KANSALLINEN KOULUTUKSEN ARVIOINTIKESKUS
NATIONELLA CENTRET FÖR UTBILDNINGSUTVÄRDERING
FINNISH EDUCATION EVALUATION CENTRE

AUDIT OF HAAGA-HELIA UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

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Auditointivuosi **2023**, Karvin julkaisu **15:2023**
Kieli **Englanti**
ISBN **978-952-206-796-8 pdf**

2.4 The HEI’s examples of successful enhancement activities

- Korkeakoulun itsearviointi

Open UAS implementations with impact

We contribute to the region through continuous learning and enhancing employability. For example, in Aviation Business, employees do not necessarily have a degree, making it difficult to change profession in the case of losing employment. Aviation Business, Open UAS Online responses proactively to the need, expressed by the Finnish and European Pilot Associations. The studies follow the Aviation Business Degree Programme curriculum, but each student has an individual study plan and path. Those with skills through previous studies or work experience can apply for RPL. If the student is accepted for degree studies, Open UAS Online studies are transferred into the degree. This has a proven record of strengthening employability. Haaga-Helia Foundation funded the project that aims at building an online Aviation Degree programme.

We are also an athlete-friendly HEI, offering studies that enable combining sports and studying and facilitate a smooth transition from professional sports to another career. Open UAS implementation in Sports is organised with the Sports College called Varalan Urheiluopisto and Tampere UAS. Our role is to teach and coordinate the cooperation. Pedagogy is work-life based and the implementation method is blended. The implementation applies RPL, Work&Study and

learning design thinking. There is demand for the model and the pass rate has been excellent.

Student project creating a commercialised product and research

The Wihi platform for thesis projects is a success story. The application was originally programmed by our IT-students in the Softala project under the supervision of commercial software company Eduix Ltd. The project included multidisciplinary research work, and several reviewed articles have been published on the topic. The product itself has been sold by Eduix to several UASs in Finland, demonstrating its societal impact.

Experimental development of thesis process

Applied research-based, systematic, and iterative methods for development have been successfully applied in the development of our master's thesis process. In 2019, the master's level education was centralised, the curriculum revised, and Development Group established. The slow pace of graduation was a challenge and for many students, the thesis was the problem. We wanted to strengthen students' professional self-esteem, reduce thesis-related stress, and build new operating methods. The Development Group and teachers started to work on the challenge. Participation was voluntary for all parties. While experimenting, they regularly followed up progress, results, and quality of activities.

As of 2020, appointed counsellors helped students to schedule their thesis work. They experimented with diverse types of thesis groups in 2020-22, because one model would not have worked for all students. At first, they introduced a "thesis train," targeted at students following the previous curriculum who were in a hurry to graduate. Next, they let students to work on cases from companies. Research-based and topical thesis groups were also tested. Finally, they introduced RDI and specialisation specific groups. Students were supported throughout the process. The graduation rate and student satisfaction improved significantly.

Digitalisation of Student Services

Study Services has applied service design thinking to revise its operation and services by involving students and organising various workshops. The Chat, chatbot and online counselling are some examples of the results. Online counselling gives students easy access to guidance during pre-announced working hours. In the autumn 2022, Study Services will start to use a new service management system to keep track of service requests, also enabling the students to give immediate feedback. The goal is to increase effectiveness and transparency.

Education Management programme for TUT directors and supervisors

Haaga-Helia has structured the Education Management programme and exported it to South

Africa. The programme was a one and half years (90 ECTS) part-time master's programme. The first implementation started in the autumn of 2019, with both onsite workshops at the Tshwane University of Technology (TUT) and online learning. Contents and various working methods were modified based on the participants' needs and their personal development plans. Learning was connected to their work and to the university context. Participants developed together, learned from each other, and networked with their peers. In individual development projects, inquiry-based development was practised.

Due to the pandemic, some face-to-face workshops turned into online implementations or were cancelled. Despite challenges, the programme was a success. The drop-out rate was minimal and most of the theses were excellent. The graduation rate and pace of the first intake were exemplary and feedback enthusiastic. The product has been developed further and has great potential for future.