

AUDIT OF HäME UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

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1.2 The implementation of education

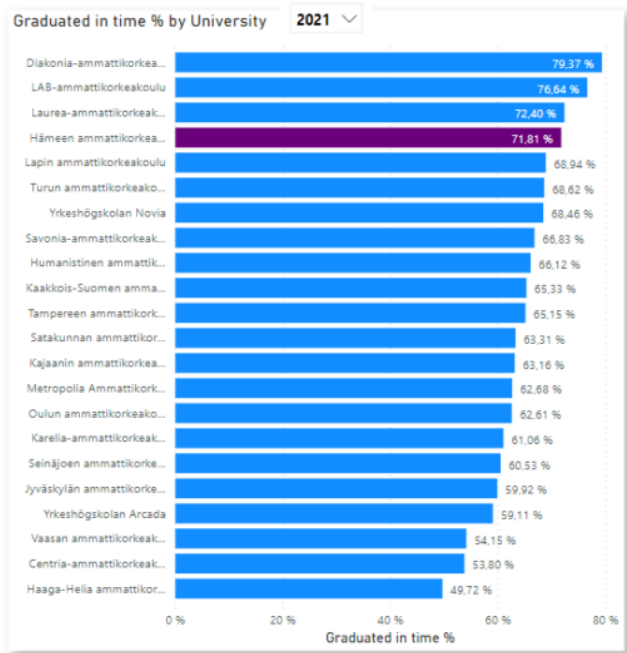
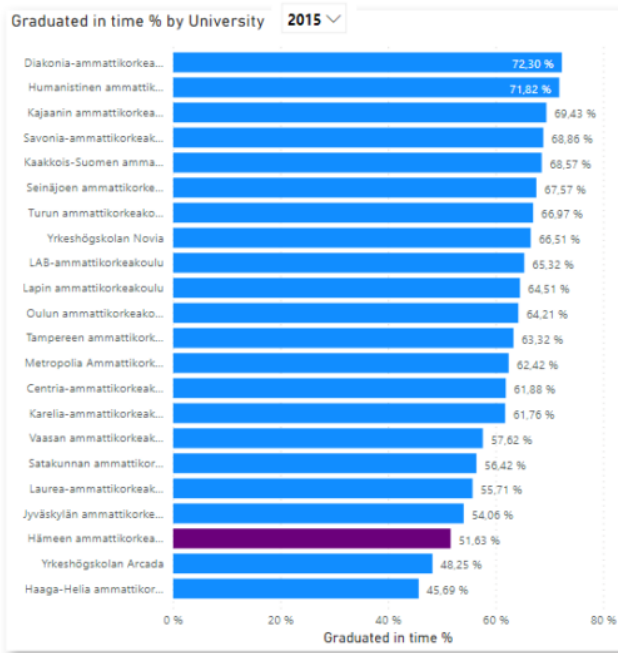
- HEI's self-assessment

The module model supports goal-oriented learning

The implementation of education has systematically been developed from courses towards workplace-oriented, phenomenon-based **modules**. In this model, the phenomena of the labour market are introduced as module projects with a research and development-oriented approach. The international section can be found in all modules. The possibility of international mobility has been incorporated into the module structure of degrees.

The contents of the degree programmes (DP) are presented as a **module map**. The degree is divided into modules of 15 credits, and a module can be divided into smaller units. The student should complete four modules during the academic year, a total of 60 credits per academic year. However, the 24/7 module will be developed so that students can build individual and flexible study plans.

A **teacher team** are responsible for the module implementation. The implementations are based on the curriculum and the [concept of Design Quality for Module Implementation](#). The teams plan the contents of the education, the student's workload, the pedagogical methods and the learning environments to support the student's active role and goal-oriented learning. Feedback from students and employers and information on previous implementations will be considered in the planning. Students receive module-specific support for learning, opportunities for cooperation and interaction with teachers, peers and employers, and feedback on their learning. The Lead team supports teachers technically and pedagogically and coordinates the peer/mentor activities. Joint planning and module structure have had a positive impact on students' timely graduation.



Diverse learning environments enable students to have a vivid and communal learning experience and support the progress of their studies. HAMK uses digital and physical learning environments (incl. forests, gardens, farms, laboratories). Learning and study counselling materials are distributed on the Moodle learning platform, where students can follow their own progress. Studies are supported using digital tools (e.g., Teams, Zoom). Theses, work placements and projects are often carried out in the client's environments.

In 2016, a self-assessment and cross-assessment of the study methods were carried out. It showed that methods 8-16 and 18-100 had been launched successfully, but the 24/7 approach still required work.

The student's own activeness and the progress of studies are supported

Versatile and timely [guidance](#) supports adherence and progress in studies, internationalisation and career planning, as well as the student's active agency and professional growth. Students are provided with guidance by a multi-professional network of actors. The guidance model and the job descriptions of study counsellors (now full-time) have been renewed.

HAMK's learning platform (Moodle) and student's desktop (Pakki) strengthen the students' self-direction and goal-oriented learning by making it possible to monitor one's own studies and make active choices. The [learning experience measure](#) piloted in 2021 supports the student's awareness of his/her own learning and the progress of studies, and the teacher's ability to better consider the different study skills of the group. The competences of teaching staff are strengthened through the HAMK100 programme.

Equality of students is promoted through joint procedures and services

Applicant Services harmonise the application procedure and ensure a smooth connection with

national joint application processes. Transparent student selection is ensured by public admission criteria.

The **Education Support Services** are responsible instructions and procedures guiding the planning and implementation of education. These respond to claims based on legislation and regulations (e.g., [recognition of prior learning](#), progress of studies and completion of degrees and [promotion of equality of applicants and students](#)). The instructions ensure the smooth running and quality of the operations, increase transparency and equal treatment of students.

At the beginning of the studies, all students are offered the digital **Starter Pack**. During their studies, students have access to **library** and **student welfare services**, and services promoting equality. These are mainly available digitally, in Finnish and English and 24/7. **HAMK International** help in matters related to student and staff mobility, internships, employment and integration. Entering the labour market is supported by the **Valo graduation stage service**. During the pandemic, HAMK been faced with new challenges requiring flexible methods and services for international students, in particular. As HAMK has the readiness of offering digital education and services, the pandemic has not caused major problems in this area in general.

The [HAMKO student union](#) monitors issues related to education, degree structure, quality, steering system and internationalisation, and influences through representative institutions and the feedback system. HAMKO appoints student representatives to the Board of HAMK, the HAMK management group and development groups. They monitor the students' interests in their livelihoods, housing, equality, and health and well-being at the local and the national level. HAMKO also serves HAMK's students by organising events and maintaining the HAMK student culture.

Strengths

The module model provides continuous and versatile feedback on the implementation of education.

The development of learning, teaching and learning environments based on research (HowULearn, HowUTeach, LearnWell).

Learning environments are versatile.

Guidance has been restructured and its significance has been recognised.

Education Support Services are strong.

Enhancement areas

The ways in which the module model is implemented varies between degree programmes, (e.g., the role of the module coordinator).

More opportunities and flexibility to students to make their own study plans.

1.2 The implementation of education

- Assessment of the audit team

HAMK has transparent information on students' admission procedures and study paths

All relevant information on student admission and recognition of prior learning is easily accessible and transparent. Study applicants can find various information on HAMK's website - in both Finnish and English languages. The website is well structured and informative. Various entryways to HAMK's programmes are possible, because most of HAMK's degree programmes offer so-called Study Paths. They consist of modules and courses in the first year of a Bachelor's degree and studies in the first semester of Master's degrees. Clear regulations as to RPL, as well as credit transfer possibilities, ensure flexible learning and study completion paths for applicants and students. In the interviews, it became clear that the recognition of previous studies is based on clear regulations and works well.

Clear process descriptions, as well as written guidelines, provide a sound basis for transparency and equality in the admission procedures. The audit team confirms that admission criteria are openly shared and found that they are written in a clear and comprehensible language. HAMK promotes the equality of both applicants and students. Clear instructions that ensure the quality of operations and equal treatment of students are proof of that. Good examples are the Equality Guidelines for students and applicants and Starter Kit of Digital Skills for new students, which helps them to start using HAMK online tools, equipment, environments, and methods already before the actual studies start. This involves digital badges with which the students can demonstrate their competence and helps students to navigate through the studies.

The competence development of HAMK teachers is well taken care of

Particularly due to the Covid-19 pandemic, it has become a necessity for all HAMK teachers and students to learn and teach in online courses. Here, the teachers' competence development with regards to the implementation of online studies was very well supported. A good example of practice concerning the development of teaching skills is the HAMK100 personnel training programme. The interviews confirmed that HAMK is offering many opportunities, such as open badges, on-the-job-learning, mentoring, study circles, online coaching and digi-pedagogical training for developing competence for its staff, based on competence mappings.

In the interviews, it was underlined that HAMK consistently maps the competences required and to be developed, catering comprehensively for staff competence development. One good example of this is the progress in team teaching and peer learning. In discussions with those responsible in the rectorate and faculties, the audit team was able to gain evidence that the measures were developed and decided upon after thorough preliminary clarifications and in-

depth consultations and are therefore well accepted and supported among the teaching staff throughout the university.

Focusing on the success and well-being of students

HAMK's student-centred approach, which begins while designing educational programmes that aim at developing students' competences for work-life and practice, is fostered by various opportunities of flexible learning paths and study methods. The students are guided by a multi-professional network of actors as well as staff and student representatives and tutors, throughout the entire learning process with regard to their professional and personal skills. This competence-enhancing and motivating study environment also means provision of efficient and flexible support services.

HAMK's learning platform, Moodle, and the students' desktop, Pakki, as well as feedback systems like Spark and HowULearn, combined with the use of data from the Power BI system, strengthen the students' self-direction and goal-oriented learning by making it possible to monitor their own studies. Hence, HAMK includes in their decision-making processes various information on the students' learning processes, experiences of the learning environment, general working life skills and well-being related to studying.

In the interviews, students, as well as teachers, expressed their satisfaction with the digital services, as they are handy to use and well accessible. Through further feedback formats, such as the Rector's student consultations, degree programme feedback discussions and student well-being survey, areas of further development as to services are identified and solutions are discussed. A good example of this is the Guidelines for Equality of students and applicants.

The student union HAMKO is also a key partner for HAMK, as they are involved in the monitoring of education, degree structures, quality and well-being. Students can also receive recurring individual guidance offered by student counsellors and tutors; for workplace questions and issues, HAMK's career services provide advice and support. In the interviews, the participation of student representatives, i.e., board, management group and development groups, in quality assurance processes was emphasised as being very pronounced and so were the numerous services offered to make the student study experience at HAMK as beneficial and individual as possible.

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