

# *Assurance of Learning Policy*

## **Purpose**

The aim of the Assurance of Learning (AoL) policy is to provide a framework which helps to ensure that students can demonstrate achievement against stated learning outcomes at a specific level, and which informs internal and external stakeholders about the results of continuous quality improvement at Hanken School of Economics (Hanken).

## **Scope**

This AoL policy applies to all programmes at Hanken.

## **Definition**

**Assurance of Learning** (AoL) is a tool the School uses in order to assure that the graduates have the knowledge and skills that are required and expected of a BSc, a MSc, a PhD and an Executive MBA graduate of Hanken. It is a data driven continuous improvement process.

## **Policy**

Hanken's AoL policy embeds practices and procedures relating to curriculum development, teaching and learning, and assessment.

## **1. Identification of Learning Outcomes**

### *1.1 Competency Goals*

Hanken has four general **competency goals** (CG).

The following knowledge and competence areas are the basis for the competency goals:

1. Knowledge in economic sciences and/or the subject area in question.
2. Academic skills (analytical thinking, methodology, information literacy).
3. Communication skills (linguistic and communication competence, leadership and other skills).
4. Skills for working responsibly and in an international environment.

Each programme has specified competency goals in order to suit its level (BSc, MSc, PhD or EMBA). There are also competency goals available for each course.

By comparing the students' performance with expectations, Hanken gets the information on how well the students fulfil the programme specific goals. In these measurements Hanken uses **AoL assessment rubrics**. The AoL data is analysed on programme level, which means that it is not single students who are assessed, but the contents and structure of the programmes.

Once the competency goals (CG) and the basis for assessment are clear to the students, they know what is expected of them. Then it is also easier for the students to do well in their studies. Therefore, Hanken encourage students to acquaint themselves with the competency goals of their programme and courses.

### *1.2 Learning Outcomes*

Hanken's competency goals are based on the School's mission and degree regulations. The competency goals describe the knowledge and skills the students should obtain with the education. Thereafter, measurable **learning outcomes** (LO) are formulated as operational definitions of learning.

## **2. Curriculum Aligned with Competency Goals**

The curriculum is defining what, when, and how students will learn in a systematic and purposeful way. Therefore, curriculum for each subject at Hanken is designed to deliver knowledge and skills that are relevant for programme competency goals.

Expected learning outcomes define the overall information, knowledge, or understanding a student should master upon a successful completion of curriculum. The curriculum alignment is presented in **curriculum maps**.

Hanken is not anticipating that every subject will contribute equally to each of the learning outcomes. As a result of the learning experience of the whole curriculum students achieve knowledge and skills progressively throughout their study.

## **3. Assessment Aligned with Learning Outcomes**

Assessing learning outcomes is essential for monitoring student learning, as well as for the learning process itself.

The assessment of the learning outcomes enables Hanken to evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum in terms of achieving the expected learning outcomes. It also provides students with useful information about their current skills, knowledge, and competencies. Assessing the learning outcomes is critical for continuous improvement at all levels at Hanken.

## **4. Data Collection, Analysis and Dissemination of Student Performance Information**

Hanken uses direct and indirect measures to evaluate student learning and to continuously improve the quality of teaching and learning. Assessments are mainly done in theses using standard rubrics. The students are given notice of assessments and rubrics in advance. Rubrics are developed by the AoL Committee in cooperation with faculty. The assessment data is collected in specific courses and theses according to the assessment plan.

The AoL Committee is guiding the data collection, and analysing the assessment of student learning. The findings/results are reported to the Department Councils and to the Academic Council. The Department Councils are responsible to review the assessment data, to discuss the results and in cooperation with the AoL Committee to recommend actions for improvements.

Throughout the whole process, Hanken is committed to protecting the privacy of its students including ensuring the confidentiality of student work submitted for assessment as well as the feedback resulting from assessment activities.

## 5. Continuous Improvement

Continuous improvement is the last step in closing the loop (Plan-Do-Check-Act) before starting again.

At Hanken the Academic Council monitors the overall process and endorses the continuous improvement. As a result of the AoL process, actions to improve student learning, revision of the curriculum and enhancement of the assessment plan are made within curriculum management.

## 6. Division of Responsibilities

- **Academic Council** (incl. **Education Council**) – Is responsible for the Assurance of Learning process, coordinates the quality assurance work, approves competency goals and curricula (incl. curriculum maps)
- **Committee for AoL and Quality** (chaired by the **Dean of Programme and Quality Assurance**) – Collects data and analyses results of student learning, proposes and prepares curriculum changes, defines/revises competency goals and learning outcomes, checks curriculum maps, approves rubrics, proposes assessment changes
- **Board** - Approves programme changes
- **Department Councils and EMBA Council** - Analyse assessment results, revise curriculum maps, recommend curriculum and programme changes
- **External Stakeholder Group** - Gives input on competency goals and curricula
- **Faculty** – Collect assessment data (using rubrics), analyse results of student learning, recognise problems, suggest solutions and new courses, implement changes

Responsibilities and timeline are defined in the Hanken Quality Handbook, the AoL Academic Calendar and the Assessment Plan.

## 7. Key Elements, Benchmarking and External Review

International accreditations are the key elements in Hanken's quality assurance and improvement system. Therefore, Hanken's approach to Assurance of Learning (AoL) complies with international standards and criteria.

Assurance of Learning (AoL) at Hanken is based on and inspired by national and international best practice. For example learning outcomes, curricula, assessments, and teaching practices are gender neutral and non-discriminatory.

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