

# AUDIT OF HäME UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

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## 3.2 Supporting the competence development and well-being of the staff

- Korkeakoulun itsearviointi

### The strategy guides competence development

Competence is a slowly-developing capital, and its maintenance is given constant attention. **Competence management** and development are based on strategic objectives and feedback produced by the quality system. Future competence needs are identified in continuous profiling work and interaction with stakeholders. The competence needs of teachers are altered, for example, by rapid changes in the labour market, digitalisation and an increase in the number of students and their diversity.

The **competence mappings** carried out every two years provide information on the state of staff competence, and the areas that are most important from the perspective of the strategy. The competence mapping enables each employee to see their development areas in relation to the learning outcomes set for the task. The results of the competence mapping will be reviewed in the performance appraisal, and areas requiring improvement will be agreed on.

The offer of the **HAMK 100 training and coaching programme** are planned based on the results of the competence mapping. The programme supports both personal development and the development of shared competence in work communities. The HAMK 100 includes internal and other training, coaching, digital badges, and webinars.

In annual **performance appraisals**, the supervisor and the employee together build the employee's personal goals, which support the employee's job description, development, and strategy. Suitably challenging goals motivate development at work, bring a sense of success, and demonstrate the importance of one's own work within overall strategy. The MBO process will thus become more concrete in performance appraisals and the jointly agreed setting of objectives. The practice has been applied systematically to all personnel since 2006. Stara system has been used to record discussions.

The **overall evaluation system** aims to achieve a fair, just, and motivating pay. In it, the employee's basic salary is determined on the basis of the position, competence, and performance. The overall evaluation makes it possible for a person to influence their pay development. The system has been developed by a variety experts, and is evaluated and updated by an Overall Evaluation Group consisting of representatives of personnel and the employer, and different professional groups.

**Recruitment** and building **career paths** are a way to acquire strategically important expertise. Transparency and fairness of recruitment procedures are ensured through open communication and by centralising recruitment decisions on the Recruitment Team managed by HR. The centralisation of activities harmonises implementation and communications, and ensures compliance with legislation and agreements. Recruitment, as a rule, is public. However, in some situations, fixed-term employment relationships can be continued or made permanent without a public procedure. A person can move to other tasks or progress in one's career without recruitment, as competence develops (e.g. Tenure Track).

## Well-being is a common issue for the entire work community

Well-being at work consists of the possibility of continuous development and learning, fair and inclusive management, interaction, and opportunities to influence. The work of **supervisors** is a tool for implementing strategic objectives, and they play a key role in the formation of the employee experience. The role description of the supervisors has been reformed in 2021, and the coaching related to this has been launched. Supervisors also have the opportunity to participate in peer mentoring. The aim is to move from administrative supervisory work to preparatory work that enables employees to flourish. Supervisor work is measured as part of workplace well-being measurements.

The well-being of personnel is **measured** systematically by various atmospheric measurements. The ParTy (better work community) measurement is performed every two years, the Pulse surveys on a quarterly basis, and the risk management survey every four years. During the pandemic, Pulse surveys were conducted more frequently. The risk management survey includes sections for measuring cognitive ergonomics and coping at work. The results of the measurements related to well-being at work are regularly reviewed together with the occupational health service provider in steering group meetings, as well as with the entire

personnel. The results of the ParTy survey have been reported to the BI system.

HAMK offers broader occupational **health care services** than statutory ones, the possibility of **flexible working hours**, and good opportunities for **sports services**. The aim of the **active support model** is to promote the well-being and health of employees, to prevent the loss of work ability, to increase the functionality of work communities and to have a positive impact on the work atmosphere. In 2019, the Knowledge Work Ergonomics **project** was implemented together with occupational health care. HAMK has annual **communal events** for the entire personnel, such as annual Personnel Days event (1-2 workdays) and Christmas events.

Well-being at work and equality are supported through **occupational safety activities**. Occupational safety is responsible for improving the working environment and working conditions, and ensuring that the personnel's work ability and health are maintained. HAMK has two occupational safety representatives.

### Strengths

All functions of competence management are interlinked, each supporting the development of a person's competence and enabling the implementation of the strategy.

Utilisation of the BI system in the development of personnel competence.

Various expert groups are involved in the development of the activities.

### Enhancement areas

Verification of impact, collection of data in order to assess success of well-being measures.

Informing people more openly about career paths through personal competence development.

Equality procedures exist, but indicators require updating and implementation has not yet been completed.

## 3.2 Supporting the competence development and well-being of the staff

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### Doing the correct things right the first time means having the right competences

HAMK's motto for its quality policy "*doing the correct things right at the first time*" implies having the right competences to fulfil one's tasks. Thus, constant and well-targeted competence development plays an essential role in the institution's strategic management. To this end, HAMK has set up various procedures and processes to capture competence development needs of its

staff and uses a variety of tools to continuously monitor both individual as well as institutional competence development. Regular and well-prepared staff performance appraisals and personal meetings help defining individual competence needs and setting personal targets and milestones. Competence mapping and HAMK's *Competence Tree* are diligently used tools to follow both development areas and outcomes achieved. In the interviews, staff also referred appreciatively to HAMK's system of mentors and supervisors for personal guidance, as well as the encouragement for "taking the extra mile" with up-skilling courses or even doctoral studies. The opportunities for experiential teaching and project "experiments" provided by HAMK's Design Factory are valuable means for innovation and personal learning and considered as an asset of HAMK, as the audit team learned in the interviews.

To cater for the rapidly changing pedagogical needs, driven by a dynamic labour market and progressing needs for digital learning, HAMK provides a specific training and coaching programme - HAMK100 - as well as the system of "digi-edu". Labour market surveys and feedback from external stakeholders and partners also serve up-dating competence needs in order to aid graduates in a successful integration into the job-market. This information, too, feeds back into the competence development plans for HAMK's teaching staff. The audit team could learn in the interviews that individual and collective learning for competence development of staff is well supported by HAMK's various measures and initiatives, and that the set of tools, including plans for competence development, forms a comprehensive "living system" of recognised value for all staff members. Furthermore, staff also referred to the "competence gain" stemming from the necessity of providing digital teaching during the Covid-19 pandemic and how helpful "digi-edu" had been in this respect.

## Communication, cooperation, equality, and transparency nourish staff's well-being

For HAMK, people are at the centre of all core areas: well-being of staff at work fostered by fairness and equality, open communication and a motivating work environment are key elements for human resource management. Supervisors help shape employee experiences, surveys are used to capture employee job satisfaction and arising needs for further development. Well-being is closely connected with equality and equal treatment at work and promoted by removing physical, mental and social barriers within operational environments and the practices of working. To prevent any form of discrimination and ensure that each person that is part of HAMK "can study and work on an equal footing with others, regardless of the individual's personal characteristics" (sic Guidelines), HAMK has comprehensively laid down the scope and principles for equality in specific documents (Equality Plan for staff, Guidelines on promoting equality among students and applicants) and published them on HAMK's webpage. The implementation of equality principles for students and staff is monitored and periodically evaluated.

Specific surveys, in the self-evaluation report, referred to as "atmospheric measurements", such as PULSE or ParTy, are regularly used to measure staff well-being; the results of these surveys

also feed back into the BI system and are used in HAMK's strategic management. Specific indicators for well-being measurement might be supportive, particularly for strategic management, and are therefore recommended by the audit team.

The staff expressed explicit appreciation for HAMK's caring attitude for their well-being and competence development, and mentioned the various services offered, such as healthcare and sports services, the flexible working hours, as well as multiple opportunities of cooperation, teamwork and learning from each other. HAMK's actively practised "open door policy", regular team meetings and collegial support also contribute the well-being of staff.

Open communication ensures fairness, equality and transparency within HAMK's work community, and for all institutional processes. Recruitment procedures and requirements are openly communicated and based on centralised decisions. In the interviews, staff convincingly confirmed that they feel well supported according to their needs and value the pleasant and stimulating working atmosphere at HAMK, that fosters their well-being, equality and personal development.