



Boosting development through benchlearning

JYU & VU Amsterdam: Continuous development of teaching competences

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Quality Council for Icelandic Higher Education Webinar: Internationalisation of HEI - a Driver for Quality?

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Outline

- Context: Quality assurance of HEIs in Finland
- Finnish Education Evaluation Centre FINEEC guidelines for benchlearning
- JYU – VU Amsterdam benchlearning project
 - Background, themes & objectives
 - Process & elements
- Lessons learned from JYU – VU colleagues



Context: Quality assurance of HEIs in Finland

- The Universities Act (558/2009): Universities must participate in external evaluation of their activities and quality systems. Evaluation results are public.
- Most universities use the services of Finnish Education Evaluation Centre FINEEC for efficiency and financial reasons.
- Purposes of the FINEEC audit
 - to evaluate whether the quality work in the HEI meets the European quality assurance standards
 - to assess whether the quality system produces relevant information for the implementation of the institutional strategy and for continuous development of activities
 - to encourage internationalisation, experimenting and creativeness
 - to increase open and transparent quality work at and among Finnish HEIs
- Central premises of the [FINEEC audit model 2018-2024](#)
 - **Competence-based, student-centred and research-based approach in education**
 - **Autonomy** of HEIs to develop their quality systems according to their own needs and goals
 - **Impact** of the HEIs' activities





FINEEC guidelines for benchlearning

- Benchlearning is a new feature in the FINEEC audit model for the term 2018-2024

“According to the principles of enhancement-led evaluation, the **purpose of benchlearning is to learn from the good practices of another organisation.**”

The higher education institution selects a target and a partner for benchlearning. The partner can be a HEI or any other type of cooperation organisation. The institution can freely select the participants in the benchlearning process from its own organisation. The HEI is encouraged to select individuals from different levels of the organisation (students, teachers, administration).

In the assessment of benchlearning, the HEI will receive feedback from the audit team regarding the success of the **planning and implementation process**, and the **plan for implementing and applying ideas and practices** the HEI has discovered during the benchlearning process. ”

FINEEC Audit Manual for Higher Education Institutions 2017



JYU – VU benchlearning: background, themes & objectives

- Previous collaboration in an EUA Learning & Teaching Initiative Thematic Group
- JYU initiated further collaboration in the form of a benchlearning project
- JYU - VU benchlearning project included in the JYU roadmap for preparing for the upcoming audit

Theme: Continuous development of teaching competences

Sub-themes

1. Teachers' professional development frameworks
2. Recognition of pedagogical merits and teachers' career models
3. Recognized change forces influencing development of teaching competences
4. Organizational culture and informal networks fostering continuous development of teaching competences

Objectives

Share information, knowledge and functional practice to support the systemic and strategic decision-making in the participating universities.



JYU – VU benchlearning: process & elements

Sep 2018

June 2019



At JYU

- Outcomes and action points included in the implementation plan of the strategic development programme of education
- Project description and outcomes included in the audit materials



Benchlearning: lessons learned

- Choose the right partner for the purpose
- Define joint objectives and institutional objectives
- Maximize outcomes: strategic connection
- Build a diverse and multiprofessional institutional benchlearning team
- Avoid administrative chaos: lean project planning
- Documentation throughout the process



**Kærar þakkir.
Kiitos.
Thank you.**

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