

27.3.2026

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Title

The usefulness of quality assurance for university management and academic staff : a case study of Finland and Iceland / Arja Haapakorpi, Gudrun Geirsdóttir and Hyda Jóhannsdóttir

Publication year

2013

Source/Footnote

In: European journal of higher education. - 3 (2013) 2, S. 206 - 219

Inventory number

34780

Keywords

Qualitätssicherung ; Evaluation ; Hochschule : Verwaltung allgemein ; Ausland : Finnland : Hochschulwesen allgemein ; Ausland : Island : Hochschulwesen allgemein

Abstract

With quality assurance related to the Bologna goals, universities are required to fulfil internationally accepted standardized criteria of quality. This tends to reinforce control in assessment. However, control-oriented evaluations seem to lack meaning for academic staff. The article explored the possibilities and space for improvement-oriented evaluation within quality assurance processes. The implementation, outcomes and utilization of audits/accreditation processes in three universities in Finland and Iceland are explored. The data consists of documents and interviews. The findings indicate that despite increasing control of universities there is still an opportunity for improvement within the quality assurance processes. Improvement is related to the preparatory phase of the evaluation process, where staff is actively engaged in the process, leading to utilization of outcomes. The external phase with control dominance lacks meaning for staff and has limited utilization. A shortage of credibility regarding assessment is a threat to quality assurance legitimation and

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utilization. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)