

AUDIT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF VAASA

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1.4 The HEI's examples of successful enhancement activities

- HEI's self-assessment

Curriculum maps & Assurance of Learning (AoL): Establishing a systematic framework for confirming ILO achievement

As part of its continuous improvement and work with international accreditations, many programmes now utilize curriculum maps in programme design and planning, and AoL to measure student learning achievements. The mapping exercise requires programme managers and teachers to indicate where ILOs and specific competencies are introduced (I), reinforced (R) and mastered (M), as well as where they are measured. This has produced the following enhancements:

- Programme managers and their faculty have greater clarity about the role of each course in supporting programme ILOs
- Programmes can see where the achievement of programme ILOs is occurring, or not, which is used to identify continuous improvement actions
- Education culture: Greater focus in discussions (between teachers, and with students) on learning, quality, and continuous improvement.

Teaching allocation tool to support work planning and teacher wellbeing

A standardized teaching workload allocation tool has been developed that gives deans and programme managers an improved overall view of the teaching resources allocated to each programme, increasing transparency and harmonizing practices related to teaching resource allocation. The hourly allocations are based on a standardized formula that considers the course size, student numbers, whether it is a new course, and the mode of delivery. These totals are then entered into the formal work planning system (CATS) for approval by superiors. This has led to the following enhancements:

- Greater transparency and perceptions of fairness in workload distribution
- Greater visibility and compliance regarding how allocations align with collective bargaining agreements
- Helped to prevent teaching faculty stress and burnout.

Finnish before Finland

UVA is attracting a growing number of international students. UVA recognizes that the international students need to acquire basic skills in Finnish early on, in order to find employment and stay in the region. To cater to this demand, the [Language Centre Linginno](#) has created a beginner-level, 2-ECTS self-study Finnish course that international students can take fully online during the summer before their studies begin. The course has been successful in the following ways:

- The course connects the students to the university and helps them commit to their studies prior to arriving in Finland. Many students also reported that they have found friends during the course which supports the integration process.
- The course alleviates a significant amount of the pressure of beginner-level Finnish teaching in the fall.
- The course has proven increasingly popular, with more than 170 enrollments for the summer of 2024.

Flipped learning to support flexible online learning and interactive classroom experience

UVA supports teaching innovations and encourages teaching faculty to experiment in curriculum design and delivery. A good recent example was a university-wide initiative to engage BSc teaching faculty in a programme of flipped learning (6 ECTS) in order to adopt more learner-centered teaching methods in large BSc courses. The positive enhancements were:

- Positive feedback from students on learning and flexibility
- Greater student engagement in classroom sessions on campus

- Teacher exchange about their experiences that outcomes on student learning that were published in a handbook
- Encouragement of other teaching faculty to adopt other kinds of new pedagogical approaches.