



FINNISH EDUCATION
EVALUATION CENTRE

Example of FINEEC's enhancement-led approaches - Quality Label for Excellence

Sirpa Moitus FINEEC
NOQA Meeting 5 Sept. 2024, Oslo

Promoting excellence through FINEEC audits

- **FINEEC audits of higher education institutions 2019-2024 include the opportunity of being awarded a Quality Label for Excellence.**
- **The Quality Label for Excellence is awarded to HEIs that have distinguished themselves with their commitment to enhancement work of exceptionally high quality.**
- **A HEI can be nominated as a candidate for receiving the Quality Label for Excellence if the audit team grants the level excellent in at least one of the three obligatory evaluation areas of the audit:**
 - **I HEI creates competence** (education)
 - **II HEI promotes impact and renewal** (societal engagement and impact; research/RDI; organisational culture)
 - **III HEI enhances quality and well-being** (use of the quality system in strategic management; competence development and well-being of staff; functionality of the quality system)

FINEEC criteria for excellence in 2019-2024

01

The HEI is an innovative forerunner and develops its operations in a bold and open-minded manner.

02

The HEI has top level expertise in long-term development, and it can provide strong evidence of the impact of its development and enhancement activities.

03

The HEI has a positive impact on its surroundings. The HEI is known for engaging a wide range of actors in its development and enhancement activities and for crossing borders in an open-minded manner.

Procedure for awarding Quality Label for Excellence and candidates in 2019-2024

The four-person evaluation panel is composed of FINEEC HE Evaluation Committee members.



Individual work: each panel member scores the candidates numerically (1-5) for each of the three excellence criteria and provides a verbal justification based on the texts of the audit reports.



Consensus discussion: the panel will conduct a consensus discussion and prepare a presentation to the FINEEC Committee for decision making.

Number of candidates for Quality Label of Excellence (NB! The same HEI can be a candidate in several areas)

Year	Area I: HEI creates competence	Area II: HEI promotes impact and renewal	Area III: HEI enhances quality and well-being
2021			3 UAS
2022		1 Uni + 2 UAS	1 Uni + 1 UAS
2023	2 UAS	1 UAS	1 UAS
2024	2 Uni	1 Uni + 1 UAS	2 Uni
2025	To be implemented		

Out of 21 audited HEIs by spring 2024 -> 11 HEIs were candidates -> 5 HEIs were awarded

HEIs awarded with Quality Label for Excellence

Higher education institutions

Excellent evaluation areas Validity

Jamk University of Applied Sciences	HEI enhances quality and well-being	19.5.2021–20.5.2025
Seinäjoki University of Applied Sciences	HEI promotes impact and renewal HEI enhances quality and well-being	18.5.2022–26.1.2028
Laurea University of Applied Sciences	HEI promotes impact and renewal	26.5.2023–15.6.2028
Aalto University	HEI creates competence HEI promotes impact and renewal HEI enhances quality and well-being	21.5.2024-28.4.2029
Lapland University of Applied Sciences	HEI promotes impact and renewal	21.5.2024-15.6.2029



FINEEC

EXCELLENCE

The awarded HEIs have a right to use FINEEC's Excellence Label on their website and in their communications

Some examples of justifications for the quality label for excellence



JAMK UAS has demonstrated that it possesses an innovative and pioneering spirit, an approach that focuses on long-term development and a participatory operating culture.

The quality culture permeates the entire higher education community. External stakeholders are also engaged.



Seinäjoki UAS's evidence of regional impact and activities in line with its values were considered strong by the panel.

The personnel and students are encouraged not only to internal entrepreneurship, meaning experiments and creativity, but also to external entrepreneurship, which means entrepreneurial activities.



Laurea UAS engages different actors, networks and stakeholders in its area in co-creation widely and in a goal-oriented manner.

In addition, the panel found Laurea's evidence and practices in RDI activities and their development exceptionally strong.



Aalto University stands out for its ability to cross boundaries in an open-minded manner, as demonstrated by its multidisciplinary approach, innovative degree programmes, and its commitment to societal impact.

The development of Aalto's educational activities is highly systematic, broadly participatory and impactful.



Lapland UAS as a driver of renewal and development for the vitality of Lapland impressed the evaluation panel.

Lapland UAS emphasises foresight, cooperation and stakeholder engagement both regionally and internationally.

Lessons learned

WHAT WORKED WELL?

- **Highly desirable status for most HEIs**
- **Has promoted excellence and innovation in individual HEIs**
- **At national level, awarded HEIs have showcased their excellence at FINEEC annual quality seminars**

ASPECTS TO BE CONSIDERED

- **The excellence criteria have differed from the FINEEC audit criteria → consider integrated criteria in the next round**
- **The evaluation task and the qualitative evaluation criteria can be challenging for panel members -> allow sufficient time for joint discussion**
- **Good practice: select one panel member from last year's group**

Workshop questions

1. Does your current evaluation model include or could you consider including aspects that promote excellence?
2. What do you consider to be the essential criteria for excellence (what about the coverage - just education or other functions of higher education as well)?
3. What practices/ideas do you have as for the selection process for excellence units?

