



**Tunne huomisen.  
All for the future.**

**XAMK**

# Quality Management at Xamk



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# Why do HEIs need quality management?

- Finnish higher education institutions (HEIs) are **responsible for the quality and continuous development** of their education and other operations. HEIs are also required to undergo regular external evaluations of their operations and quality systems and to publish the results of such evaluations. (The Finnish UAS Act 932/2014, 14.11.2014 § 62)
- There are two aims for the quality assurance activities of HEIs: **accountability and enhancement**. These create trust in the performance and results of HEIs. (ESG, European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Management in Higher Education)
- The quality system **provides information for the needs of management** and operational steering. Evaluating and enhancing quality makes sure that Xamk **meets the objectives** and **responds to the needs** of stakeholders, customers and staff.



At Xamk we work for tomorrow. We are brave and interested in new developments and the world around us. Continuous evaluation and development of our quality are the essential part of that work.

# What does Xamk quality system consist of?

- Xamk quality systems follows the recommendations of the **European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ESG)**.
- This is ensured through the **audit by the Finnish Education Evaluation Centre (FINEEC)**.
- Xamk's quality system is part of its **strategic planning, management and operational steering**.

- Xamk quality management bases on the **principle of continuous development** of the PDCA model where the four stages form an iterative cycle:

**PLAN – DO – CHECK –ACT (PDCA)**

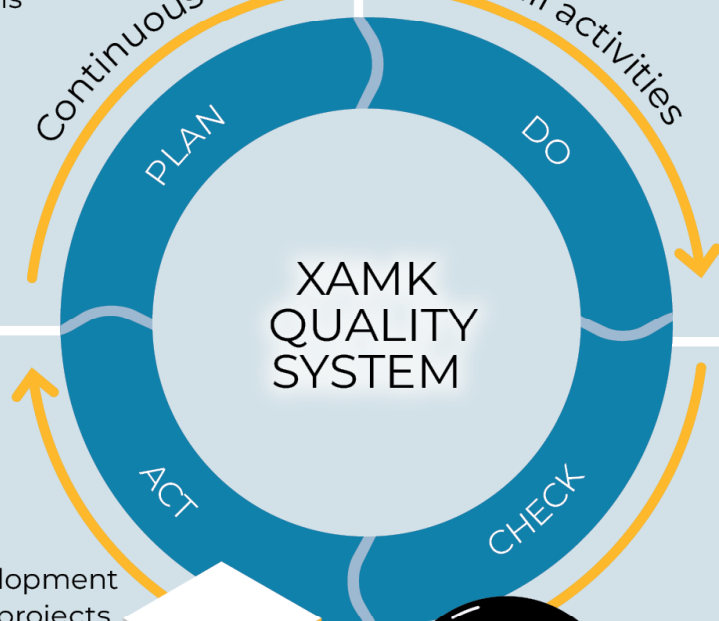
- The quality system consists of
  - **quality policy**
  - **quality responsibilities**
  - the **methods and tools** to continuously assess and improve the activities
- The **quality management description** outlines Xamk's quality management and serves as a quality manual. That description is complemented by
  - Xamk's **process descriptions** in the IMS management solutions software and the instructions and
  - **guidelines** available through the intranets for staff and/or students.



Laws and decrees  
Operating licence  
Agreements with the Ministry  
of Education and Culture  
Xamk strategy  
Operation plans  
Action plan  
Budget  
Curricula



Continuous development of all activities



Core and support  
processes  
Decisions by the  
Management Teams and  
teams  
Guidelines:  
regulations  
programmes  
instructions and other  
guidelines



Strategic development  
Development projects  
Daily improvement  
Development of one's  
own work  
Development of  
competence



Monitoring of results  
Development  
discussions  
Feedback:  
• students  
• staff  
• stakeholders  
Internal reviews  
Self-evaluations  
External evaluations





# Xamk quality system aims are to

- systematically **produce information** to support the management and development of activities
- **ensure** that the information is used to support the development activities at all the levels of the organisation.
- **clarify and harmonise** the responsibilities of all actors concerning quality management.
- **standardise** the practices and to **share good practices**.
- **support the participation** of the Xamk community members – students, staff, and stakeholders – in developing the activities.
- strengthen **the quality culture**, ie the atmosphere of continuous development.

# Continuos development in everyday work

- All Xamk community members make efforts towards quality in our activities and in **providing high-quality services for our students, customers and stakeholders.**
- In **assessing one's own work** and in **making small improvements** all Xamk community members can benefit from the information produced by Xamk quality system, such as course feedback, project assessment results or valuable daily observation as well as immediate feedback from students or other customers.
- Development ideas, their prompt testing and assessment of their functionality are important in terms of **dynamic, agile and flexible operations.**





**Quality assessment and development involves improving activities and maintaining strengths, following targets and requirements, developing competence, meeting customer and stakeholder needs and streamlining processes.**

# Quality policy 1/2

- Xamk values quality. The **strategic management** and **operational steering** base on the information systematically produced by the quality system.
- High-quality operations ensure Xamk's **societal impact** that play an important role in its competitiveness.
- Quality targets, their maintenance and improvement **base on Xamk strategy** and integrate into Xamk's and its different units' operations.
- Quality assessment and development tools selected involve **efficient and economical methods** and operation models that motivate students and staff in improving quality.

# Quality policy 2/2

- Quality work follows the principles of **transparency, reliability and confidentiality**.
- The quality system and the data produced are **documented** on the staff and student intranets and on the Xamk website according to the user group needs.
- **Communication** on the information produced by the quality system is active.

# How does Xamk develop activities and what tools are used?

| Quality tools  |                           |
|--|---------------------------|
| Processes  | Self-evaluations          |
| Guidelines and instructions                              | External evaluations      |
| Feedback   | Monitoring of the results |
| Internal reviews   | Development discussions   |
| Development forums                                       |                           |
| <b>Description of the evaluation and feedback system</b> |                           |

# Processes

**Operational steering**

**Education process**

**RDI process**

**Support services**

# Processes

- Processes are described
  - to establish a **common understanding** of the operations
  - to enable **better development** and attention to activities that are relevant in terms of the process targets.
- Xamk's core processes include **education and RDI processes**
- Support processes are support services process and operational steering process. They support our organisation's operations and create a solid ground for successful core processes
- Processes include subprocesses.
- Processes are **described in the IMS management solutions software** according to Xamk's common process instructions.



# Instructions and guidelines

1. **Statutory instructions**, for example the degree regulation and SORA guidelines.
    - Oblige to all Xamk staff and actors.
  2. **Guidelines for procedures**
    - Common to entire Xamk, more comprehensive than a specific job description or a user guide.
    - Guidelines are drawn up following common instructions and using common templates.
- Stored in the Dynasty electronic records management system and made available through the intranet where the documents are arranged under the specific topic or operation type

## EVALUATION AND FEEDBACK SYSTEM

| Management/<br>unit   | Staff  | Students   | Stakeholder groups               |
|-----------------------|--|--|----------------------------------|
| Monitoring of results | Development discussion                       | Course feedbacks   | Stakeholder feedback             |
| Internal reviews      | Work community development survey            | Arrival survey   | Alumni feedback                  |
| Self-evaluations      | Equality survey                              | Equality survey  | Project evaluations and feedback |
| External evaluations  | Job orientation survey                       | Development forums   | Career monitoring survey         |
|                       | Exit survey                                  | Graduand feedback questionnaire (AVOP)                       | Customer service surveys         |
|                       | Customer service surveys of support services | Customer service survey of Open UAS and continuing education |                                  |
|                       |  | Customer service surveys of support services                 |                                  |
|                       |  | Feedback survey of continuing education                      |                                  |

# Principles of feedback system

- The feedback **results are published**.
- The results are **processed openly** by accounting for **confidentiality** and **data protection**.
- Students also receive **feedback-on- feedback**, in other words, information on the feedback received, possible development activities and their results on courses and through development forums.
- A description of evaluation and feedback system defines responsibility for data analysis and launching development activities. Feedback **results are analysed in different bodies, teams or workgroups, staff meetings, on courses, on development forums and in projects**.

# Monitoring the results

- Monitoring of the results include operational objectives and their follow-up. The results are addressed at least monthly by the Management Team.
- Longer-term strategic goals are also defined and the Management Team monitors the achievement of the goals.

# Management reviews

- Xamk's **top management** carries out management reviews every year.
- These reviews aim at
  - supporting **implementation of Xamk's strategy**
  - **assessing** operations and
  - **supporting and promoting** spontaneous development work.
- The reviews address the **strategic direction, the objectives set, the measures taken and the results achieved**. In addition, the development operations agreed in the previous year are reported and discussed, and new development targets are agreed on
- The reviews are attended by the Management Team, **directors/managers** of departments and units, **staff members and student representatives**

# Self-evaluations



- The **overall evaluation is carried out** approximately every third year. This evaluation results in strategic development projects, for which separate funding is reserved. The implementation is followed in the management reviews.
- **RDI projects** carry out self-evaluation throughout their lifecycle. The main tool used is the Hansa system.
- Continuous assessment is an integral part of degree programme planning, implementation and development, for example, in terms of the **curriculum planning process and pedagogical development**.
- The curricula renewal and update process involves degree programmes's self-evaluation and possibly peer-evaluation. This evaluation relies on the **Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG)**.

# External evaluations



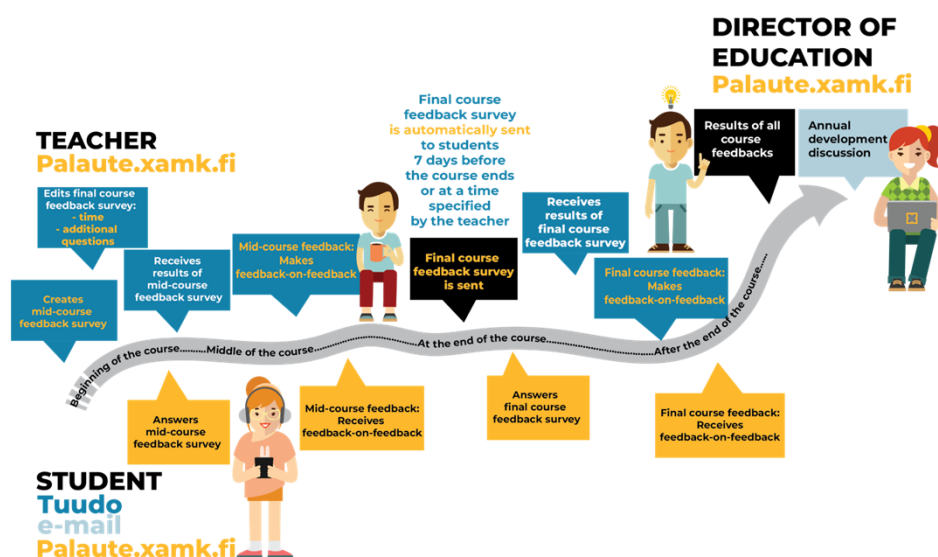
- Through the external evaluation Xamk obtains information on the present state of its operations and its development in relation to other universities and other operational environment.
- Xamk **quality system is audited** regularly (FINEEC audit).
- Xamk also participates in **national evaluations** specific to certain fields of education, certain themes, or that are necessary in specific fields or degree programmes (such as marine technology).
- The **accreditations** of laboratory services

# Development discussions

- Superiors and their staff carry out development discussions **at least once a year**.
- These discussions aim at
  - assessing the results and competence,
  - clarifying the job description and role,
  - giving two-way feedback,
  - defining the targets of work,
  - identifying development needs and agreeing on the actions,
  - promoting cooperation and good work atmosphere.
- Development discussions follow common instructions that are reviewed annually



# Course feedback



- Mid-course feedback and final course feedback **on all courses**
- The teachers collect mid-course feedback in a way that suits best to the course
- The teachers collect final course feedback with electronic form into common feedback system

# Student surveys

- The **arrival survey** collects information about starting of studies, guidance, student tutoring, student satisfaction and the brand of Xamk.
- All degree students and path students of Open UAS respond during their first semester.
- **The equality survey**
  - Every second year for all students

# National student surveys

- The **graduand feedback questionnaire (AVOP)**
  - Degree students respond approximately three weeks before graduation.
  - teaching and learning, internationality, multiculturalism and language studies, career services and connections with the working life, practical training, thesis and the general satisfaction for the studies
- The **career monitoring survey**
  - Degree students who have graduated five years ago
  - Quality of employment and effectiveness of studies, career paths and how competences relate to demands of work

# Development forums

- Staff, students and student union gathers together to
  - discuss the given feedback and students development ideas
  - agree on new actions
  - discuss the impact of earlier development measures.
- All departments of education or degree programmes have at least one forum during a term

# Other surveys and feedback

- The **work community development survey** for Xamk staff, once a year. Results are used to enhance work community, working conditions and management, in departments and on Xamk-level.
- The **equality survey for staff**. Every second year at the same time with the work community development survey.
- **Stakeholder or alumni feedback**
  - The stakeholder feedback for example about the expectations of stakeholders, co-operation with Xamk, the services provided and our role in regional development.
  - Feedback is also collected continuously and non-formal way during projects, RDI-work, co-operation with companies etc.
  - The alumni survey collects feedback for example co-operation and information needs of the alumni.
- Feedback from students and staff **on support services** is also collected (the student office, IT-services, library, internationalisation services...)

# Who create quality?

- Xamk **students and staff as a community** are committed to quality work.
- All **Xamk community members are responsible** for the quality and development of their own activities and actively participate in common development.
- This **atmosphere of collective development** provides foundations to our quality culture.
- Xamk's **quality culture** means an atmosphere of long-term development of operations where strengths and development targets are identified actively and with determination.
- The results are used to launch development actions at different organisation levels with the aim of **continuously improving** the operations, as well as maintaining and making the best of our **strengths**.



# Quality-related responsibilities

| Quality executives              | Quality responsibilities   |
|---------------------------------|--|
| <b>Staff</b>                    | All staff members are responsible for the quality and development of their own activities. They have the right to receive and give constructive feedback to support the development of operations. Staff members also ensure that they follow common processes and guidelines. |
| <b>Students</b>                 | Students are responsible for their own learning and the progress of their studies. They have the right to give constructive feedback in order to develop education and other operations.   |
| <b>Student Union<br/>Kaakko</b> | The student body has the responsibility for student participation in Xamk's development work by naming representatives to the Xamk Board, other bodies and to the degree programme development forums and teams/meetings   |

# Quality-related responsibilities

| Quality executives  | Quality responsibilities   |
|---|--|
| <b>Directors of Education, Research<br/>Directors and unit managers</b> | Directors and unit managers are responsible in their own unit or field for <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- the operational quality and results</li><li>- the functionality of the quality management</li><li>- the launch of the feedback surveys and the related analysis at Xamk level</li><li>- the documentation related to the quality management system at Xamk level</li><li>- the orientation of staff in their own area of responsibility to Xamk quality management.</li></ul> |
| <b>Studies Coordinators</b>   | are responsible for orientating students with Xamk quality management and students quality responsibilities. They organize students to answer to the arrival survey and analyse the results with them as part of xx -course  |
| <b>Degree Programme Coordinators</b>                                    | Degree Programme Coordinators participate in the analysis of degree programme feedback by attending development forum work. They are responsible for taking forward the development activities agreed on.  |



# Quality-related responsibilities

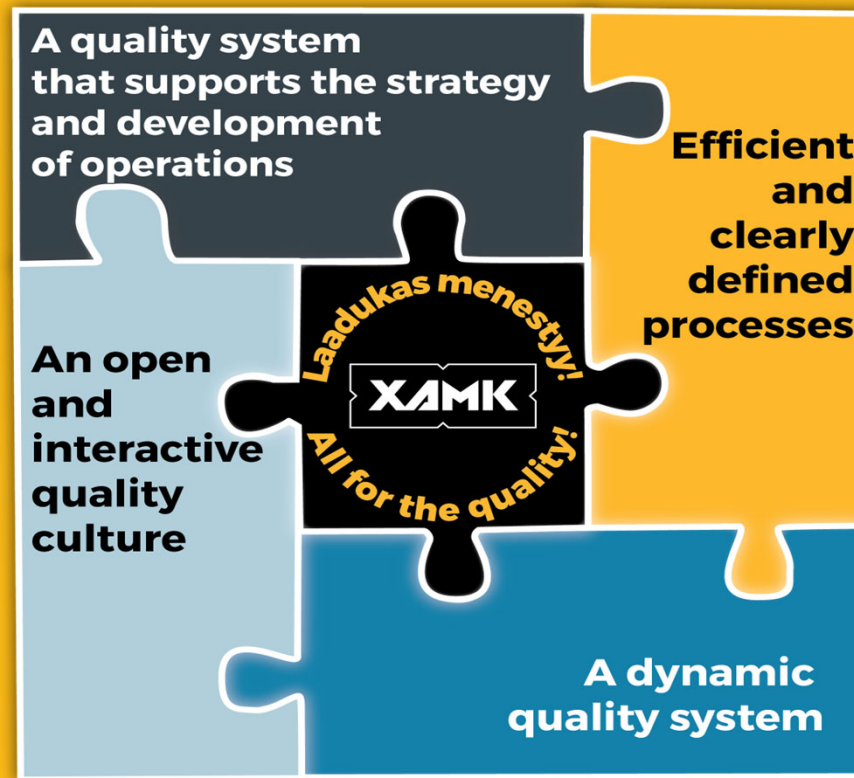
| Quality executives                             | Quality responsibilities   |
|--|--|
| <b>Quality manager</b>                         | Quality manager has overall responsibility for the implementation of Xamk's quality policy through the quality system. Quality Team is chaired by Quality Manager  |
| <b>Quality Team and Quality Services -unit</b> | Quality Team and Quality Services are responsible for <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the development of Xamk's quality system</li><li>• coordinating quality management and providing instructions to the departments and units</li><li>• the internal and (where necessary) external communication related to quality management</li><li>• launching feedback surveys and analysing the results at Xamk level</li><li>• the documentation related to the quality management system at Xamk level</li></ul> |

# Quality-related responsibilities

| Quality executives     | Quality responsibilities   |
|------------------------|--|
| <b>President / CEO</b> | President / CEO has the overall responsibility for the successful management of Xamk's operations and the operational quality and results.   |
| <b>Management Team</b> | Management Team is responsible for the strategic steering of quality management and the launching, monitoring and assessment of development activities at Xamk level. In addition, the Management Team members are responsible for the quality and results in their own areas of responsibility. |
| <b>Xamk Board</b>      | Xamk Board monitors the strategy implementation and achievement of the targets set for Xamk.   |
| <b>Stakeholders</b>    | Representatives of stakeholders contribute to the development of education, RDI activities and business services at Xamk in many ways. They also give feedback and assess operations.  |



# Where is Xamk heading?



# More information

[Xamk quality management description](#)

[Xamk web pages of quality and assessment](#)

[Xamk audit report \(summary\)](#)

[Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area \(ENQA\)](#)

[FINEEC audit manual for HEIs 2019-2024](#)

[Finnish National Education Evaluation Center \(FINEEC\) audit and thematic evaluations for HEIs](#)

[For Xamk Staff at Lux](#) Xamk - Quality

[For Xamk Students at Lux](#), Studies – Student involvement





**We would be happy to tell you more. Please contact:**

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