

Abstract

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The Finnish Education Evaluation Centre has conducted an audit of the Turku University of Applied Sciences and has awarded the institution with a quality label that is valid for six years from 12 May 2016. The quality system of the Turku University of Applied Sciences fulfils the national criteria set for the quality management of higher education institutions, and corresponds to the European quality assurance principles and recommendations for higher education institutions.

The object of the audit was the quality system that the Turku University of Applied Sciences has developed based on its own needs and goals. The freely selected audit target chosen by the university of applied sciences (UAS) was the *service business*.

The following were regarded as key strengths of the quality system:

- The staff of Turku UAS take an active part in strategy work and the development of operations. In addition to the staff, the strategy process received positive comments from students and stakeholders. The staff is committed to the development initiatives and feel that the work is inclusive and highlights expertise.
- The ideology of continuous development and the PDCA cycle are well present in the planning and implementation of operations. The staff have internalised the principle of continuous development and this is manifested in both thinking and action. The process of operating and financial planning, which covers all levels of the organisation, functions well.
- In degree education, the quality management processes work well thereby enabling the institution to monitor and develop the education and contribute to meeting the targets set for it. Some of the programmes have excellent procedures that focus on ensuring working-life orientation and smooth study progress.

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

- The audit group recommends introducing more efficient methods for the overall evaluation and development of the quality management system. The UAS should clarify the roles and responsibilities of the quality management group with regard to the overall evaluation and development of the quality management system.
- The UAS should create more systematic routines for collecting feedback from customers, partners and stakeholders. In addition, the institution ought to improve its routines for disseminating information about the ways in which feedback is utilised and its effects.
- The UAS should employ more systematic methods for handling the information generated through the quality management system with regard to social and regional impact. The information should also be better documented and utilised.

Key words

Audit, evaluation, higher education institutions, quality, quality management, quality system, university of applied sciences