



HELSINGIN YLIOPISTO
HELSINGFORS UNIVERSITET
UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI

Quality Assurance in Life-Long Learning (LLL)

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Kauko Hämäläinen, Director, Professor

kauko.hamalainen@helsinki.fi





Palmenia Centre for Continuing Education

SERVICES

- In-service training, continuing education
- Training for unemployed academic people
- Master's programs
- Research and development projects
- Palmenia Uniconf – Professional Congress Organiser
- Palmenia Publishing

FACTS AND FIGURES

- 16 000 students
- 600 training courses and programs
- 110 research and development projects
- 30 international ventures
- 30 publications
- 220 staff (15-20 researchers)
- Annual income 22 MEUR





Content of presentation

- What is LLL in Higher Education
- European, National and Institutional perspectives of quality assurance in Higher Education
- Methodologies and instruments used in QA



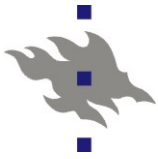
Towards a common definition

ULLL is the provision by HEIs of learning opportunities, services and research for :

- **The personal and professional development of a wide range of individuals, *lifelong* and *lifewide and***
- **The social, cultural and economic development of communities and the region**

It is often developed and/or provided in collaboration with stakeholders and external actors.

It is at university level and underpinned by research



Key elements of LLL

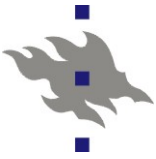
- **Diversity** exists in the definition and the provision of ULLL and
- in its organisation and status within an institution

- **Flexibility** in courses and learning pathways, including validation of non formal and informal learning



Different forms of LLL

- Short and long courses
- University of Third Age
- Professional development programmes
- Bachelor / Masters programmes for adults
- Open University
- Studia generalia
- Training for unemployed



Levels of quality assurance

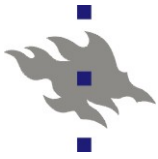
- **Institutional**; universities have responsibility of their quality; they must demonstrate the quality to others; quality systems

- EFQM, Benchmarking
- quality of teaching, learning, research, administration, staff, library, ICT

National

- programme evaluations
- audits, accreditation
- institutional evaluations

- **International**: standards for qa in the European Higher Education Area



Quality of ULLL

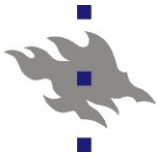
- Quality has many definitions
- E.g. a range of advice and guidance services :
 - To match entrants with learning opportunities
 - To match courses with learner's aspirations
 - To guide learners into and through more individualised learning pathways
 - To support candidates for validation of non formal and informal learning

Quality is defined by stakeholders



European perspectives

- ENQA (European Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in HE) has a mandate to promote European dimension to quality assurance
- EUCEN (European University Continuing Education Network): performance indicator for LLL
- common standards, procedures and criteria on qa in Europe, European Qualifications Framework for LLL (EQF)
- quality criteria for national and regional quality assurance agencies;
 - effective internal monitoring system and
 - external quality assurance



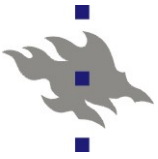
European Quality Framework for LLL

- Aims: to promote citizens' mobility between countries
- facilitate their lifelong learning
- 2012 for countries to ensure that individual qualification certificate bear a reference to the appropriate EQF level
- 8 reference levels in general, vocational as well as academic education and training



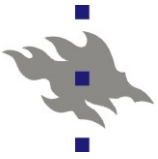
EQF levels

- Levels are described in terms of learning outcomes
- What a learner knows, understands and is able to do = knowledge, skills and competence
- Learning outcomes may be combined from formal studies or work or from informal studies



Examples of levels of EQF

- Level 1: basic general knowledge and skills for simple tasks, work or study under direct supervision
- L 5: comprehensive, specialised, factual and theoretical knowledge and awareness of the boundaries of knowl., comprehensive range of cognitive and practical skills to develop creative solutions to abstract problems
- L 8: knowledge of the most advanced frontier of a field of work or study, most advanced and specialised skills and techniques. Synthesis and evaluation, solve critical problems in research, redefine existing knowledge, demonstrate substantial authority, innovation, autonomy etc.



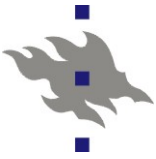
Institutional framework for quality (examples)

- University has a LLL policy
- It has a quality management policy
- Effective feedback and customer satisfaction system
- It has a Unit with responsibility for LLL
- It has a system for validation of prior learning
- It offers individual pathways for learning



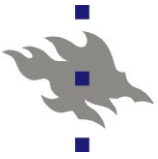
A good quality system (Tavenas 2003)

- Self-evaluation is an essential first step
- Peer evaluation should be the foundation of the system
- Publishing the results of evaluations is the platform for credibility
- Respecting diversity is an essential precondition



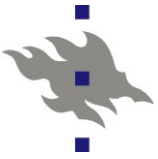
Common standards for programmes

- Tell about the tresholf which should be reached
- Serve as the benchmarks against which each programme can be evaluated and rated
- clear standards for
 - objectives, missions
 - Recources / facilities
 - promramme content and design of curriculum
 - teaching
 - learning
 - evaluation / quality assurance
 - context: university, local, national, international



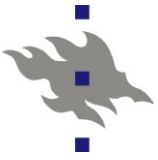
Main trends of evaluations

- Universities have responsibility of their quality; they must demonstrate the quality to others
- Accreditation: institutions, programmes
- Audit
 - What the university is trying to do?
 - How it is going to do it?
 - How does it know that the objectives has been achieved?
- Benchmarking
 - Comparison of good practices
 - Learning from each other



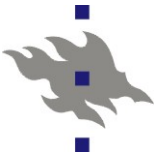
Accreditation

- Gives acceptance (or not) that a certain standard is met in a higher education course, programme or institution. This may be a minimum standard or a standard of excellence.
- Why: student mobility, international recruitment, transparency, international standards, competition from USA
- To move from input criteria to outcome criteria, e.g. in medicine



Targets of accreditation

- Institutions: whether institutions possess a suitable academic environment for the award of degree qualifications
- Programmes: to monitor the content and quality of degree from an objective standpoint and to help institutions improve their courses with authoritative advice involving a dialogue between peers about education, teaching, learning, research and related issues vs. learning results



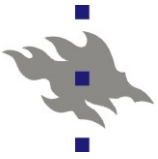
Benchmarking

- is a systematic development process which compare the activities of one organisation or a part of it to the activities of another similar organisation
- Steps: set a target, decide the focus, identify key areas, find the partners, agree the time schedule, agree the data collection, self-evaluation and comparison and report
- A method for organisational learning based on systematic comparison: to learn from best practises
- As a result external comparable information about one's strengths and development needs as well as ideas for development can be found



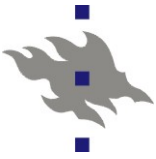
Quality matrix for the self-assessment of teaching, example from Univ. Of Helsinki

- defines the quality of teaching
- essential processes and areas in high-quality education
- areas are ranked: satisfactory, developing, good and excellent
- definitions are concrete
- sets standards for quality



Content of the matrix

- teaching goals
- leadership of teaching
- teaching
- learning results
- resources
- interaction between teaching and research
- feedback and follow-up
- postgraduate studies



Use of the matrix

- for self-assessment as well as for setting concrete objectives
- help individual teachers and students to become acquainted with matters related to quality and its definition
- help planning of the programmes
- used to set criteria when rewarding departments for excellent teaching