

**Approved by FINEEC Director on 29 February 2024**

## **FINEEC GUIDELINES FOR THE FOREIGN QUALITY ASSURANCE AGENCIES CARRYING OUT EUR-ACE ACCREDITATIONS IN FINLAND**

The Finnish Education Evaluation Centre (FINEEC) is the Finnish state authority in the field of external evaluation of education and early childhood education and care. As a part of its operations, FINEEC carries out EUR-ACE degree programme reviews and accreditations in the field of engineering higher education. For this purpose, FINEEC is authorized by the European Network for Accreditation of Engineering Education (ENAAEE) to award the EUR-ACE labels to the accredited degree programmes.

FINEEC is authorised to award the EUR-ACE Label to the following engineering or technology programmes in higher education:

- 4-year (240 ECTS) bachelor's degree programmes
- 3-year (180 ECTS) bachelor's degree programmes and
- 2-year (120 ECTS) master's degree programmes

ENAAEE regulates the transnational accreditation in the document "Standards and Procedures on Transnational Accreditation for ENAAEE Authorized Agencies" (approved 4<sup>th</sup> Nov 2021). Later in this document it is referred as the "ENAAEE rules".

The foreign quality assurance agencies aiming to carry out EUR-ACE accreditations in Finland are below referred as "Requested Agencies", in line with the terminology in use in ENAAEE documentation.

The ENAAEE rules require that the Requested Agency informs FINEEC on the degree programmes of the Finnish HEIs submitted for accreditation before signing a formal contract on the accreditation with the HEI. In addition, there is simultaneously also the requirement for a formal FINEEC agreement for the accreditation as well as an agreement on FINEEC's possible attendance in the accreditation process.

### **The Requested Agencies are asked to follow the guidelines below to fulfill the requirements of the ENAAEE in cooperation with FINEEC:**

1. The Requested Agencies are asked to inform FINEEC in two weeks when they have received a request for a EUR-ACE degree programme review and accreditation from any Finnish higher education institution. The information letter should be sent to the following addresses: [kirjaamo@karvi.fi](mailto:kirjaamo@karvi.fi) and [kati.isoaho@karvi.fi](mailto:kati.isoaho@karvi.fi)
2. The information letter should include the following information on the HEI and the submitted degree programmes: date of the request received from the HEI, full name of the institution, the full name of the programme(s) in Finnish and English, the target degree of the programme(s), number of ECTS included in the programme(s), intended study time of the degree programme(s), main language of

instruction of the programme(s), and admission procedure applied on the programme(s) (joint application system or a separate admission).

3. ENAEE rules require that FINEEC has the possibility to take part in the EUR-ACE accreditation process led by the Requested Agency in Finland. This includes nominating a review team member or joining the process as an observer. An agreement on possible attendance should be made before signing a formal contract on the accreditation with the HEI.

FINEEC shall decide on its possible attendance case by case in two weeks after receiving the information letter from the Requested Agency on the submitted degree programmes. FINEEC shall inform the Requested Agency's contact person via email on its decision.

Following the ENAEE rules, FINEEC covers the costs of its possible attendance to any review process.

4. ENAEE rules state that the Requested Agency shall ask the Finnish HEI for information that FINEEC or any ENAEE authorized agency has not turned down, in the past two years, any of the programmes submitted by the HEI for accreditation.

To complement the information provided by the HEI, FINEEC informs the Requested Agency upon request whether it has turned down the programme or not. A request for this information should be included in the information letter mentioned under point 1 in this document.

For this purpose, the Requested Agencies are asked to acknowledge the following views:

*4.1. "To turn down" is understood as the right to decide on educational responsibilities*

FINEEC's mandate as the state authority does not include rights to decide on the educational responsibilities or degree programmes of Finnish higher education institutions.

*4.2. "To turn down" is understood as a negative accreditation outcome*

FINEEC informs the Requested Agency upon request whether the submitted programme has been reviewed by FINEEC with an outcome "not-accredited" within the past two years or not.

*4.3. "To turn down" is understood as a negative decision on accepting a degree programme for an accreditation process*

FINEEC informs the Requested Agency upon request if the submitted programme has been provided FINEEC for accreditation or not, and if FINEEC's decision has been to not take this programme under review due to non-suitability. Non-suitability can include, but is not limited to, a mismatch with the engineering field, an obvious mismatch with FINEEC reference programme outcomes or a lack of competence-based degree programme curriculum.

5. ENAEE rules state that a written agreement from FINEEC confirming that the Requested Agency may perform the EUR-ACE label accreditation procedure for the indicated programmes will be included in the dossier that will be presented to ENAEE when the concerned programmes are submitted for EUR-ACE label approval.

FINEEC provides the above-mentioned agreement for the Requested Agency upon request. The Requested Agency should ask for the agreement before signing a formal contract on the accreditation

with the HEI. The request for the agreement should be included in the information letter mentioned under point 1 in this document.

Getting an agreement is limited to cases where the FINEEC has not turned down the programme submitted for the accreditation in the past two years (see points 4.2 and 4.3. in this document).

