

The quality system of Volda University College

Approved by the Board of the university college 26.04.2018

1. Quality work at VUC

Sections 1-6 of *The University and Colleges Act (Universitets- og høgskulelova)* state:

Universities and colleges must have a satisfactory internal quality assurance system that will ensure and further develop the quality of education. Student evaluations shall be part of the quality assurance system.

Volda University College (VUC) has elected to concentrate on quality work linked to the following main themes:

- Targets for quality work
- Organization, responsibility and participation
- Evaluation measures related to the five main elements of the quality system
- Systematic retrieval and use of information and other data that provide knowledge of the main elements of the study quality

The Regulations on Supervision of Higher Educational Quality (Forskrift om tilsyn med utdanningskvaliteten i høyere utdanning) states the following about the quality work:

§ 4-1. Requirements for systematic quality work

- 1. The institution's quality work shall be rooted in a strategy and cover all significant areas of importance for the quality of the students' learning outcomes.*
- 2. The quality work shall be rooted in the institution's leadership and management at all levels. Through its quality efforts, the institution will contribute to promoting a quality culture among employees and students.*
- 3. The institution shall have arrangements to systematically verify that the education offered meets the requirements of the Regulations on Quality Assurance and Quality Development in Higher Education and Vocational Education, Section 3-1 to § 3-4 and Chapter 2 of this Regulation, and any additional requirements stipulated by the institution.*
- 4. The institution shall systematically gather information from relevant sources in order to assess the quality of the education offered.*
- 5. Knowledge of quality work shall be used to develop the quality of the education offered and to disclose any failing quality. Failing quality should be corrected within a reasonable time.*
- 6. Results from the quality work shall be included in the knowledge base for assessment and strategic development of the institution's total education portfolio.*

2. Target

VUC's quality system will help to enrich the college's vision:

- *Knowledge for the future.*

2.1 The quality system shall:

- Contribute to continuous quality improvement
- Be developing and dynamic
- Focus on students' learning
- Highlight good quality and uncover failing quality
- Provide information to the leadership and board as the basis for decision making on prioritization and resource allocation
- Clarify who is responsible for what in the development of quality of education

The work of improving the quality of education can be seen as a process with five phases which repeats continuously:

Plan – implementation - acquisition of knowledge - analysis and assessment – measures etc.



3. Management, responsibilities and roles

3.1 Overall responsibility

The Board of the university college has the overall responsibility for the quality system at VUC and handles the annual report on quality for education.

3.2 Employees: Responsibilities and roles

3.2.1 Rector and pro-rector

The Rector is responsible for the quality of the college's education programme. The Rectorate is responsible for the day-to-day follow-up of the quality system. They are also responsible for the establishing and implementation of skills development measures for academic employees.

3.2.2 The Director

The Director is responsible for the operation and maintenance of the quality system. The Director is also responsible for the quality of the administrative units linked to the quality of education.

3.2.3 The Director of Academic Affairs

The Director of Academic Affairs has the overall responsibility for the quality work associated with the VUC education administrative support services. The Director of Academic Affairs, in collaboration with the faculties, will initiate an internal evaluation of the education programme at the university college in order to ensure the quality of the education. The Director of Academic Affairs shall prepare statistics and analyses that the faculties can use in their quality work.

3.2.4 The Human Resources Manager

The Human Resources Manager has the overarching responsibility for ensuring that employments are made in accordance with the quality system and current regulations.

3.2.5 Dean

The dean has the overall responsibility for the quality work and to provide quality culture in the faculty, including:

- to organize the faculty's quality work, and to write and publish the chosen arrangements for employees and students
- ensure that the evaluations have been completed and that the results are followed up by the relevant forums and the Faculty Council

3.2.6 Programme Leader/Head of Studies (Programansvarleg/studieleiar)

The main responsibility of the Programme leader/Head of studies is to coordinate planning, follow-up and assessment of the programme.

More specifically, this means:

1. an overall plan for the programme is made and adequately announced
 - a. proper marketing of the programme is carried out, in consultation with the course convenor (s), the Head of Department and the faculty management
 - b. teachers (lecturers, advisors etc.) and examiners have been engaged for the courses, in consultation with the coordinator, the course convenor (s) and the Head of Department
 - c. plan within the given framework of resources and, if necessary, give feedback to the Head of Department for resources needed to complete the course
2. Coordinate the cooperation between the course convenors on the implementation of the programme
 - a. follow up the learning outcome and the fulfillment of target figures for the programme
 - b. join and develop academic networks relevant to the programme
 - c. follow up students in matters relevant to the programme
3. Systematic assessment of the programme
 - a. follow up issues raised in the student councils in the various courses within the programme
 - b. write the program report that accompanies the academic year and send it to the Head of Department
 - c. coordinate the annual revision of the programme, including registration in EmWeb, in collaboration with the course convenor (s)
 - d. consider the need for major revision of the course, in dialogue with the course convenor (s) and the Head of Department.

3.2.7 The Course Convenor (Emneansvarleg)

The main responsibility of the Course convenor is to coordinate the planning, implementation and assessment of the course.

More specifically, this means:

1. an overall plan for the course (course plan and implementation plan) is made and adequately announced
 - a. proper marketing of the course is carried out, in consultation with the programme leader/head of studies, coordinator, Head of Department and faculty management

- b. teachers (lecturers, advisors etc.) and examiners have been engaged for the course, in consultation with the programme leader/head of studies, Head of Department and coordinator
- c. evaluation of current new literature on the course field, and, if necessary, revision of the curriculum
- d. creation of course work requirements and examination questions for the course, and written sensor guidance for the assignments
- e. to plan within the given resource frameworks and, if necessary, give feedback to the programme leader/head of studies and Head of Department for resource needs to complete the course

2. The daily follow-up and operation of the course

- a. information throughout the semester about the organization and planned completion of the course to the students and employees
- b. follow up students in matters relevant to the course
- c. follow up those who have teaching assignments (teaching in groups, teaching online, guidance, etc.)

3. Systematic assessment of the course

- a. in cases where the course has its own student council, meetings are conducted in accordance with the intention
- b. write the course report that accompanies the academic year and send it to the programme leader/head of studies
- c. contribute to the annual revision of the course, including registration in EmWeb, in collaboration with the programme leader/head of studies and coordinator
- d. consider the need for a major revision of the course, In dialogue with the programme leader/head of studies and Head of Department.

3.2.8 The Lecturer (*faglærer*)

The Lecturer is responsible for providing research-based teaching, guidance and follow-up, and to contribute to the evaluation of education programmes and courses.

3.2.9 The employee

All employees shall take responsibility for quality in their own work and work continuously for their own quality improvement. All employees must contribute to a motivating and stimulating work environment.

3.3 Students: Responsibilities and roles

3.3.1 The Student

The students' rights and duties are governed by the *Universities and Colleges Act (Lov om universiteter og høyskoler)* of April 1, 2005, No. 15, and by the *Regulations on admission, study and examination at Volda University College (Forskrift om opptak, studium og eksamen ved Høgskulen i Volda)*.

The students are responsible for the development of the education quality at the university college. This will be done by representation in boards and committees, and through participation in student evaluations, well-being surveys, etc., facilitated by the college. Students are also responsible for complying with current regulations.

3.3.2 Student Council Member (Fagutvalsmedlem)

A member of the Student Council shall contribute to the evaluation of his/her subject / education programme.

The member of the Student Council shall contribute to the council on behalf of the students on their subject / education programme.

3.3.3. The Student Representative (Tillitsvalgt student)

The Student Representative is the link between a student group and a lecturer/course/programme leader. The representative may also be a member of the Student Council.

3.3.4 Student Parliament in Volda (Studentparlamentet)

The Student Parliament in Volda will work to improve the learning environment at the university college and ensure the students' interests and rights, both academically and socially.

3.4 Committees

3.4.1. Key committees

At VUC we have the following key committees that have been assigned to quality assurance:

- The Strategic Education Committee (*Strategisk studienemnd*)
- The Learning Environment Committee (*Læringsmiljøutval*)
- The Research Committee (*Forskingsutval*)
- The International Committee (*Internasjonalt utval*)
- The Working Environment Committee (*Arbeidsmiljøutval*)
- The Appeals Committee (*Klagenemnda*)

3.4.2 The Faculty Council (Avdelingsråd)

The Faculty council shall handle the quality report from the faculty. See also section 5.2.2.

3.4.3 Student Council

The Student Council should be a forum for feedback and evaluation underway in the course of the education. It is also an aim that the students and teachers develop an academically critical attitude.

All educational programmes with more than one year of study (Bachelors and Master's programmes) must have a Student Council in which students from all years/year groups are included.

It is optional to organize other Student Councils, regardless of the type of education/duration of courses.

For online students, there must be own evaluation plans, and it must be clearly stated in the programme description.

3.4.4 Doctoral Degree Committee for Health and Social Sciences (Doktorgradsutval for helse- og sosialfag)

The Doctoral Degree Committee for health and Social Sciences is responsible for quality assurance and development of study plans and course plans. The programme leader is responsible for devising a quality assessment report based on course evaluations, student council minutes and study programme evaluations. This quality report will be presented to the Doctoral Degree Committee for approval. The report shall be integrated into the overall quality report of the faculty.

4. Main elements of the quality system

National Agency for Quality in Education (Nasjonalt organ for kvalitet i utdanninga, NOKUT) has named the student's life at an educational institution – from admission to a recognized diploma – the student's *learning path*. There must be quality on all levels, from the student's first contact with the educational institution through good information at admission – until the student leaves the institution with a diploma in his/her hand.

VUC has selected five quality areas that shall make up the structure of the quality system and which will ensure the quality of the student's learning path:

1. Quality of recruitment, information and student reception
2. Frame quality
3. Programme quality
4. Quality of results
5. Relevance quality

For each of the five quality areas there are defined targets, measures and responsibility placement.

On VUC's website there are templates and examples for use in the various quality areas.

4.1 *Quality of recruitment, information and student reception*

Target	Measures	Responsible
--------	----------	-------------

VUC shall have academic employees with high competence	Research Programme Competence Enhancement Programme (Link to HMS System)	The Rectorate/the director/the deans/ The Human Resources Manager/ Director of Research
Students will participate in decision making at VUC	Regular meetings between the Rector, Director, Director of Academic Affairs, Leader and deputy for the Student Parliament and the Director of Studentsamskipnaden Students should be represented in the Board of the college university and in councils	The management of the Student Parliament VUC and the Student Parliament
VUC must offer a good administrative support system	Evaluation of student administrative services and IT services Competence raising measures	Director of Academic Affairs/ The Manager of the IT services/Canvas-responsible Director/The Human Resources Manager
VUC must have an academic library with relevant literature and knowledge bases that are of high quality	Annual review of priorities and routines in connection with purchasing and facilitation of information UH network	Library Manager Library Manager

4.3 Programme quality

Programme quality includes the quality of study plans and the implementation of studies.

Target	Measures	Responsible
VUC will offer teaching of high academic and educational quality	All academic employees must have pedagogical basic competence (link to the following documents) Course in pedagogical basic competence Merit System	Prorector/The Human Resources Manager/the deans Faculty of Humanities and Teacher Education Prorector and The Human Resources Manager
VUC will have good education management at all levels	All programmes of study must have a programme leader / head of studies VUC must provide for holistic education and ensure coherence in the programmes of study	The Deans Programme leaders/ head of studies

	<p>VUC must provide for varied teaching and assessment methods, and provide a clear description of learning outcomes</p> <p>VUC must provide for a good correlation between learning outcomes and teaching and assessment methods</p> <p>VUC must provide for the highest possible degree of universal design in the teaching</p> <p>VUC must enable students to give feedback underway in the course</p>	<p>Programme leaders/ head of studies</p> <p>Programme leaders/ head of studies</p> <p>Programme leaders/ head of studies</p> <p>Course convenor/ Programme leaders/ Head of studies/ Lecturers</p>
VUC will ensure the quality of new programmes of study and new courses of study	<p>External peer review of new programmes / courses</p> <p>External assessment the first time courses are being conducted</p>	<p>Dean, programme leader/ head of studies and course convenor</p> <p>Dean and course convenor</p>
VUC will have an international and diverse learning environment	<p>VUC will organize international day annually</p> <p>VUC is going to staff Pangaia, the international meeting place</p> <p>VUC will host an international club</p> <p>VUC will have curriculum literature that reflects the latest international research in the field</p>	<p>International office</p> <p>Director of Academic Affairs</p> <p>Pangaia</p> <p>Academic employees</p>
VUC will offer students and employees to study abroad at renowned educational and research institutions	<p>Close contact with foreign institutions</p> <p>Student evaluations (as part of a user survey and / or a candidate survey)</p>	<p>Programme leader/head of studies, dean, director of Academic Affairs</p> <p>Director of Academic Affairs, programme leader/head of studies and dean</p>
VUC will offer students guidance related to the planning and implementation of their education	<p>Individual education plan review for students of 60 credits or more</p> <p>Student guidance</p> <p>Routines for enrolment and handling unfortunate events for students</p>	<p>Programme leader/head of studies</p> <p>Study advisor</p> <p>Director of Academic Affairs</p>

VUC must have a high response rate on <i>Studiebarometeret</i>	<p>VUC will seek all 2nd year students on Bachelor and Master's degrees, and inform about Studiebarometeret, and provide students with time and guidance to respond to the survey</p> <p>The Student Parliament shall inform and engage the student representatives and fellow students so that the response rate at VUC becomes high</p>	<p>Prorector and Director of Academic Affairs</p> <p>Student Parliament</p>
Supervision of existing programmes of study	<p>External evaluation: The Strategic Education Committee chooses annually 3-4 programmes that will have external evaluation, and selects the theme for the evaluations. Programmes may also request to be externally evaluated</p> <p>Candidate survey for educations which are chosen for external evaluation (students who were finished 1-3 years back in time)</p> <p>Internal evaluation: All programmes of study must be evaluated on a continuous basis</p> <p>All courses must be evaluated on a continuous basis</p> <p>Compulsory Student Councils in all educations over more than one year, and possibly also at the course level</p>	<p>Dean and programme leader at the selected studies in cooperation with The Strategic Education Committee</p> <p>Director of Academic Affairs</p> <p>Programme leader/ head of studies</p> <p>Course convenor</p> <p>Dean, programme leader/head of studies, course convenor, lecturer</p>
Programmes of study and qualifications framework	<p>Programme descriptions and course plans shall be prepared in accordance with <i>the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education</i></p> <p>Annual audit of existing programme descriptions and course plans</p>	<p>Dean</p> <p>Dean</p>

4.4 Quality of results

Quality of results includes throughput and character distribution

Target	Measures	Responsible
--------	----------	-------------

VUC will have a continuous overview of the flow rate and character distribution between the candidates	<p>Analysis of failing percentage, grades distribution and grades development over time</p> <p>Prepare statistics on the relationship between admission quality and quality of results within selected educations</p>	<p>Deans/Director of Academic Affairs</p> <p>Director of Academic Affairs / Programme leader/ head of studies</p>
VUC will ensure that the students get a fair assessment	<p>All courses must have external assessment at least every third year</p> <p>All examinations must have a sensor guidance</p>	<p>Dean/course convenor</p> <p>Course convenor</p>
VUC should be among the best on the flow of Bachelor degrees	<p>Analysis of progression and the completion of Bachelors degrees</p> <p>Close follow-up of the students who are delayed</p> <p>Invite students who are delayed to individual education plan reviews</p>	<p>Director of Academic Affairs/deans/ Programme leader/ head of studies</p> <p>Programme leader/ head of studies</p> <p>Programme leader/ head of studies</p>
VUC will increase the throughput in the Master's degrees	<p>Follow up the measures in the plan of action for completion in the Master's degrees</p> <p>The Strategic Education Committee shall evaluate the plan of action</p> <p>VUC will work to achieve understanding of the need for Master's degrees as a lifelong learning and the need for alternative organization of the course of study</p>	<p>Dean/ Programme leader/ head of studies</p> <p>The Strategic Education Committee</p> <p>Rector/director/ deans/director of Academic Affairs</p>

4.5 Relevance quality

Target	Mesaures	Responsible
VUC shall offer programmes of study that is relevant to work in the private and public sectors	Close contact with the field of practice, as well as feedback / evaluation from the place of practice and students in practice	Programme leader/ head of studies and course convenor

	A description of learning outcomes in line with the qualifications framework in all programme descriptions and course plans	Dean, programme leader/head of studies, course convenor
	VUC should have employees with relevant experience from the practice fields	Dean and the Human Resources Manager

5. Evaluation, reporting and development

Good information and feedback flows are vital components of the quality system, as they will help to share knowledge, learning and development in the organization. Reports from the various evaluation measures must be available to students and employees in Canvas.

If problem areas are revealed and reported on to the system, written feedback has to be given on what has/will be done and who is responsible for the follow-up of the problem.

Under section 5.2 there is a more detailed description of reporting and feedback routines.

5.1 Review of central evaluation measures

5.1.1 The faculty's quality report (*Avdelingane sin kvalitetsrapport/Studiekvalitetsrapporten*)

The faculty's quality report must be handled in the Faculty Council. The Faculty Council shall be composed of representatives from the students, the academic community and the administration of the faculty. The Council discusses and follows up results across the faculty.

5.1.2 Student Council for study programmes (*Fagutval for studieprogram*)

The Student Councils shall be the link between the students and the lecturers on the study programmes. The Student Council shall be able to discuss courses and educational plans, completion of the education, and give feedback on the study programmes.

The work of the Student Councils shall be based on the guidelines for the Student Councils. All study programmes which lasts more than one year, must have a Student Council. Besides this, the faculty elects the structure for Student Councils and whether they want other/more Student Councils in the

faculty. The Student Councils must include both students and academic employees, and there must be at least one meeting per semester.

Approved reports from meetings in the Student Council shall be sent to the Dean for continuous assessment and any further follow-up.

5.1.3 Individual Education Review/Individual Education Plans

The education plan shall facilitate the students to pass through the programme at a specified time and shall deal with guidelines, information and education planning. Educational plans shall ensure a closer and more committed relationship between the individual student and the institution. The education plan shall be a tool for both parties in the planning and implementation of a study programme.

A student with a degree of 60 credits or more will be appointed a student adviser at the start of education. Early in the first semester, the student adviser will offer an education review, individually or in groups. Later in the course of the study, the parties should conduct a quarterly education review, individually or in groups.

The implementation of education reviews is based on the guidelines for education plans. Times follow the schedule in the calendar for the students' academic year.

5.1.4 Evaluation of programmes of study

The evaluation of programmes of study shall give students and programme leaders/heads of studies the opportunity to provide feedback on the planning and completion of each programme. This evaluation only applies on programmes of 60 credits or more.

The Strategic Education Committee choose programmes of study that will have an external evaluation. When there is no external evaluation, a simpler form of internal evaluation will be conducted. This will be based on the course evaluations included in the programme, Student Council reports, sensor reports and any additional evaluation elements that the academic community initiates. All evaluation shall form the basis for systematic analysis, professional discussions and any improvements in the quality of the study.

The programme leader/head of studies summarizes all feedback and discusses the results together with the course convenors within the programme. This, together with any relevant measures of improvement, forms the basis for a written report on the study programme. The report should also contain comments on the course evaluations for the courses included in the programme (see below).

The Dean analyses all reports on the study programmes and prepares the faculty's quality report. The report will then be submitted to the Faculty Council and is processed there. Then, as part of the annual report for education quality, the report goes to the Strategic Education Committee and Board of the university college. The reporting follows the academic year.

The results of the evaluations shall be known to the students.

5.1.5 Joint PhD degree with Molde University College

The report for the PhD degree is submitted for the Doctoral Degree Committee and will be held there. Then, the report goes on to the Dean for the Faculty of Social Studies and History. The PhD programme is evaluated in accordance with the quality system of Molde University College.

5.1.6 Evaluation of courses

The evaluation of courses will give the students and the course convenor the opportunity to provide feedback on the planning and completion of each topic.

The course convenor summarizes the feedback and discusses the results with the students and the academic community. This, together with any relevant measures of improvement, will be written in a short report that goes to the programme leader/head of studies (see above).

5.1.7 Quality assurance of new study programmes and courses

Peer review

Peer review of new programmes and courses will ensure an external evaluation of new study offers. All new programmes and courses of 15 credits or more will be considered by two external professionals from two different institutions prior to the approval of the programme/course. The peer review shall be submitted to the faculty's application and administrative procedure, for the final approval of new course plans and programme descriptions.

Procedures for preparation, design and approval of course plans, and programme descriptions, are provided by guidelines for course plan and programme description work.

External assessment

In addition to the usual evaluation measures, all new subjects must have at least one external examiner at the first exam.

5.1.8 Survey on education start

VUC wishes to receive feedback on how well the university college succeeds in giving good and relevant information about studies and the quality of the reception students receive at the start of the semester. The joint administration conducts the survey on the start of the semester.

5.1.9 Internal evaluation of start of teaching

VUC has prepared one overall plan for teaching start and student reception. The Strategic Education Committee evaluates the education start each autumn.

5.1.10 Messaging service for students

On the web page for students, there is a messaging service – *Sei i frå!* – where students can give feedback about unfortunate events to VUC. The Director for Academic Affairs, the Student Advisor and the Operations manager is responsible for following up the input and issues that are reported.

5.1.11 Examiner Guidance

VUC must have examiner guidance for each examination. Examiner guidance will help to ensure quality of the determined learning outcomes and to reduce inequalities in the assessments between examiners.

5.1.12 Studiebarometeret (the "Study barometer" – study evaluation)

Results from the *Studiebarometer* will be discussed with students and in the academic community. The results will also be mentioned in the reports on the programmes of study and in the faculty's quality reports.

5.1.13 Strategic Assessment of the programme of study portfolio (strategisk vurdering av studieprogramporteføljen)

VUC uses the «SEFØ model»:

- Strategic assessment
- Demand
- professional sustainability
- Economic sustainability

5.1.13 Merit System

(Information about this will be later)

5.2 Reports from the course convenor / programme leader / head of studies and faculties

5.2.1 Basis Reports

Following reports form the basis for the faculty's quality reports:

Student Council reports

A report must be written from meetings in the Student Council to be published for students and academic employees in Canvas.

Examiner Report

In case of external assessment, the external examiner must prepare a report to be sent to the course convenor. The report from the external examiner must contain a statement about the examiner guidance, an evaluation of the assessment scheme in the course, if possible, and a statement about the exam assignment(s). The report from the external examiner shall provide a review of the exam assignments regarding the learning outcomes of the course.

Evaluation of courses

The course convenor writes a short report for his/her course, and sends it to the programme leader/head of studies for the programme to which the course belongs. Reports of the course can be submitted in the Student Councils at the programme to which the course belongs. The reporting follows the academic year.

Evaluation of the programme of study

The Programme leader/head of studies writes a summary report for his/her programme of study (see 5.1.4). The report will be sent to the Dean and will be included in the faculty's Quality Report.

External evaluation of programme of study

Strategic Education Committee chooses each year an education programme of at least 60 credits for external evaluation. The Programme leader/head of studies and Dean are responsible for compiling a report to be handed in to the Faculty Council. The Strategic Education Committee shall be briefed about the report.

Studiebarometeret

The programme leader/head of studies analyses the results of the Studiebarometeret for his/her programme of study. Results must be published for the students and in the Student Council at the programme level. The results shall be part of the basis for the reports on the study programme.

5.2.2 The faculty's quality report

Yearly, each Dean shall prepare a report on the quality of education based on reports from the study programmes. The reporting follows the academic year and after being handled in the Faculty council it shall be sent to the Director of Academic Affairs, within 1 October.

The faculty's quality reports shall:

- Provide an overall review of the quality of education and education offered by the faculty, and a review of the results and measures in the quality work
- Give a review of quality work based on the five main elements of the quality system
- Identify any problems that the faculty cannot solve

5.2.3 Annual report for education quality

Strategic Education Committee prepares an annual report on the quality of education on the basis of:

- The faculty's quality report
- A summary of the beginning-of-term survey
- Statistics from the target areas *Recruitment, Information and Student Reception, Framework, Programme, Performance and Relevance Quality*
- Results from *Studiebarometer* at VUC

The annual report shall provide an overall evaluation of the quality of education at the institution. The report shall also give a review of the plans and measures in the quality work.

The annual report shall contain proposals for measures of improvement and prioritization of resources for the submitted proposals, and how these measures will be followed up.

The annual report follows the academic year. It will be submitted to the Board of the university college in time for the results of the report to be included in the budget and annual plans for the coming year.