approval of the curriculum.

In the Psychology Unit, the purpose of the feedback collecting system is defined as follows: to acquire information for the development of the learning and study process and the education process that influences them. There is also a systematic way of collecting and handling feedback. Once a year all the feedback collected during the year is discussed and used to improve the programme contents and plan new study requirements. The Students' Union has an important role in these meetings. The summary of the findings is discussed in faculty meetings.

The team-based management has proved to be an efficient way to deal with daily operative adjustments in the curriculum, and in creating participatory developmental culture in the Psychology Unit. Despite strengths of the team-model, the Psychology Unit has recognized that teams which are too closed along with narrowed perspectives on daily activities are not ideal in identifying needs for major changes. As a remedy, teachers are now encouraged to participate in more than one team and the Unit organises evaluation meetings for the whole degree programme. The Audit Team found that these developments have been important, and recommends making these evaluations a systematic part of the University's quality system. As there is joint education in the Turku School of Behavioural Sciences between the Turku University and Åbo Academi University, the Audit Team encourages a broader view for evaluation and development of education in Psychology and to organise at least every 2-3 years a joint evaluation meeting where all the feedback, curricula of all departments, procedures and the content is discussed and good practices exchanged.

One good example of the well-functioning quality management system of the University is the identified need for improving pedagogic and teaching skills of the staff. As a result, the University is organising pedagogic courses to improve such skills, enhance interactions among teachers from different faculties, learn from each other and share good practices. The Audit Team acknowledges the Psychology Unit for recognising and identifying issues that work and those in need of further development. The Audit team concludes that quality management procedures related to the planning of education are systematic, well-established and provide excellent support for planning of education.

### **Implementation of education**

The Psychology Unit provides high quality modern learning environments and teaching methods, such as nationwide video-based courses, web-based courses, experimental research courses and multi-professional clinical training. Courses are taught by leading Finnish experts and designed so that students can freely decide when they study the learning materials and take course exams. As an example of good practice, the Audit Team highlights the multi-professional clinical training, where students work under

supervision with real clients and their genuine problems. The multi-professional group takes care of the evaluation process of a client from appointment until final evaluation and written report.

Interviewed staff named the Psykonet network as very important tool to improve teaching methods. Psykonet is a network formed by the psychology departments and disciplines in Finnish universities. It is also responsible for collecting and analysing all feedback on the nationwide basic courses in psychology. According to the Self-Evaluation Report and interviews, the development of pedagogical methods is proceeding in line with its relevance for the programme, and is assessed by course and student feedback, and other feedback processes.

The Unit has a wide range and several levels of well-functioning methods of assessing students' learning: feedback from teachers, evaluations of master's theses, student self-evaluation, peer evaluation, feedback collected from graduates, feedback collected by the student organisation Fobia, work placement feedback and University level survey assessments. One good example of feedback impact mentioned by the interviewed students was the increased use of electronic exams. Students' learning and skills assessment is regarded as a continuum that extends through all studies. Because of the constant on-going evaluation, the student guidance system seems to be naturally and effectively intertwined within it.

The Audit Team met students that were very satisfied with the programme's feedback system, programme implementation and the good connections with the staff, as well as with the Head of the Department. Students recognised several well-working ways to make their voices heard. The course feedback has proved to be useful in modifying the timing and the extent of courses. As a good example of the well-functioning quality system and students voices being heard, students named improvements with scheduling the workload for third year Bachelor's theses. Interviewed students were especially happy with the Students' Services Secretary's work.

The programme's staff also identified some weaknesses with respect to course feedback collection. One aspect was that the nature and extent of feedback collected in individual courses depends on the teacher of the course. As an improvement, the latest discipline-level meeting decided to design a standardized feedback form that is distributed to students at the end of every course as an obligatory part of coursework. Overall the Audit team finds the quality management procedures related to the implementation of the education systematic and well-established, and thus providing excellent support for implementation of education.

### **Effectiveness of quality work**

Based on the audit material, self-evaluation report and interviews, the student feedback on education and teaching is collected, discussed and used regularly in the development of the education during the year. During the site visit, the Audit Team

saw that the personnel groups and students are committed and very actively involved in the development of the operations in the discipline of Psychology. However, the interviewed international students said that they would like to know more about quality management systems. Thus, the Audit Team recommends orienting and engaging international students better with the quality work of the University.

Based on audit material and interviews, there is some evidence of involving external stakeholders in the quality work, especially in professional skills area. Although alumni questionnaires are done 1–2 years after graduation, and the Union of Psychologists performs surveys, there is no systematic way to gather feedback from external stakeholders. The Audit Team recommends the University develop a systematic feedback system for external stakeholders.

Overall, the Psychology degree programme is well thought-out and planned and the presentation of quality management processes is clear and to the point. There is clear evidence of the effectiveness of the quality work.

### 6.2.2 Doctoral training in the Department of Biology

*The quality management procedures related to the implementation of doctoral training in the Department of Biology are not fully functional and do not yet support the implementation of doctoral training in a meaningful manner. Most problems with the implementation of doctoral education are caused by the BGG's broad programme perspective, quality assurance practices and challenging supervision process, the Graduate School's undetermined programme monitoring guidelines, and undefined qualitative and quantitative targets for doctoral theses. The Audit Team understands that the problems related to quality management in doctoral studies are to a great extent caused by the transition from the old graduate school system to the new one, but nevertheless urges the University to improve instructions, guidelines and division of responsibility between different units and parties. Furthermore, the supervision responsibilities in cases where a student conducts independent research with a personal grant need to be clarified, and monitoring of students' progress should be enhanced. The quality management of the doctoral training in the Department of Biology is at an **emerging** stage.*

#### **Planning of education**

The aim of the doctoral training in the Department of Biology is to train professional researchers with solid theoretical and practical competency in biology. Doctoral studies consist of doctoral thesis research and 60 ECTS of coursework and studies supporting thesis work. Practical training supports the student's professional growth as researcher and member of the scientific community.

The University of Turku Graduate School (UTUGS) was established 2011, and from beginning of September 2013 16 doctoral programmes were established under UTUGS. Most post-graduate students at the Department of Biology belong to the Doctoral Programme in Biology, Geography and Geology (BGG). Based on the Self-Evaluation

Report, the education is primarily planned by BGG and UTUGS, and the Department of Biology and the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences play a smaller role. The BGG steering committee provides recommendations for the doctoral programme and plans courses. UTUGS recommendations on postgraduate study plans are available on the UTUGS websites, though they are not yet completed. The BGG steering committee published its own instructions for students and supervisors in early 2014. Based on the Self-Evaluation Report and interviews, the lack of instructions and practices as well as the unclear division of responsibility between different administrative units have caused uncertainty among all parties. The Audit Team recommends UTUGS to clarify the responsibilities between the different parties, and to develop instructions that will help in quality management of the new system.

Based on Self-Evaluation Report and interviews, the most essential part of postgraduate learning takes place during research work. Students learn to conduct research in a master-apprentice relationship by following and participating in the work and reasoning of more experienced researchers. The research group is recognised as being the most important learning environment for postgraduate students. Well-functioning cooperation between the supervisor and the supervised students at all stages of the research process is crucial. The supervisor monitors the progress of the thesis project and is able to aid in case problems arise. In the regular project meetings of larger research groups, students receive feedback and support from other members of the group besides their own supervisor. Based on self-evaluations and interviews, most problems arise in cases where a student conducts independent research with a personal grant, sometimes outside the University. These students receive less peer support from the research group and the relationship with the supervisor remains more distant. In some cases the topic of the thesis research is not within the expertise of the supervisor. The Audit Team would therefore recommend that a systematic student feedback system be developed in order to identify and solve the problems as early as possible. There is also a need for improving instructional guidelines and clarifying the supervision responsibilities. The Audit Team found that the quality management procedures related to the planning of post-graduate education are not fully functional and do not support the planning of education in a meaningful manner.

### **Implementation of education**

According to interviews with the staff, most of the PhD training in Biology is research. The licentiate examination is the only obligatory non-research part of the doctoral degree and it ensures the student's acquaintance with literature relevant to the research topic. Based on the Self-Evaluation Report, national thematic doctoral networks were responsible for designing and offering specialisation courses until 2013. Currently, based on the Self-Evaluation Report and interviews, the BGG's broad doctoral programme perspective forces the programme to split insufficient resources across many subjects. Thus, the challenge is to offer thematically worthwhile courses to a heterogeneous group of postgraduate students in terms of their research fields. In the earlier system, most students participated in national level courses provided by the networks.

Based on the Self-Evaluation Report, students apply for post-graduate studies four times a year. The BGG is responsible for processing the applications and presenting the decisions on admission to the faculty. Every postgraduate student has a named Research Director and a Principal Supervisor. If the Research Director and the Principal Supervisor are the same person, a Thesis Advisory Committee is appointed. The student and the Supervisor prepare a supervision plan together. The plan describes the responsibilities and duties of both parties and their commitment to collaboration.

Based on student interviews, the quality of supervision is good if the interaction between the Supervisor and the student works well and the research group is able to provide support. On the other hand, the current system is vulnerable if the relationship does not work. Furthermore, students feel that the feedback system is not working. Based on staff interviews, students' experiences of supervision are not collected during the process, only at the end, although UTUGS is supposed to collect student feedback annually.

The research plans are updated annually for the Thesis Advisory Committee, and the Supervisor is evaluated and given feedback. According to the Self-Evaluation Report, the supervision process consists of two-way feedback discussions with the Supervisor and the student. In cases of non-optimal interaction the student is supported by the other Supervisor, the Research Director and the possible Advisory Committee.

There is also an informal network "Peggy" available to arrange meetings, social interaction and peer support for postgraduate students and postdoctoral researchers in biology. According to the Self-Evaluation Report, UTUGS requires the programmes to monitor the progress of doctoral studies, but the practical implementation and guidelines for this are not yet determined. The Department of Biology is considering ways to ensure the adequate monitoring of the progress of the students. The Audit Team encourages UTUGS to develop systematic supervision practices and a feedback system for this.

Based on the Self-Evaluation Report, there is evident incompatibility between the separate UTUGS application periods and project funding decisions throughout the year. The lack of an official right to study may delay recruited students' research work for several months and restrict course participation. The Audit Team recommends UTUGS to develop a more flexible approval process.

According to staff interviews, only 15% of the students have a salaried position at the graduate school while 85% get funding outside the University. Based on the Self-Evaluation Report and interviews, the weak financial situation and the risk of delayed studies is greater for students working on an external grant than for students in salaried positions and integrated into research groups. The situation is most problematic among those students who work on grants and without connections to large, externally funded research groups. The problem is recognised, and the Department of Biology is considering how to improve the research conditions of these students and how the responsibility for these measures should be divided between different parties.

The University is committed to continuous development of the position and working conditions of researchers according to the guidelines set forth in the European Charter for Researchers. According to the Self-Evaluation Report, the Department of Biology together with the faculty and the doctoral programmes is constantly reviewing the targets of doctoral theses. However, based on staff interviews, UTUGS' unsettled qualitative and quantitative targets for doctoral thesis, such as the number of published articles to be included in a thesis, cause confusion. Based on student interviews, there are no clear guidelines available about who determines the length of a final thesis and the required criteria.

The Audit Team would like to give credit to the Department of Biology for the way postgraduates are prepared for their public thesis defence. For example, before the public examination of the thesis, postgraduate students may have a mock examination to prepare for the actual public defence.

### **Effectiveness of quality work**

The Self-Evaluation Report concerns the years 2010-2014, during which the doctoral training at the Department of Biology has faced considerable changes. These changes have had direct effects on practical and administrative instructions of the Department, and the quality assurance system. The combination of the transition period of the doctoral training with two parallel and partly overlapping instructions, in addition to the old ways of working gradually fading away and new ways just developing, are causing confusion among all parties.

According to the Self-Evaluation Report and interviews, the transition period's effects are seen as an increased administrative burden and as a lack of clarity on the division of responsibilities between the Department, Faculty and UTUGS. The Audit Team recommends the University to clarify the following issues: 1) responsibility of determining the requirements related to the contents of postgraduate studies and qualitative and quantitative targets of doctoral theses, and 2) allocation of sufficient resources for networking and organising courses.

According to the Self-Evaluation Report and interviews, there are confusing observations and information about postgraduate student feedback collection and processing practices both in doctoral education and research work. Based on interviews, the Audit Team recommends that feedback collecting and processing be made systematic and visible for all parties in order to be useful in the development of the new doctoral training system. Personnel groups, students and external stakeholders are currently not involved in developing the operations in a meaningful manner. Overall, the Audit Team sees that there is relatively little evidence of the effectiveness of the quality work.



### 6.2.3 Sample chosen by the Audit Team: Master's Programme in Global Innovation Management

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*The quality management of the Global Innovation Management Master's Degree Programme is systematic and supports the planning and implementation of education in an excellent way. Based on the audit material and interviews, the degree programme is well structured, and the development of education and quality management are based on systematic feedback collection and its processing through an annual improvement cycle. The quality management of the Global Innovation Management Programme is at an **advanced** stage.*

#### **Planning of education**

The Global Innovation Management (GIM) Master's Degree Programme was developed in 2006 by the faculty of International Business at Turku School of Economics (TSE). The programme is designed to be completed in two years. According to the Self-Evaluation Report, the curriculum is systematically reviewed annually. Furthermore, there is a continuous improvement system in which good ideas are experimented with. The curriculum review process starts in January-February when all teachers are invited to revise their courses based on the feedback from the students as well as discussions with colleagues. The programme provides research-led teaching, i.e., researchers develop and facilitate the courses together with doctoral students. Teaching is required to be in line with recent research, contemporary phenomena, as well as programme level intended learning outcomes.

From the year 2014 onward, the curricula will be approved every second year by the TSE Faculty Council. The whole curriculum is audited internally every two to three years. As a part of this process, the programme is regularly benchmarked with other programmes within the University, in Finland, and internationally. The programme has been internationally listed as one of the best practices in curriculum development in International Entrepreneurship ([www.ie-scholars.net/education](http://www.ie-scholars.net/education)). Based on interviews and audit material, the Audit Team finds that research, innovation activities and teaching are well linked in the programme.

According to the Self-Evaluation Report, intended learning outcomes have been defined at the programme, discipline, and faculty (TSE) level. The achievement of intended learning outcomes is assessed through exams and exercises. The GIM programme has a wide range of feedback methods including formative and summative feedback, peer feedback and self-evaluation. A personal study plan is made for each student during the autumn semester of the first year of study and students are responsible for keeping, updating and implementing their plan during their studies. The system of personal study plans improves students' guidance and promotes the advancement of their studies.

According to the Self-Evaluation Report, the GIM alumni network has been designed to foster lifelong learning, to disseminate recent research findings on global innovation

management, and to share the experience of the GIM alumni. There is also an innovation portal led by GIM students that aims at sharing relevant information to the GIM alumni and to a wider international audience ([www.innorim.com](http://www.innorim.com)). Students' work on real life cases introduces them to future professional challenges. Further, many of the GIM students participate in a Career Management course that helps them to develop their personal career thinking by taking part in career and working life related events. Based on student interviews, the Audit Team encourages GIM with stakeholders to develop further employment opportunities for foreign graduates who would like to stay in Finland. For example, the GIM together with stakeholders could help foreign students to establish stakeholder contacts that could help them to find a job.

According to the Self-Evaluation Report, the faculty has regular informal discussions with businesses and organisations on what should be taught and how. External stakeholders have also been invited to comment on the curriculum. To understand the global requirements for the future graduates in International Business and in International Entrepreneurship, the GIM academic team has conducted Delphi studies. Despite all these actions, the GIM academic team sees that 1) the resources have not been sufficient to organise trainee positions for the students, and 2) there is a need to develop a system to follow up on the future careers of the alumni. Based on student interviews, the region's difficult economic situation and students' minimal work experience makes it hard for the graduates to get a job. Thus, there is a need for focused career services.

According to the Self-Evaluation Report and student interviews, the Audit Team wants to commend the GIM programme for its versatile student feedback methods. Students have a number of media through which to give feedback and assist in the planning of education. Students are invited to give qualitative feedback and recommendations on how to improve the learning experience. Feedback from standardised forms has been enforced through the collection of Self-Evaluation Reports and discussions on student learning experiences as part of a course. Beyond courses, the reasonably close relationship students have to the GIM teachers provides them with good opportunities to discuss learning experience face-to-face, or via the GIM Facebook group "GIM Paradise". Based on student interviews, the feedback and support from professors is fast. Students also feel that their feedback has been effective in improving the programme. The quality management procedures related to the planning of education are systematic, well-established and provide excellent support for planning.

### **Implementation of education**

According to Self-Evaluation Report, the Audit Team wants to acknowledge the multiple learning methods utilised in the GIM programme, such as lectures, group exercises, case studies, research projects, experiential learning, and international virtual collaboration. For instance, in the course "International Innovation Management as Design", the students observe and collect data outside the University premises and

the course ends with a 58-hour innovation camp. The GIM programme's student feedback form is also a good example of best practices the Audit Team would like to mention - at the end of each course the students evaluate teaching methods, the expertise of teachers, and other factors that enhance or hinder the learning process. Teaching methods are aligned with the learning outcomes.

According to the Self-Evaluation Report, many GIM students participate in international exchange every year to gain international experience. The programme would like to increase this sort of mobility but students' interviews revealed that courses are quite fixed which makes it difficult to go abroad. According to the Self-Evaluation Report, credits earned abroad are recognised and transferred to the degree but according to students credits earned abroad are for extra elective courses. In past years, particular attention has been also paid to the progress of the students during and after the exchange periods. For example, students may participate in their thesis groups via e-mail while abroad. In addition, there have been experiments with virtual collaboration by having presentations made by students staying abroad via digital means.

According to the Self-Evaluation Report, skills assessment is regarded as being continuous, and extends throughout the studies. Assessment criteria are communicated to the students in the study guide and at the beginning of each course. To ensure equal evaluation of students, an assessment template for master's theses is used, which includes very thorough explanations of the assessment criteria. Based on student interviews, there is some variation in orientation courses from year to year, perhaps due to coordinators changing from one year to another. For example, the grading system was communicated to the international student before courses, but Finnish-speaking students did not get it at all or received it too late. According to the Self-Evaluation Report, evaluation systems for individual courses in the GIM programme have been developed, but aligning the assessment methods across courses and throughout the programme needs further action. Based on student interviews, the Audit Team recommends the GIM team to develop consistency in orientation courses and in their quality assurance.

According to the Self-Evaluation Report, actions taken for the students' learning and well-being are adequate and work well. This was confirmed by the students' interviews: they are satisfied with the support and well-functioning relationship with their professors. For instance, GIM students are invited to join the Facebook group "GIM Paradise" before they start their studies. Furthermore, there is a Monday afternoon GIM coffee club where students can discuss matters related to the programme or individual courses with the staff. Based on the Self-Evaluation Report, each student is allocated a teacher tutor, who is a contact person between the student and the faculty. The programme offers coordinator's services that are provided face-to-face, and, particularly, via "GIM Paradise". The aim is to have a low threshold for students to contact the teachers when necessary. The quality management procedures related to the implementation of education are systematic and well-established and provide excellent support for implementation.

### **Effectiveness of quality work**

During the site visit, the Audit Team saw that personnel groups and students are committed and very actively involved in the development of the operations of the GIM programme. External stakeholders are also involved in the development work in a meaningful manner. There is a strong emphasis on quality management which is built into the annual cycle of the programme. This involves continual feedback with students and stakeholders. All academic staff members are involved in reviewing their own progress and contributions. There is clear evidence of the effectiveness of the quality work. Overall, this example of one of the University's degree programmes is well planned and implemented, and the presentation of quality management processes is clear and to the point.

## 6.3 Research

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*Quality management supports the University's research strategy fairly well. University leaders are supportive of quality management for research, but the role of the Research Council should be strengthened. The University oversees the quality of its research activities, e.g. by collecting data on publications and research funding, and by conducting international evaluations. There is evidence that the information gathered is used to develop the University's research activities (e.g. prioritization of research areas). Furthermore, the new research information system will improve the quality and quantity of information gathered. Also the evaluation of research activities to be conducted in 2015 will provide information about the quality of research. The restructuring of research services, the introduction of a research application system (TOPI) and an electronic recruitment system will benefit quality management. Quality management of the new graduate school system is not yet fully operational, while quality management of research support services functions relatively well. Personnel are involved in the development of quality work related to research, but the participation of students and especially external stakeholders should be improved. The quality management of research activities is at the **developing** stage.*

### 6.3.1 The objectives and involvement of different parties in research quality work

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According to the documentation, the guiding principles of the University's research activities are competitiveness at national and international levels, freedom of research, and that research is motivated by the researchers' interests. The University's strategy underlines the importance of self-directed basic research while applied research is an essential part of the University's integration into society. All societal cooperation must serve the University's basic missions and be ethically responsible. Success in research leads to international networking, which, in turn, is viewed as improving the University's competitiveness and the quality of its operations. Thus, successful research and networking are seen to improve quality of research. Research activities are monitored by the University and several quality management measures are in place (see below).

The Audit Team found that the University's leaders are committed to quality management in research. The Rectorate considers quality management in research a very important component of the University's quality system. The Research Council appointed by the Rector (chaired by the Vice Rector responsible for research) is responsible for monitoring the implementation of the measures outlined in the University strategy for the development of research. The Council also participates to some degree in quality management concerning research but the Audit Team recommends that its role be strengthened and clarified.

Teachers and researchers have been actively involved in quality work, while PhD students have participated in developing the quality system at a department level and in the graduate school/doctoral programmes. However, external stakeholders

have had very little involvement in developing the quality system for research and are only marginally involved in quality management procedures. The Audit Team recommends that the involvement of external partners in the quality management of research needs be clarified and strengthened.

### 6.3.2 The functioning of quality management procedures

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In line with the self-directedness of research the main method of quality management is traditional peer evaluation and feedback within the scientific community (peer reviews from scientific journals and feedback received during funding application processes). Each researcher is responsible for his/her own participation in peer review processes within the scientific community. This is a form of self-regulated quality management and is reflected in publication success which is monitored by the University. The University also collects data on research funding. Information on research quality is also gathered through international evaluations, discipline evaluations by the Academy of Finland and by other external assessments. There is evidence that the information collected has been used, for instance, to prioritize research areas. Interviews revealed that publication activities are monitored at the department and faculty levels, and at least in one faculty bonuses are provided for publication in high-quality journals. Overall, quality management procedures in research function relatively well and there is evidence that the information gathered is used in a strategic manner to lead the University.

According to the Self-Evaluation Report and interviews, research carries a strong relative weight in the internal funding model of the University. Criteria used in the model include productivity measured in terms of doctoral degrees, publications, external funding, and the internationality of staff. In a sense these aspects can be seen as quality management procedures because researchers try to achieve the best results as possible in order to secure funding.

With respect to innovation activities, the strategy states that the University will pay increasing attention to the commercialisation of its research results. Innovation competence will be strengthened, the dissemination of research results for society's use will be made more effective, and the search for innovations will be enhanced by systematising the management of innovation processes. Quality management procedures of these activities were presented, including, for instance, the discipline-specific evaluation by panels for innovations generated through research activities.

It is stated in the Self-Evaluation Report that research achievements play a crucial role in the recruitment of research and teaching staff. This in turn has an impact on the quality of the research conducted. The recruitment process includes several quality assurance elements as described in the Quality Manual. In addition, the electronic recruitment system (eRekry) to be introduced in the autumn of 2014 will enable the University to streamline its recruitment processes. Due to the change, instructions guiding recruitments will be updated and new instructions on using eRekry will be

made to correspond to the change. This new electronic recruiting system will also enhance the University's international visibility and appeal.

The University has a Graduate School that covers all the disciplines. Together with its 16 doctoral programmes, the Graduate School provides doctoral training on academic topics as well as on transferable skills and career planning. It is evident from the documents and interviews that various kinds of quality management challenges are related to the new Graduate School system. For instance, interviews revealed that procedures to secure high-quality PhD student supervision and monitoring require attention. The Audit Team notes with satisfaction that a course about issues of student supervision will be offered for supervisors. Overall, the Audit Team recommends that systematic quality management procedures related to the new Graduate School system should be developed, and the division of responsibility in quality management between departments, faculties and the Graduate School should be clarified (see also Chapter 6.2.2.).

### 6.3.3 The information produced by the quality system and support services key to research

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The University uses a research information system which in the future will be the tool for all collection and publication of data related to research. This information will be available both within the University and externally. The research information system is being introduced in stages with the first step being the internal recording of publications in 2013. The introduction of a website presenting the publications and areas of expertise of the researchers will improve quality management of research activities. The research information system will be used in connection with a comprehensive research evaluation to be conducted in 2015. The evaluation consists of an analysis of quantitative factors, such as the ranking of publications and the number of citations, and peer reviews by discipline-specific panels. The evaluation of research replaces earlier evaluations that concentrated on the areas of strength. This is a very welcome exercise and the Audit Team recommends that this evaluation should form a significant element of the University's quality management system.

The support and guidance provided by the Research Services Unit can be considered an important element of quality management. The Research Services provides information, training and advice to the University staff on issues related to supplementary funding at application, contract and implementation stages. The University is also in the process of reforming its research services and a Research Affairs sector will be established. This will improve support services for research, and in particular provide proactivity in applying for international funding. Also a new information system (TOPI) is being developed to support research administration. Thus, the new Research Services will be of importance for quality management and the Audit Team recommends that its role in the quality system be clarified.

Research ethics is an important value at the University of Turku. The University has committed to following national guidelines on ethics. Procedures to ensure ethical conduct include electronic checking of theses using a plagiarism detection system. The use of electronic plagiarism detection is also recommended in the publication process for the scientific publication series of the University of Turku.

Overall, the Audit Team concludes that quality management in research supports the University's strive towards high-quality, internationally recognized research. In line with the emphasis on the self-directedness of research, the main method of quality assurance is peer evaluation and feedback within the scientific community. In addition, the University oversees the quality of research activities by collecting data on publications and research funding, by conducting international evaluations, and by participating in discipline evaluations, e.g. by the Academy of Finland. Relevant information is gathered for the management of research quality and there is evidence that the information is used to develop the University's research activities (e.g. prioritization of research areas). However, the way these different elements form a system to manage the quality of research should be improved.



## 6.4 Societal impact and regional development work

*The University describes the objectives for societal impact and for regional development in its strategy 2013–2016. The understanding of the University is that societal interaction has to be integrated into research and education on all levels. The ethical responsibility of the University is to ensure that the new knowledge is provided for society's use. Due to personnel changes at the University, the realization of this part of the strategy will start after the audit in the beginning of 2015. The University will develop indicators to measure the quality of societal impact and regional development work. The Audit Team would encourage the University to use the support of external stakeholders and the expertise of the University Board to establish a functional quality management system for societal interaction. At the moment of the audit the link between societal impact and regional development work and the quality management is largely missing in the majority of their aims and is at the **emerging stage**.*

The Turku University is an important actor in the city of Turku, Rauma and Pori and linked in many ways to society and city life. Especially in the smaller cities of Rauma and Pori the activities of the University are integrated deeply into the city life and are fundamental cornerstones of the local community. The faculties, teachers and students cooperate in many different manners with the local economy in the city and the region. For example, the students of the faculty of law are invited by local law firms for excursions and the court offers internships and student trainings. After training the students evaluate their practice. Also the teachers and students of humanities are involved in projects in the city and cooperate with the local media. The student training in hospital plays an important part in the education in the Faculty of Medicine and follows a clear structure. The Department of Education, especially in Rauma, and the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences are strong in the field of societal impact and regional development work. UTU has appointed a Network and a Council for Societal Interaction as a support for the action plan on societal interaction and reports to the Management Group and the Board. The Council collects and updates information, plans and monitors these societal interaction activities.

There are also good contacts to the alumni of the University and to several external stakeholders. These activities will be attended and coordinated by the Steering Group for Alumni Relations and the Communications Unit of UTU, whose task is to promote the development of these relationships and networks. Many teachers carry out research and development projects with local partners. These projects are supported by the administration of the University in a similar way to other research projects (e.g. they get consultancy for applications, funding and financial services). An excellent idea of the University is the funding of cooperative projects by the New Knowledge and Business from Research Ideas programme such as the KiVa School anti-bullying programme by the Faculty of Social Sciences.

The University should define its concrete goals for the regional work, build quality management procedures for the activities and find a structural, systematic way of

communication and evaluation of its societal impact at all levels of the University. This development target was recognised both in the Self-Evaluation Report and on the site-visit.

The University has described its aims in the strategy 2013-2016. The University will create a web-based database for co-operation with stakeholder groups and the quality system will include a matrix of societal interaction, where the actors and responsibilities of the interest group cooperation are described. The University is also developing indicators to measure the quality of societal impact and regional development work. The Audit Team would encourage the University to use the support of external stakeholders and the expertise of the University Board to establish a functional quality management system for societal interaction.

# 7

## Optional audit target: Support resources/practices to enhance student engagement

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*The University has chosen to focus its efforts and the optional audit target on practices to enhance student engagement. In practice, there is still some confusion over what the University is working towards, although the prevailing focus is on students engaging with their studies and ensuring better graduation rates. Both the University and the Audit Team recognise that while many strands of this work are well established, the efforts to strategically bring everything together under the heading of student engagement are still in the early stages.*

*By ensuring strong leadership, articulating more clearly the various forms of student engagement at the University and prioritising areas for attention, the University will be able to move forward and draw more effectively on literature and good practice from elsewhere in Finland and beyond. As the student engagement agenda is still being brought together as a single entity, the Audit Team considers the optional audit target, support resources / practices to enhance student engagement, to be at the **emerging** stage.*

### 7.1 Objectives for enhancing student engagement

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The University has a strategic aim to develop a responsible study culture. Good student engagement with their studies is seen as a cornerstone of such a culture and has been identified as an area for focus and development by the Teaching and Learning Council. More specifically, the University has identified good student engagement in this context as relating to being enthusiastic about studying, committing sufficient time to studying, and subsequently the smooth progress of studies. This is measured by the number of students achieving 55 study credits per year.

The Self-Evaluation Report identifies four stages of the student journey into which its activity to enhance student engagement can be placed: prior to admission (prospective students); between admission and commencing studies (admitted students); at the

beginning of the studies (first year students); and for the remainder of the studies (bachelor's and master's degree students and alumni). Students and staff who met with the Audit Team, simplified and amended this to identify prospective students; current students; and alumni.

Beyond having a high level aim of improving student engagement and splitting students into three or four groups, there is limited articulation so far of precisely what the University is trying to achieve and how it will go about it. This is recognised by interviewed staff and students, along with the fact that the many practices cited in the Self-Evaluation Report have only recently been brought together under the umbrella term of student engagement. There is also some disparity of views between staff who each have different priorities for this work.

In order to move this work forward, the Audit Team recommends the University articulate a small number of key strategic objectives and actions that will help achieve the overall aim of enhancing student engagement. Activity should then be focused around these objectives and quality management systems should be used to drive and monitor progress in the defined areas. The University may also want to consider a more targeted use of its efforts and resources by working in partnership with students to continually research the causes of low student engagement and the subject areas where this is most prevalent.

## 7.2 Functioning of quality management procedures

The University's work to enhance student engagement is managed as a part of its wider approach to enhancing teaching and learning, as led by the Teaching and Learning Council. This body has provided leadership and direction to the work, while the detailed development has been undertaken by working groups of staff and students. Any final outcomes of the work are formalized and disseminated through Rectors' decisions, often in a way which sets a baseline or minimum set of expectations for the whole University.

There are several examples of individual initiatives progressing in this way, most notably the development of study guidance and the enhancement of the first year student experience, the latter of which included introducing a new institutional survey of first year students. There is some evidence of how this work is integrated with the University's quality management systems, such as student feedback being considered as part of annual planning and reporting, and some evidence of how the quality management systems inform it, such as through Faculty Student Advisors' recommendations to the Teaching and Learning Council.

The development of the University's approach to student surveys has also resulted from a working group of the Teaching and Learning Council as part of this wider focus on student engagement. This is perhaps the most prominent example that the Audit Team heard of with recognition at all levels: the Rectorate; the Teaching

and Learning Council; faculties; departments; and students. Although this work is recent and the full impact is yet to be felt, there has clearly been a successful effort to place student feedback at the heart of the University's approach to continuously improving degree education.

Although generally successful, each of these examples appears to have been handled in isolation and some were progressing before the notion of a strategic approach to enhancing student engagement was introduced. This is symptomatic of a wider need to join up activities in a more systematic and strategic way as discussed in chapters three and five. The University would benefit from a more strategic and linked approach to student engagement with clear senior level leadership.

Furthermore, there is a limited body of evidence available to demonstrate how the University's quality management system considers student engagement beyond the headline measure of the number of students achieving 55 study credits per year. This is the result of not articulating lower level objectives and measures to sit below the overall goal of enhancing student engagement.

Overall, some progress has been made towards enhancing individual elements of student engagement and integrating this with the quality management system. As this activity is brought together under the umbrella of the student engagement agenda, the Audit Team recommends the University further articulates its definition, vision and aims for student engagement and translates this into a series of prioritised and sequenced projects that explicitly contribute towards achieving those aims.

### **7.3 Information produced by the quality system**

One of the successes of the work undertaken thus far is the introduction and embedding of new survey mechanisms to capture student feedback. This feedback is considered both within and outside the formal quality management procedures, meaning that useful information on the quality of the student learning experience and how it is being enhanced is produced by the quality system.

While many elements of the quality management system may not easily allow for sharing and comparison between faculties, the information produced by surveys of student feedback does. There was some evidence of this beginning to happen, such as through the network of Faculty Student Advisors, and using feedback to inform the Teaching and Learning Council. However, this process could be more systematic and robust. The Audit Team therefore recommends that the University systematically analyse and act upon trends in student feedback across faculties as well as within them.

## 7.4 The involvement of different parties in the quality work

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Cross-sections of staff and students have been involved in the work so far, either through project groups or the Teaching and Learning Council, which has allowed for a consensus-led and collegiate approach. This is particularly notable with the work on student feedback.

The work of students and staff to introduce awards for the best teachers, tutors and courses has helped to identify, recognise and share good practice in a systematic way with students at the heart of the process. However, there appears to be limited awareness of the wider strategic aims around student engagement beyond the crude target of more students achieving 55 student credits per year. This may be caused by a lack of support, training and engagement of academic staff in this work, with limited evidence of development sessions or communications being produced. There are also differing priorities amongst the group leading the work which may not help with achieving clarity and understanding. These issues are easily remedied and could be turned around to have a significant and positive effect on the work. The Audit Team therefore recommends that the University defines and then proactively communicates its aims and activities to staff and students and offers professional development support to help staff engage with the work.

# 8

## The quality system as a whole

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*The quality system covers the essential parts of the basic duties of the University and provides meaningful support for the development of the operations. Aspects of the system have an impact on operations (for example, annual planning and student feedback). However, there are other aspects of the system (e.g. HOPS and the use of external stakeholders) that have less impact and there is room for improvement in the articulation of the different procedures and the communication of the system as a whole.*

*The quality culture of the University of Turku is well-embedded and is articulated by senior management staff through to those who are working in individual departments. The senior staff are self-aware and acknowledge the areas of the system that cause them concern. The quality system as a whole is **developing**.*

### 8.1 The working of the quality management procedures

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In general, the quality management procedures are well-embedded across the University and in the faculties and departments. Staff told the Audit Team that quality processes and the information they yield have improved significantly over the last five years or so. They also appreciated the use of the intranet for information purposes rather than the requirement to produce quality manuals for each unit. However, the Audit Team feels that quality management may be too deeply embedded in the everyday operations of the University, as it was acknowledged in the documentation and through interviews that quality management procedures are somewhat invisible to staff, students and external stakeholders.

Although decentralisation of quality management to the faculties and departments is a necessity in such a large and multi-disciplinary university, the level of decentralisation leads to variation in the operation of procedures. This in turn means that the University's oversight of quality assurance and improvement is not as strong as it might be. Two examples of this are the recent work carried out by the Teaching and Learning Council on the student feedback system. This work was systematically carried out and well documented through the Council's reporting process. However, despite the detailed work done on the project, the Council's final summary and analysis in 2014 was that

‘stability and uniform procedures of feedback practices vary greatly among faculties,’ that ‘attitudes and approaches to the utilisation of feedback vary’ and that ‘even the faculties that function systematically did not describe their feedback practices very thoroughly.’

On the one hand, this demonstrates a commendable culture of honesty and transparency in evaluating the work done so far; on the other hand, it demonstrates a need for a more solid institutional framework within which variation can exist. Variation between faculties and departments was demonstrated through discussion with staff and students (see also chapter 6.1). The Audit Team recommends that the University consider an institutional framework of principles for the operation of its quality management procedures which will both assist with institutional oversight and allow for flexibility within the different disciplines and faculties/departments.

## **8.2 The comprehensiveness and impact of the quality system**

The quality system is comprehensive in that it is closely linked to both the institutional strategy and the steering process of the University. These impact the development and implementation of the quality management procedures at faculty and departmental levels. The University Board agreed with the University that its role is strategic development, whilst the Rectorate’s role is to operationalise the strategy. However, the University is currently in the process of developing a new strategy and agreed that the existing strategic plan does not highlight quality work. This is something that the University will want to bear in mind during the development of its new strategic plan. The Rectorate gave several examples of how it plans to use the outcomes of the audit to inform future plans; for example, the development of the quality system as a whole, which it said it develops ‘theme by theme.’ The Audit Team noted that the outcomes of the previous audit of 2008 were not well known amongst staff, including senior staff, nor was the institutional response to the recommendations well-documented in the Self-Evaluation Report (see also Chapter 5). Responses to some of the recommendations were embedded in the text but there was no systematic response.

The Audit Team recommends that the University ensures that the development of the new University strategy and the quality system inform each other, particularly in the light of the recommendations of the current audit.

Despite the well-functioning quality management procedures already recognised in this report, the Audit Team believes that several elements are missing that would allow the University to further develop its quality system into a comprehensive, overarching one that makes quality work visible and assists with institutional oversight.

The Audit Team was informed that two degree education programmes of each faculty prepared a self-evaluation in preparation for the audit; the Self-Evaluation Report says that it was ‘a practical and rewarding way to gain an up-to-date overview of our own university.’ The University also recognises the burdensome nature of such a task. Much work is currently carried out on various components of the system ‘theme by



theme'. This leads to a somewhat piecemeal overview both of the development of the system and the oversight of the University's academic provision and management and support mechanisms.

Whilst annual planning, curriculum development, working group projects and initiatives from the Teaching and Learning and Research Councils undoubtedly provide useful information and manageable procedures, the Audit Team was less able to see how provision as a whole was evaluated. It was also unclear as to how the University took an overview of the operation of the system as a whole.

The Audit Team recommends that the University consider external reference points such as the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) when considering the value of a periodic review of provision and the value of regular, cyclical self-evaluation. The Audit Team also recommends that the University consider the value of an overarching evaluation for its quality processes and how they form a systematic whole.

### **8.3 The quality culture in the development of operations**

The Audit Team was impressed by the University's efforts to develop a quality culture and saw evidence that it was considered important by senior management, academic and administrative staff and was strongly supported by the student organisations. There was clear evidence of the desire to ensure that quality was built into the everyday life of the University and that it does not become a bureaucratic end in itself (see also Chapter 3).

The Audit Team consider the strength of the quality culture at the University and the efforts made to embed that culture across the whole staff and student body to be a feature of good practice. Senior staff were aware and open about the areas that they felt required improvement in the system. The Audit Team felt that this self-awareness was a strength of the University and that a proactive approach to the development of strategy and procedures would strengthen the University's culture further; whilst the Audit Team could understand why the University might wait for the outcome of an audit before making decisions on various matters, it also felt that some proactive planning in advance of the audit would also have been useful - for example, the Audit Team was told that the University was waiting for the outcomes of the audit before deciding further on how it might develop the system (see also Chapter 5).

Other staff were also very clear that quality should be part of everyday work and clearly this culture was well embedded. However, the invisibility of the quality system meant that there was some vagueness around certain processes (e.g. HOPS) and much variability in process. The Audit Team recommends that the University considers the balance it wishes to achieve between embracing variability and ensuring that the quality system is capable of providing it with oversight information that is useful at the top strategic level as well as at departmental level.

## 9.1 Strengths and good practices of the quality system

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### Strengths

- The atmosphere and quality culture is supportive of quality work, and the level of commitment of many of the actors has a positive impact on the continuous development of the quality work.
- The Teaching and Learning Council is a dynamic body and one which provides leadership within quality management and has evidently developed and implemented projects relating to the quality system.
- The introduction of student feedback as a core element of quality management strengthens the quality management of degree programmes.
- The Psychology programme has a wide range and many levels of well-functioning methods of assessing students learning. Furthermore, the Psychology Unit has recognised and identified issues that work and those in need of further development in their quality management.
- The close integration of students in biology with research groups supports their PhD research and studies.
- The multiple learning methods and student support in the GIM programme improves students' learning experience.
- Research services are being reformed to better support research activities and will be of importance for quality management.
- The research evaluation to be conducted in 2015 is a very welcome exercise for quality management of research activities.

### Good practices

- To stay in contact with the operational level, the Rectors use annual visits to the faculties and units with questions posed beforehand to staff and students.
- Undertaking curriculum review concurrently across the institution in a way which allows strategic objectives to be achieved.
- The quality culture and the efforts made to embed the culture across the whole staff and student body.

- The way postgraduate students are prepared for the public defence of their theses in the Department of Biology gives the students a chance to practice (mock examination to prepare for the actual public defence).
- The GIM programme's student feedback form for evaluating teaching methods, expertise of teachers, and other factors that influence the learning process should be shared within the University.

## 9.2 Recommendations

- The University should consider an institutional framework of principles for the operation of its quality management procedures which will both assist with institutional oversight and allow for flexibility within the different disciplines and faculties/departments.
- The University should consider periodically reviewing the quality system on a 5-7 year cycle. This should involve scrutiny of all parts of the system in order to ensure that the overall system is functioning effectively and to maximise the impact of what is going on so that the whole University can benefit. The review should include input from experts external to the University and provide an overview of operations.
- The University should consider reviewing its curricula every three to four years, to allow a full bachelor's cycle to be completed, would allow for a more holistic review, albeit with smaller changes continuing to be made as they are required between reviews.
- The Quality Manual should be developed into a document that describes procedures used to enhance and manage quality, and that demonstrates how these form a system.
- University should consider having all units to maintain their own quality or operations manuals on the intranet in order to make quality work more visible at the level of faculties.
- The role of Quality Contact Persons' Network, Extended Management Group, Research Council and Teaching and Learning Council should be clarified and these bodies should be better integrated into the quality system so that they can better support and enhance quality work
- University should ensure that the development of the new University strategy and the quality system are connected, particularly in light of the recommendations of the current audit.
- The faculties and units have a lot of experience with cooperation and projects with external stakeholders. However, the role of external stakeholders in quality management should be defined and they should be better engaged in the quality work, and a systematic feedback system should be developed for external stakeholders.
- The University should consider the effectiveness of its communications in order to improve the visibility of the quality system, awareness of quality work and enhance the development of the system.
- The University should engage international students better with the quality work.

- The reformed Research Services Unit and the research evaluation to be conducted in 2015 should be clearly linked to quality management.
- UTUGS should: clarify responsibilities between different parties (faculty, department, graduate school etc.), develop systematic supervision practices and a feedback system for this, develop procedures for monitoring progress of students, and develop instructions that will help in quality management of the new graduate school system.
- The University should articulate its definition, vision and aims of student engagement and translate this into a series of prioritised and sequenced projects that explicitly contribute towards achieving those aims.

### 9.3 The Audit Team's overall assessment

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The quality system of University of Turku fulfils the Finnish Education Evaluation Centre's criteria set for the quality system as a whole and the quality management of basic duties. None of the audit targets are at the level of absent and the quality system as a whole (audit target 6) is at the level of developing. The audit team proposes to the Higher Education Evaluation Committee that the University of Turku passes the audit.

# 10

## Decision of Higher Education Evaluation Committee

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In its meeting on 27 February 2015, Higher Education Evaluation Committee of the Finnish Education Evaluation Centre (FINEEC) decided, based on the report of the audit team, that the quality system of University of Turku does not meet the criteria for quality systems. Thus, the development of the quality system requires actions from the institution and a re-audit. The re-audit will focus on the following audit targets, as set in the audit manual for the quality systems of higher education institutions 2011–2017: Development of the quality system (Audit target 3), Societal impact and regional development work (Audit target 4c) and the Quality system as a whole (Audit target 6). The quality system of University of Turku will be re-audited in approximately two to three years from the decision of the Higher Education Evaluation Committee.

## Appendix I: Table of the audit targets and criteria

TARGETS	CRITERIA		
	ABSENT	EMERGING	DEVELOPING
<p><b>1. The quality policy of the higher education institution</b></p> <p>The quality system shows a complete absence of or major shortcomings in the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• definition of the system's objectives and responsibilities</li> <li>• knowledge and commitment of those responsible</li> <li>• documentation of the system and the information it produces or</li> <li>• suitable communication.</li> </ul>	<p>The quality system's objectives and responsibilities have not been clearly defined. The division of responsibility works only partially, and those responsible for the operations exhibit widely differing skill levels and commitment to their duties.</p> <p>The quality system and the information it produces are inadequately documented. The information needs of the HEI's personnel groups, students or external stakeholders are not adequately addressed in the documentation. Information produced by the system is not systematically communicated within the institution or to external stakeholders.</p>	<p>The quality system's objectives and responsibilities are clearly defined. The goalsetting process is an inclusive one. The division of responsibility functions well. The key people responsible for the operations are committed to their duties and have sufficient skills to undertake them.</p> <p>The quality system and the information it produces is documented in a clear and appropriate manner. For the most part, the information needs of the HEI's personnel groups, students and external stakeholders are taken into account in the documentation. The information produced by the system is communicated in a systematic and targeted manner within the institution and to external stakeholders.</p>	<p>The objectives of the quality system are defined in a very clear and inclusive manner. The objectives and division of responsibility provide excellent support for the development of the institution's operations. There is clear and continuous evidence of the skill level and commitment of those responsible for the operations.</p> <p>The HEI has systematic and well-established procedures for documenting the quality system and the information it produces so that the documentation satisfies the information needs of various parties. The institution has excellent and well-established procedures for communicating information to different personnel groups, students and external stakeholders. Communication is active and up-to-date.</p>

**TARGETS**

**CRITERIA**

	ABSENT	EMERGING	DEVELOPING	ADVANCED
<b>2. Strategic and operations management</b>	<p>The quality system shows a complete absence of or major shortcomings in the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• links to strategic planning, management and operations management</li> <li>• ability to meet the needs of strategic and operations management or</li> <li>• commitment to quality work of managers involved in operations management.</li> </ul>	<p>The quality system is not sufficiently well linked to the HEI's strategic planning, management and operations management. The system and the information it produces do not serve the needs of strategic and operations management in an appropriate manner.</p> <p>The system does not serve as a meaningful management tool at all organisational levels, and managers involved in operations management show a lack of commitment to joint quality work.</p>	<p>The quality system is quite well linked to the HEI's strategic planning, management and operations management. The system and the information it produces serve strategic and operations management, and there is evidence that the information is put to use.</p> <p>In terms of management, the system works at different organisational levels, and the managers involved in operations management are committed to joint quality work.</p>	<p>Quality management is a natural part of the HEI's strategic planning, management and operations management. The institution has systematic, well-established and excellent procedures that produce information for strategic and operations management and there is clear needs, and there is clear and continuous evidence that information is put to systematic and wide use.</p> <p>In terms of management, the quality system works in an excellent manner at all organisational levels, and there is clear and continuous evidence that managers involved in operations management are committed to joint quality work.</p>

TARGETS

CRITERIA

	ABSENT	EMERGING	DEVELOPING	ADVANCED
<b>3. Development of the quality system</b>	<p>The HEI shows a complete absence of or major shortcomings in the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• procedures for evaluating or developing the quality system or</li> <li>• overall view of the functioning of the quality system.</li> </ul>	<p>The HEI has inadequate procedures for evaluating and developing the quality system. It has a weak overall view of the functioning of the quality system. System development is not systematic.</p>	<p>The HEI has wellfunctioning procedures for evaluating and developing the quality system. It is able to identify the system's strengths and areas in need of development, and system development is systematic.</p>	<p>The HEI has wellestablished and systematic procedures for evaluating and developing the system. It is able to efficiently identify the system's strengths and areas in need of development, as well as to evaluate the effectiveness of the system. There is clear and continuous evidence of the system's successful development work.</p>
<i>Followup section for the HEIs subject to the second FINHEEC audit:</i>	<p>The HEI shows a complete absence of or major shortcomings in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the development work following the first audit.</li> </ul>	<p>The development of the quality system after the first audit has not been systematic or effective.</p>	<p>The development of the quality system after the first audit has been systematic. The system works better than before.</p>	<p>After the first audit, the HEI has systematically improved the functionality and fitness for purpose of the quality system. Special attention has been given to the workload produced by the system. The system has been developed in a very successful and effective manner.</p>



The fulfilment of the following criteria is reviewed separately for each basic duty and optional audit target:

TARGETS	CRITERIA		
	ABSENT	EMERGING	DEVELOPING
<p><b>4. Quality management of the higher education institution's basic duties</b></p> <p><b>4a) Degree education</b></p> <p><b>4b) Research, development and innovation activities, as well as artistic activities</b></p> <p><b>4c) Societal impact and regional development work (incl. social responsibility, continuing education, open university and open university of applied sciences education, as well as paid services education)</b></p> <p><b>4d) Optional audit target</b></p>	<p>The quality system shows a complete absence of or major shortcomings in the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• quality management procedures used to achieve the goals set for the operations</li> <li>• links between goals set for the activities and the HEI's overall strategy</li> <li>• participation of the institution's personnel groups, students or external stakeholders in the development of the operations or</li> <li>• quality management of support services that are key to the operations.</li> </ul>	<p>The quality management procedures are not fully functional and do not support the achievement of goals set for the operations in a meaningful manner. The goals are not linked to the HEI's overall strategy.</p> <p>The quality system provides insufficient information for the quality management of the operations, and information use is sporadic and/or information collection is an end in itself.</p> <p>The personnel groups, students and external stakeholders are not involved in the development of the operations in a meaningful manner.</p> <p>The quality management of key support services is not functional.</p>	<p>Functional quality management procedures advance the development of the operations and the achievement of goals set for the operations. The objectives are mostly linked to the overall strategy of the HEI.</p> <p>The quality system produces relevant information for the quality management of the operations, and the information is used to develop the HEI's operations in a meaningful manner.</p> <p>Personnel groups and students are involved in the development of the operations in a meaningful manner. External stakeholders also participate in the development work.</p> <p>The quality management of key support services functions relatively well.</p>
			<p><b>ADVANCED</b></p> <p>The HEI has systematic and well-established quality management procedures that provide excellent support for the development of the operations and the implementation of the institution's overall strategy. There is clear and continuous evidence of the system's effectiveness in achieving the goals set for the operations.</p> <p>The HEI has systematic and excellent procedures used to produce information for the quality management of the operations. Information is used systematically, and there is clear and continuous evidence to show that it is successfully used to develop the operations.</p> <p>Personnel groups and students are committed and very actively involved in developing the operations. Special attention has been given to the workload generated by the quality management procedures. External stakeholders are involved in the development work in a meaningful manner.</p> <p>The HEI has systematic and well-established procedures for the quality management of key support services. There is clear and continuous evidence that the procedures function well.</p>

The fulfilment of the following criteria is reviewed separately for each degree programme:

TARGETS	CRITERIA		
	ABSENT	EMERGING	DEVELOPING
<p><b>5. Samples of degree education: degree programmes</b></p> <p><b>Planning of education</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Curricula and their preparation</li> <li>• Intended learning outcomes and their definition</li> <li>• Links between research, development and innovation activities, as well as artistic activities, and education</li> <li>• Lifelong learning</li> <li>• Relevance of degrees to working life</li> <li>• Participation of different personnel groups, students and external stakeholders.</li> </ul> <p><b>Implementation of education</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teaching methods and learning environments</li> <li>• Methods used to assess learning</li> <li>• Students' learning and wellbeing</li> <li>• Teachers' competence and occupational wellbeing</li> <li>• Participation of different personnel groups, students and external stakeholders.</li> </ul> <p><b>Effectiveness of quality work</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suitability of key evaluation methods and followup indicators and their impact on the achievement of goals.</li> </ul>	<p>The quality system shows a complete absence of or major shortcomings in the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• quality management procedures related to the planning of education</li> <li>• quality management procedures related to the implementation of education</li> <li>• participation of the institution's personnel groups, students or external stakeholders in the development of the operations or</li> <li>• effectiveness of the quality work.</li> </ul>	<p>The quality management procedures related to the planning of education are not fully functional and do not support the planning of education in a meaningful manner.</p> <p>The quality management procedures related to the implementation of education are not fully functional and do not support implementation in a meaningful manner.</p> <p>The personnel groups, students and external stakeholders are not involved in developing the operations in a meaningful manner.</p> <p>There is little evidence of the effectiveness of the quality work.</p>	<p>The quality management procedures related to the planning of education are systematic and well-established and provide excellent support for planning.</p> <p>The quality management procedures related to the implementation of education are systematic and well-established and provide excellent support for implementation.</p> <p>Personnel groups and students are involved in developing the operations in a meaningful manner. External stakeholders also participate in the development work.</p> <p>There is clear evidence of the effectiveness of the quality work.</p> <p>There is clear and continuous evidence of the effectiveness of the quality work.</p>

**TARGETS**

**CRITERIA**

	ABSENT	EMERGING	DEVELOPING	ADVANCED
<b>6. The quality system as a whole</b>	<p>The HEI has only individual management procedures that do not form a structured system.</p> <p>There is no evidence of the procedures' impact on the development of the operations.</p>	<p>The quality management procedures do not form a functioning and unified system.</p> <p>The quality system encompasses some of the HEI's basic duties but does not provide meaningful support for the development of the operations. There is little evidence of the system's impact on the development of the operations.</p> <p>The institution's quality culture is only just emerging.</p>	<p>The quality management procedures constitute a functioning system.</p> <p>The quality system covers the essential parts of the basic duties of the HEI and provides meaningful support for the development of the operations. There is evidence that the system has an impact on the development of the operations.</p> <p>The development of the operations is based on an existing quality culture.</p>	<p>The quality management procedures form a dynamic and comprehensive system.</p> <p>The quality system covers all of the basic duties of the HEI and provides excellent support for the institution's overall strategy and the development of the entire institution's operations. There is clear and continuous evidence that the system has an impact on the development of the operations.</p> <p>The well-established quality culture provides excellent support for the development of the operations.</p>

## Appendix 2:

The stages and timetable of the audit process

Agreement negotiations between the HEI and FINHEEC 5 March 2014

Appointment of the audit team 25 March 2014

The HEI's audit materials and self-evaluation report submitted to  
FINHEEC 4 August 2014

An information and discussion event at the HEI 30 September 2014

Audit visit 28-30 October 2014

Audit decision 27 February 2015

Concluding seminar 31 March 2015

## Appendix 3: Programme of the audit visit

TUESDAY 28 OCTOBER 2014	
9.00—10.30	University leadership
10.45—11.45	University Board
12.30—13.30	Deans of faculties
13.45—14.45	Heads of departments
15.00—16.00	Students' representatives
16.15—17.15	External stakeholders
WEDNESDAY 29 OCTOBER 2014 GROUP A	
9.00—10.00	Teachers and staff of department of Psychology
10.15—11.15	Students of Psychology department
11.30—12.30	Teachers and staff of Department of Biology
13.15—14.15	Doctoral students of Department of Biology
14.45—15.45	Teachers and staff of Global Innovation Management Degree Programme
16.00—17.00	Students of Department of Global Innovation Management
WEDNESDAY 29 OCTOBER 2014 GROUP B	
9.00—10.00	Teachers and staff of the Faculty of Humanities
10.15—11.15	Students of the Faculty of Humanities
11.30—12.30	Teachers and staff of the Faculty of Medicine
13.15—14.15	Students of the Faculty of Medicine
14.45—15.45	Teachers and staff of the Faculty of Law
15.45—16.45	Students of the Faculty of Law
THURSDAY 30 OCTOBER 2014	
9.00—10.00	Group A: Interview with representatives of University of Turku units in Rauma and Pori and other units
9.00—10.00	Group B: Thematic interview on Support resources/practices to enhance student engagement.
10.15—11.15	Quality management contact persons
11.30—12.30	Group A: Teaching and learning council
11.30—12.30	Group B: Research council
13.15—14.15	University administrative managers
14.30—15.30	Rectorate and quality manager
16.00—16.15	Preliminary feedback to the University leadership

The Finnish Education Evaluation Centre (FINEEC) is an independent, national evaluation agency responsible for the external evaluations of education from early childhood education to higher education in Finland. It implements system and thematic evaluations, learning outcome evaluations and field-specific evaluations. Moreover, FINEEC supports providers of education and training and higher education institutions in matters related to evaluation and quality assurance, as well as advances the evaluation of education.

The Finnish Education Evaluation Centre and its predecessor the Finnish Higher Education Evaluation Council have conducted audits of the quality systems of higher education institutions since 2005. The aim of the audits is to help institutions achieve their strategic objectives and steer future development activities in order to create a framework for the institutions' continuous development. Audits evaluate whether the quality system fulfils the FINEEC criteria set for the quality management of higher education institutions and whether it corresponds to the European principles and recommendations for quality management.

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