



FINNISH EDUCATION
EVALUATION CENTRE

Linking Qualifications Frameworks with Quality Assurance – case Finland

Sirpa Moitus, FINEEC
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Overview of the Finnish context

Ministry of Education and Culture

- Legislation, financing and dialogue with HEIs
- Vision 2030: High-quality, effective and internationally competitive HE system

FINEEC

- Enhancement-led approach
- Quality audits, field-specific and thematic evaluations
- Strategic emphasis: Impact of evaluations
- ENQA member and listed in EQAR

HEIs

- Dual system: 13 universities and 24 universities of applied sciences (UASs)
- HEIs have an obligation to participate in external evaluation of their activities and quality systems

Finnish National Qualifications Framework (FiNQF)



- FiNQF has eight levels
- HE degrees are referenced at levels 6,7 and 8
- Bologna implementation began in early 2000's with nation-wide curriculum reform and adoption of Bachelor – Master degree structures
- Law on FiNQF in 2017, self-certification in 2018
- Topical: Extension of the framework in 2020 (preparatory and training programmes)
- Specific to Finland: Education system with no dead-ends - access from vocational education to higher education

FINEEC's audit model 2019-2024

1 HEI creates
competence

-> QM of degree
education and other
provision

2 HEI promotes impact
and renewal

3 HEI enhances
quality and well-being

4 Learning HEI



NQF appearing in the FINEEC Audit Model Evaluation area 1



- Generally speaking, the links between the quality assurance, national qualifications frameworks and ECTS have been made even more explicit in the FINEEC third round audit model.



- The audit criteria include e.g. definition of learning outcomes; ensuring that degrees and other provision are in line with the NQF and Other Competence Modules; alignment of the teaching methods, assessment of learning, and learning environments with the achievement of the learning outcomes; recognition of prior learning; and systematic monitoring of degree programmes and other provision.



- In order to pass the audit, the HEI needs to have the above-mentioned procedures in place.

The links between NQF and QA at the institutional level – examples

1

NQF is being utilised in **curriculum drafting** and in the **description of common competences**

- *“The criteria for each degree is drafted in accordance with the EQF and FinNQF.”*
- *“There is support available from the HEI central administration.”*

2

NQF is being utilised in **recognition of prior learning** when identifying the level of prior (formal and non-formal) learning

- All Finnish HEIs have institutional RPL policies and processes
- These are supported by national RPL guidelines prepared by the HEIs' networks and endorsed by the Rectors' Councils

3

EQF is being utilised in the context of **international mobility**

- *“EQF and the ECTS system together provide a good framework for study comparability, especially with those countries and HEIs that have a similar approach and agreements.”*



Conclusion

NQF alone is not enough - there needs to be other complementary instruments and practices that support the HEIs in strengthening the learning outcomes approach.

“We should emphasise the learning outcome approach increasingly.”
(Ministry representative)



Thank you!

sirpa.moitus@karvi.fi

www.karvi.fi/en

