



Audits of higher education institutions 2020–2024

Principles of online implementation

Addendum to the Audit manual for higher education
institutions 2019–2024

Approved by the Higher Education Evaluation Committee
on 16 September 2020



Audit process and online implementation of FINEEC audits

FINEEC audits of higher education institutions (HEIs), in which the Audit Manual for Higher Education Institutions 2019–2024¹ is applied, can be implemented either fully or partly online. The method of implementation will not affect the audit team's assessment, the price of the audit or the awarding of FINEEC's Quality Label or the Quality Label for Excellence.

Online implementation is possible at all stages of the audit process:

- benchlearning,
- agreement negotiations between FINEEC and the HEI,
- HEI's self-assessment,
- Higher Education Evaluation Committee's meeting for the appointment of the audit team,
- training and meetings of the audit team,
- briefing and discussion event,
- audit visit,
- Higher Education Evaluation Committee's meeting regarding the final results of the audit,
- final seminar and
- the audit team's and the HEI's feedback on the audit process.

When it is not possible to organise the audit visit on the HEI's premises, FINEEC's project manager for the audit will agree on the online implementation of the visit together with the HEI. The initiative for implementing the audit visit online may be made by FINEEC or the HEI.

The principles and criteria described in the Audit Manual for Higher Education Institutions 2019–2024 are applied to FINEEC's audits regardless of the method of implementation. The audit process described on page 18 of the Audit Manual is also followed in audits implemented online.

In the online implementation, the sections concerning the length of the audit visit and requests for additional material may deviate from the procedures described in the Manual.

- Online implementation may affect the length of the audit visit, which may be longer than the 2-3 days defined in the Audit Manual.
- FINEEC reserves a possibility for the audit team to request additional material or organise extra hearings after the audit visit if the evidence obtained during the online implementation of the audit visit was insufficient because of reasons such as technical problems.

FINEEC's audit team is responsible for planning the programme of the audit visit. Different hybrid models (partial implementation online) are possible in all of FINEEC's audits. A hybrid

¹ Audit manual for higher education institutions 2019–2024 (2019). Finnish Education Evaluation Centre. Publications:21.

model can be applied in situations where individual audit team members, FINEEC's employees or representatives of the HEI are prevented from participating in the on-site visit. Hearings and workshops can also be implemented online.

FINEEC's project manager will relay information between the audit team and the HEI. The contact person for the audit and FINEEC's project manager will agree on the practical arrangements related to the audit visit, such as possible special arrangements in connection with the online implementation (timetable, technical support, instructions for the participants, etc.). FINEEC's project manager is responsible for communicating information to the HEI and providing it with instructions regarding the audit visit.