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Research Evaluation of the University of Tampere 2004

FINAL REPORT

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PREFACE

The purpose of this report is to document and assess the research evaluation process carried out in the University of Tampere in 2003–2004. Our aim is to provide the reader with further understanding of the decision-making process of the evaluation, and be of assistance with the planning of possible future evaluations.

The research evaluation was initiated by the University. As Marja Jylhä, the vice-rector in charge of the research (1999–2004) in the University of Tampere, stated in the University's culture and science periodical *Aikalainen* (16/2003), what motivated the evaluation was improving the status of the University of Tampere as a research university, as well as getting a good idea of its current standing. In addition to the increases in both the funding received from the Academy of Finland, and the rate of produced publications, there have been various changes in the University's research environment, following the increasing internationalization and new structuring of research funding. In its strategy, the University of Tampere has stated as one of the objectives that all its teachers do research, and all of its researchers teach. Supporting and developing the quality of academic research is prioritized in the strategic plan of the University.

The research evaluation sought to assess the level of research in the University of Tampere and at the same time to provide a basis for outlining its future development. The aim was to assist individual researchers and departments in drawing up explicit research strategies for the future. The evaluation would also serve decision-making in matters concerning research activities at the University. Another important goal was to help the university make informed decisions about its research policy.

The research council of the University discussed the evaluation process on a general level in the spring of 2003. In the discussions several issues were raised, e.g.: evaluation should focus on quality rather than quantity and support lively discussion and creativity, and generally be focused more toward the society than inside the University; the multidisciplinary and social character of the University should be taken into account in the evaluation.

The research evaluation conducted in the University of Tampere is the third of its kind in Finland. Analogous evaluations have been conducted in the Universities of Helsinki and Kuopio. Currently, the University of

Helsinki is in the process of its second evaluation, and the University of Jyväskylä is carrying out the first one.

The panel reports are available as a separate publication and also on the Internet at <http://www.uta.fi/tutkimus/arviointi/index.html>.

The evaluation organization is grateful to all the panelists and cooperation partners, especially the personnel in the Planning office and executive secretaries Idel Kantola and Taru Olanterä for giving advice in many kinds of practical matters. Other coordinators of the evaluations, especially Antti Arjava, Jouko Aho and Katri Haila have provided their support and experiences throughout the process. We would also like to thank Tiia Fagerberg for brushing up our English.

I ELEMENTS OF THE EVALUATION PROCESS AND FEEDBACK

1. BASIC DECISIONS

The main points concerning the research evaluation of the University of Tampere were the following:

The evaluation was initiated by the University. The comprehensive evaluation of the quality of the research was conducted on the University's own initiative. The evaluation was carried out, as planned, during the years 2003–2004. The evaluation was carried out as a peer review by external, international panels which consisted of experts from various fields.

The subject of the evaluation was published research. The basic principle of the research evaluation of the University of Tampere was to determine *the quality of research with focus on the research output*. The focus was on the academic output, that is, on published research. The evaluators were specifically asked to address the quality of the submitted publications from a field-specific, international perspective. If the subject of the evaluation had been the whole research activity of the University, including organization, funding etc., the evaluation process would have become too time-consuming and expensive to be feasible.

The unit evaluated was the individual department. This international evaluation was the first external evaluation to assess the research performance of all departments and institutes at the University simultaneously. The evaluation period was 1999–2003, and the basic unit assessed was a department (excluding the Department of Acting, which decided to withdraw from the evaluation). A department was chosen as the evaluation unit, as it has an important operational role both in research and in finance in the University of Tampere.

The evaluation included two separate and graded dimensions. Grade I: "The level of research with regard to the international level of research in the field" and Grade II: "The contextual and practical importance and quality of research". Both grades were defined with regard to how the quality of research manifested in the publications evaluated. The University of Tampere is multidisciplinary with a wide range of disciplinary areas. For

this reason, conducting comparisons only on an international level (Grade I) was considered inadequate, and therefore the social relevance of the research was included. The purpose of research and practices of research as well as publishing vary from one department to another, with the emphasis of research varying from the strictly academic to the more practical.

The evaluation results would have no direct, predetermined influence on departmental funding. It was decided that the grades would not directly, in a predetermined way, influence the financial resources of the departments. Instead, the result of the evaluation will be used as one element in the regular internal evaluation of the department. The regular internal evaluation will be conducted every two years by a group whose members come from the management level of the University and its faculties. This group will conduct the evaluation based on both qualitative and quantitative indicators, and its knowledge of the working environment of the departments. The results of the evaluation will also be used in developing the University's research strategy.

The cost of the evaluation was estimated at approximately 280,000 euro. The final cost was slightly less, 230,000 euro, including the cost of the panel visits, approximately 115,000 euro.

2. ORGANIZATION OF THE EVALUATION

2.1 Key actors

The key actors in the implementation of the evaluation process were the executive group, the research council, the evaluation officer, and the project secretaries. The contact persons of each department also had a significant role in the process.

The members of **the executive group** were vice-rector Marja Jylhä (chair), professor Kalervo Järvelin, professor Päivi Korvajärvi, professor Anna Mauranen (vice-chair), and professor Simo Oja. Due to changes in the University rectorate, the chair of the group was assigned to vice-rector Arja Ropo in the beginning of August 2004. Professor Marja Jylhä was appointed as a group member by the rector to replace professor emeritus Simo Oja. The members of the executive group are all distinguished and research active professors, and the expertise of the group covers a wide variety of disciplines and research traditions.

Founded in 2002, **the research council** of the University of Tampere is chaired by the vice-rector in charge of research. The research council is essentially a body of experts, committed to promoting research in the university, and strengthening its status as a research university.

PhD Tiina Soini worked as **an evaluation officer** and MA Taina Sahlander as **a project secretary**. During the fall's 2004 panel meetings, M. Sc. Admin. Maria Virtanen was also employed as a project secretary.

Each department had **a contact person**. The evaluation organization also cooperated with **the University research services** and **the Planning office**.

2.2 The roles and working methods of the key actors

The implementation of the research evaluation process was to begin in the spring of 2003. The research council first discussed the principles of the evaluation. In May, 2003 the rector appointed an executive group and an evaluation officer to implement the evaluation. The tasks of the executive group included the planning and decision-making of the implementation, directing the process, and solving possible problems. The vice-rector and

the evaluation officer directed and coordinated the group. The executive group met once a month on average, and discussions were also carried out via e-mail during the evaluation phases. The intensity of the activity of the group varied throughout the process. The role and input of the group was most noteworthy in the planning and preparatory stages of the evaluation. The University's administration and the University governing board were informed of the evaluation throughout the process.

Evaluation officer, PhD Tiina Soini was appointed as a part-time employee until the end of September 2003, when the position was extended full-time until the end of August 2005. The evaluation officer's tasks included designing and coordinating the evaluation process together with the executive group, responsibility of the financial matters, acting as liaison between all participants, and informing the departments about the evaluation process. The evaluation officer also acted as the secretary of the executive group.

Throughout the process, the executive group worked in cooperation with the research council, and submitted all questions of principle to be discussed in the council. In 2004, the evaluation process was the main task of the research council, operating in its third year. The research council discussed the basic principles of the evaluation but did not make actual decisions. As the members of the research council come from all of the faculties, as well as the University's independent research institutes, the council also functioned as the important contact towards the departments. In practice, the council covered all the general principles of the evaluation: scheduling, the composition of the panels, grades, criteria, and the consequences of the evaluation.

The fluency of the evaluation process depended largely on the departmental contact persons. Departmental contact persons represented their departments in dealing with the evaluation organization, and reported back to their departments on the progress of the evaluation. The contact persons were also generally responsible for compiling the evaluation material, and they helped with the practical arrangements of the panel members' departmental visits. The contact persons, chosen by the departments in fall 2003, were expected to be familiar with the routines of their departments, and preferably to be also participating actively in research.

The evaluation officer met the contact persons during four discussion sessions in November 2003. The purpose of these sessions was to give the contact persons a general introduction of the evaluation process, discuss

the views of the departments concerning the evaluation, and go over the guidelines of compiling the material. The guidelines concerning the compiling of the material were also revised following some of the feedback received from the contact persons in these discussions (and via e-mail). Nearly all of the contact persons were present in these discussions, and considered them useful. The discussions may also have had some influence on the department's commitment to the evaluation.

The evaluation officer introduced the evaluation process to the faculties in several meetings and also at the forum for the university management organized by the Personnel training unit. Specific information concerning the evaluation was largely internal and focused on the departments. Public information was kept on a very general level, as the details of the process clarified only gradually, and having the facts known first inside the University was preferred. The evaluation Internet site was the primary medium of public information.

Project secretary MA Taina Sahlander began working on a part-time basis in January 2004, and continued full-time from the beginning of September of the same year. The project secretary's responsibilities included arranging and filing the collected data (spring 2004), organizing the visits of the evaluation panel members (spring – fall 2004), and reporting on the evaluation process (the beginning of 2005). The practical aspects of the work of the evaluation officer and the project secretaries were emphasized during the panel visits.

An additional goal of the evaluation organization was to develop the evaluation practices together with the Planning office. Equally important was improving the use of the University's academic database, Sordino CRIS (Current Research Information System) as a documentation and evaluation tool (feedback on the database in chapter 'Material'). The statistical data used in the evaluation was provided by the Planning office and the University's Department of finance.

The executive group will end its term in February 2005, after the approval of the final report.

2.3 Comments on the role of the executive group

The criteria for the composition of the executive group were workability (keeping the size of the group sufficiently small), and versatility (multidisciplinary, gender). Although the group included professors from

various disciplines, it was stressed that the members were not chosen to represent any single department or discipline. The group maintained its flexibility and efficiency by viewing the evaluation process from the viewpoint of the University as a whole, instead of focusing on individual disciplines and research traditions. The composition of the group was, however, somewhat criticized in the beginning of the process: the departments were primarily concerned about the group's representativeness.

The multidisciplinary nature of the University, and the differences in the departmental cultures posed a continuous challenge to the executive group, which held broad discussions to ensure a many-sided and equal approach to the matters at hand. Some of the group members were also members of the research council, and were thus familiar with the issues discussed there. This ensured continuity in their activity. On the other hand, membership in both the executive group and the research council may have caused a certain degree of role conflicts.

During the most tedious parts of the process, a special effort was required from the group members. The selection of the candidates for the panelists was one of the phases during which intensive input was needed from all members, and discussions were conducted via e-mail regardless of the time of day. This kind of commitment to the process is one of the prerequisites of a successful group, and it manifested very distinctly in all the executive group's activities.

3. PANELS

The unit of the evaluation was an individual university department. The departments, or units, were divided into six panels loosely following faculty borders, albeit that being no criterion for the division. The basic principle was not to divide departments across several panels (with the exception of the Department of Mathematics, Statistics and Philosophy, see Appendix C). Both the executive group and the research council considered the panel division thoroughly, and the proposed division was circulated for comments in September 2003. Each department was asked to comment mainly on its own placement in the scheme.

The aim was to have heterogeneous and multidisciplinary panels, each with an extensive and appropriate combination of expertise. The panels differed both in size and the ratio of foreign and domestic members, but each panel was to have at least one Finnish member. The criterion for membership was internationally recognized, extensive expertise in more than one of the panel's disciplines and departments. The executive group thought it prudent to use various sources in finding suitable experts. The departments themselves were not asked to name candidates for the panels. The Academy of Finland, and the Universities of Jyväskylä, Turku and Tartu were sent official letters and asked to propose candidates from both Finnish and foreign universities. As the candidate lists were not sufficient after these initial propositions, several key figures, such as the president of the Academy of Finland, and several members of the Academy of Finland's research councils, were asked to propose additional candidates.

The proposed primary candidates and their substitutes formed a pool of experts for the executive group to choose from. The candidate lists, circulated through the departments for comments, had twice the number of candidates needed for the panels. In order for the composition of the panels to not influence the selection of the evaluation data, the candidate lists were sent to the departments only after they had submitted their evaluation material. The departments were given one week to comment on the possible disqualification of the candidates. Most comments gave no cause for further actions but a couple of candidates were changed. All proposed substitutes coming outside the lists were verified by calling the departmental heads before invitation.

Loosely one third of the 61 invited candidates and substitutes declined (20). Most refusals were due to the inconvenience of the proposed time. If the primary candidate was unable to attend, the substitute was immediately invited. In some cases, several invitation rounds were needed.

The panels varied in size so that each panel consisted of 5–9 experts. The 41 panelists came from ten European countries: Finland (14), Sweden (8), Norway (2), Estonia (2), Poland (1), Germany (3), Italy (1), Belgium (1), United Kingdom (8), and Ireland (1). Twelve of the panelists (approximately 30 %) were women, which cannot be considered altogether satisfactory.

To ensure the fluency and conformity of the process, the chair of each panel was to be a Finn, having a thorough knowledge of the Finnish system of higher education. All chair candidates were asked to give their agreement in advance. The chairs met in Tampere on May 18, 2004, a couple of weeks before the first panel meeting. The rector and members of the executive group were also present. The aim of the meeting was to give the chairs general advice about the evaluation process, clarify its possible consequences and impacts, and ensure the conformity of the grading and criteria. In the future, it might be appropriate for some panelists to work in more than one panel. The idea was introduced but not yet implemented in this evaluation. The role and input of the chairs was extremely significant throughout the process. The pre-selection of the chairs was considered successful.

3.1 Practical arrangements

The candidates for membership in panels I and III–VI were sent an official invitation letter in February–March, and candidates for panel II in June–July 2004. A general brochure of the University of Tampere, together with several key statistics, was sent with the invitation letter. The letter also included appendices regarding the panel division and 2–3 proposed times for the panel meetings. A week after the official invitation, all candidates were e-mailed asking to state which of the proposed times were impossible for them, and return the attached form by e-mail or fax. Due to misunderstanding, several candidates replied with the times which were most appropriate for them. To make sure, the dates were again verified via e-mail. Arranging the panel meetings on a rather tight schedule required flexibility of all parties.

The project secretary worked on the details of travel and accommodation together with the panel members. The project secretary offered to help if needed, but the panelists generally took care of their individual travel arrangements. Despite the independent initiative of the panelists, extensive correspondence was required. The project secretary informed the panelists about a multitude of subjects, ranging from the suitable arrival and departure times to the weather conditions in Finland at the time of their visit. The practical information service was tailored to every panelist's needs.

3.2 Comments from the panels

The panel members were generally pleased with the functioning of their panels. The composition of the panels, and issues concerning the proceedings became problematic when the panel had only one Finnish member. *"It is not clear that the panel is really able adequately to evaluate Finnish language publications, and thus to come to an overall view of the research profile as required."* (Panel IV)

3.3 Comments from the departments

Judging by the comments from the departments, the composition and division of the panels were generally considered successful. Some questions were raised about whether the panelists were in their best area of expertise regarding specific departments. It was hoped that each panel would have at least one representative of the discipline in question. It was also considered problematic that panelists were not sufficiently familiar with the Finnish system of higher education, or the research field and principles of funding in Finland. The composition of the panels was also criticized when the majority of the panel members represented a single country, or when the panel had only one Finnish member while most of the submitted material was in Finnish.



4. MATERIAL

Departmental reports were used as the main source of evaluation material. The reports included

- 1) A list of research active staff,
- 2) A full bibliography of published work,
- 3) A select bibliography,
- 4) Information on research projects (begun after January 1, 2002),
- 5) Department's own view on its research, and
- 6) Doctoral dissertations.

Additional information was gathered from statistics in various organizational registers. The data were to be used as a framework, supplementing the qualitative material in the departmental reports, and aiding the panels when considering reasons for qualitative excellence or failure. The data consisted of

- 1) Statistics of staff and doctor's degrees,
- 2) Total budget (regular budget and external funding), and
- 3) Competitive external funding from the Academy of Finland, the European Union, and the National Technology Agency (Tekes).

Each department submitted a list of their research active staff in November 2003. A certain section of the staff, namely professors and senior assistants, were obligatorily included. The departments were then free to choose which individuals they wanted to name as research active from other staff categories (e.g. full-time teachers and lecturers, junior assistants, postgraduate research fellows).

All departments submitted full bibliographies, i.e. all published work from 1999–2003. A complete literature reference was required of each publication. The list of publications was categorized as follows:

- 1) Articles in international scientific journals with referee practice,
- 2) Articles in international edited volumes and in international scientific conference proceedings with referee practice,
- 3) Articles in Finnish or other national scientific journals with referee practice,

- 4) Articles in Finnish or other national scientific edited volumes and in Finnish or other national scientific conference proceedings with referee practice,
- 5) Scientific monographs,
- 6) Textbooks and dictionaries,
- 7) Other scientific publications, such as articles in non-refereed scientific journals, and conference proceedings, and publications in university and department series,
- 8) Edited volumes with an editorial contribution, and
- 9) Other publications, popularizing articles, patents, computer programs, radio and television programs.

Each department also compiled a select bibliography of the research output it considered most important in 1999–2003. As the panelists were required to base the grading mainly on the submitted material, the importance of the select bibliography was pronounced. The number of publications in the select bibliography was relative to the number of staff members listed as ‘research active’: the bibliography contained one publication from each person on the list. In addition, the departments could include publications they judged to be representative of their research, or of outstanding quality, so that the total number of selected publications would be twice the number of research active staff. Consequently, the select bibliography would reflect both the average quality of the work of each department, and its best achievements. The panels were asked to view the publications of each department as a whole to acquire a sense of its overall quality profile. The panels could also take into account the distribution of the presented publications among the research active staff.

The departments were also asked to include information about their major projects (three most significant, or those with funding over € 50,000), started between January 1, 2002 and December 31, 2003. This was to give the evaluation panels information about the departments’ current research, not yet at publication stage, including the title, supervisor, researchers, (external) funding, and a short description of the research project. As the projects were required to involve at least two of the department’s researchers, single dissertations could not be included.

As additional material, the departments could offer extended views about their research, such as comments about their research strategy of the last five years, changes in the department’s staff, or other matters relating

to resources. This section was not intended for self-evaluation, and the departments were not asked to submit self-evaluation, but it offered an opportunity to bring forth matters of importance to the department, not necessarily evident in the previous material.

Finally, the departments listed their doctorates, providing the title of the dissertation, current affiliations of the doctors, and the type of present employment/affiliation, if known.

4.1 Practical arrangements

The departments received the guidelines and the data form for gathering the evaluation material in November 2003. The guidelines included some examples of possible problems, and offered solutions to them. The evaluation officer also answered dozens of phone calls and e-mails concerning the process of gathering the material. Generally, the questions made by the contact persons reflected the departments' unfamiliarity with this type of evaluation, it being far more extensive than any evaluation previously conducted in the University. The evaluation experiences and practices of the departments naturally varied quite a bit. All in all, most questions concerned the guidelines with which the departments were free to use their own judgment. Foremost, *how* the material was to be gathered was left for the departments to decide by themselves. The departments were also expected to set their own criteria for selecting their best publications, and whom to list as research active.

The departments were to submit the evaluation material to the evaluation officer both as a paper copy and in electronic form by the end of January 2004. The evaluation officer received most of the material by mid-February (with the exception of panel II). Following the decision made by the executive group, the material was not to be edited in any way, and consequently there was some disparity in the departmental reports. Several bibliographies were edited by e.g. eliminating redundancy when the same publication had been mentioned twice, but even in these cases the reports were sent back to the departments to be approved. The project secretary technically checked and arranged all the material so that it could be verified that all the departments had submitted all the publications mentioned in the select bibliographies. The departments were asked to submit the missing publications during the spring. Some inconsistency in the material (e.g. the same publication mentioned twice) naturally remained, as the schedules

of the evaluation officer and project secretary did not permit them to go systematically through the material in its entirety.

The Faculty of Economics and Administration experienced major organizational changes during the time of the evaluation. The six departments of the Faculty were merged into four new departments, which were inaugurated August 1, 2004. Due to the organization changes, the evaluation material was collected in a manner different from the other departments: the departments gathered the material by subject of study, and the material was then grouped according to the new departmental division.

The evaluation material, together with the guidelines, was posted to the panelists a month prior to the panel visit at the latest. Panelists were expected to familiarize themselves with the material before the visit. Copies of the publications (from the select bibliography) were not sent to the panelists, who were instead advised to contact the evaluation office in order to get the publications they wished to read in advance. Only a few panelists did so, and it occurred that not all the panelists were even aware of the possibility. No actual evaluation activity, such as drafting the report, was required in advance, since the evaluation report would be produced collectively.

The publications listed in the select bibliography were available for the panelists in the working area during the panel visit. Panelists received information about the university's strategy, and the annual report (in Finnish only) as well as information about some financing organizations such as the Academy of Finland and the National Technology Agency (Tekes). Panels were advised not to accept any additional written material during the departmental visits. The departments were also aware of this.

4.2 Comments from the panels

From the panelists' perspective, the most significant problems concerned the evaluation material, or, rather, what was not included in the material. Despite the fact that what was to be evaluated was the output of research activity (in practice, mainly publications), several panels in their feedback commented on the kind of material the evaluators should have had access to for the evaluation to be "more accurate".

These types of material would have been e.g.

- The scientific status of research actors, for example, editorship of journals, chairing important program committees, scientific awards (panel I),
- Bibliographic assessments of the material such as impact factors and ranking of journals for each publication (panel II),
- The research production in relation to size of the full-time equivalent of the staff in the departments (panel II),
- Diagram of organization for each department (panel II).

The panels also commented on the disparity in the evaluation material submitted by different departments, *“making it difficult for panel members to establish a clear, accurate profile of each department”* (panel IV). There were problems with the information given about the departments’ research active staff, for example: *“there was considerable ambiguity and uncertainty over the criteria used by departments to decide on which staff to include as research active”* (panel III). In the panel’s opinion, *“the university should centrally compile the lists of research active staff and supply these for departmental use. The evaluation submission should show, for each such researcher, whether they have been in post through the whole of the assessment period. In the case of staff that have left the department or have joined it during the period of the assessment, dates of leaving and joining should be shown. Non-Finnish panel members would find it especially useful to have greater clarification on the academic grade and contractual position of each member of staff, as it is not always possible to distinguish University research staff, contract research, and doctoral students.”* (Panel III)

The panels were also not pleased with the disparity in the bibliographies of the different departments (panel III), and found the categorization of the publications inadequate.

During the panel visits it became apparent that the panels found the section ‘Departments’ own view on their research’ somewhat obscure. According to one panel, *“the extra commentary provided by the different departments was the only opportunity for the panel to gather information on the nature and role of the department. This section should have been divided into (a) a profile of the department’s research and (b) a critical self-evaluation of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to the research. Instead, the brief commentaries provided were of patchy quality and some were too defensive.”* (Panel I) After the panel visits, the chairs met with the rectorate

and the executive group on November 11, 2004. In this meeting, the chairs proposed that in future evaluations the departments would be asked to self-evaluate the social relevance of their research (cf. Dimension II). The chairs also expressed their views of the importance of self-evaluation in the whole evaluation process, and hoped it would be more pronounced in future evaluations.

The panels found some of the submitted statistical information to be problematic: during the departmental visits, several departments presented the panels with their own statistics, which differed from the statistics given to the evaluators beforehand by the University. In the future, it must be confirmed in advance that both the evaluation organization and the evaluated departments agree on the accuracy of the submitted material.

4.3 Comments from the departments

Based on the feedback from the contact persons, the departments did not encounter major problems gathering the evaluation material. It is possible, however, that some of the problems had already been forgotten by feedback time. The methods of gathering the material differed somewhat between the departments. Some departments began by teaming the department's professors and the contact person into a departmental executive group which decided on principles and practical aspects of the process. Without exception, the role of the contact persons was extremely significant in the evaluation process, especially so in conducting the negotiations between the different staff groups in their departments. Some departments also employed extraneous personnel for the work. Quite often the professors of each subject, together with the contact persons, made decisions on the material to be submitted (list of research active staff, select bibliography) based on the suggestions received from the research staff. Some contact persons reported having difficulty in acquiring the actual publications.

Other, bigger problems occurred. In the guidelines given to the departments, it was stated that part of the full bibliography could be produced from the University's Current Research Information System database. The Planning office sent a memo on the subject to all departments, offering to help them download and print the full bibliography from the database. The Planning office also gave instructions on revising and supplementing the existing document, i.e. the full bibliography, once it had been downloaded. Since many of the University's former and current

researchers had not updated their publications in the database at all, or had done so only partly, some of the contact persons found revising the bibliographies very tasking. Departments with a large staff turnover had difficulty motivating former researchers to update their publication data. On the other hand, some departments found the research information database very useful. Categorizing the publications and compiling the select bibliography also raised some questions. Despite the guidelines, it seemed that some departments did not have a clear idea of what the research evaluation was supposed to evaluate and how. (See Chapter 5: Evaluation criteria and scale, Implementation and comments)

Opinions on the given guidelines varied from one contact person to the other. Although many considered the guidelines to be “quite clear”, a greater degree of exactness and unambiguity would have been preferred. For example, the criteria used to define the research staff vary in the individual departments, and the departmental criteria are in turn different from the set used in the evaluation. Some departments felt that the quantity of the evaluation material would be too large for the panel to be able to assess its quality. Others wished the guidelines would have told them what kind of material was *preferred*. One contact person said that the evaluation caused so much extra work it would have been useful to get a more general set of guidelines of conducting the evaluation in addition to resourcing.

The organizational changes in the Faculty of Economics and Administration, coinciding with the evaluation process, caused some confusion. The evaluation panel visited the Faculty only about a month after the new departments were inaugurated. The timing was generally considered problematic for both the evaluation and the gathering of the evaluation material. However, some positive aspects resulting from the merge could also be seen: the evaluation formed an excellent basis for charting possible synergy benefits, as well as developing departmental research strategies.



5. EVALUATION CRITERIA AND SCALE

5.1 Defining the criteria and scale

The executive group wrote a draft for the evaluation criteria, and the research council discussed the criteria in its meetings during January and February 2004. The executive group agreed on the final grading guidelines in late February.

Defining the criteria was a complex task. While providing uniform guidelines for the evaluation, they should also be flexible enough for a multidisciplinary approach. The University of Helsinki used the level of research with regard to the international level of research in the field as the main criterion in its evaluation. The research council of the University of Tampere considered this feasible but not adequate. In the first phase of defining the criteria, three grades were proposed: 1) Publications with regard to the level of publications in Europe; 2) The general level of publications; and 3) Social relevance.

These considerations were then formulated into the final two grades:

Grade I: “The level of research with regard to the international level of research in the field”

Grade II: “The contextual and practical importance and quality of research”

Grades I and II represent two different and independent dimensions of the quality of research. Average or parameter numbers were not to be considered. The panels were requested to use the general criteria by carefully considering their applicability to the special characteristics and situations of each department and discipline.

Grade I described departmental research achievement relative to the international level in the field, i.e. its (potential or existent) academic value in the international context. For this grade, evaluators were asked to make an assessment of the submitted work with regard to the international level, considering whether it either has been or could be published in the best journals or books in the field, regardless of where or in which language it actually was published.

Grade II described the contextual and practical importance of the research. It may or may not fall together with academic quality in the strict

sense referred to in grade I. Panelists were asked to assess the practical importance, relevance and usefulness of the research to society and community, and the field of practices the department is working in.

The purpose of grading was to define the parameters of the evaluation. The breadth of the scale was also considered. Evaluation panels were asked to supplement and motivate the numerical grades in written statements.

The two dimensions were rated according to the scale as follows:

- 7 The majority of the submitted work is at an outstanding international level and virtually all other publications are at a good international level.
- 6 At least one third of the submitted work is at an outstanding international level and the rest is at a good international level.
- 5 The majority of the submitted work is at least at a good international level and virtually all the rest is at a fair international level.
- 4 At least one third of the submitted work is at a good international level and the rest is at a fair international level.
- 3 The majority of the submitted work is at least at a fair international level.
- 2 Some of the submitted work is at least at a fair international level, but the rest of what is submitted is not at this level, or it is difficult to evaluate its value using international standard.
- 1 Most of the submitted work does not reach fair international level, or it is difficult to evaluate the quality of the work using international standards.

Outstanding, good and fair international levels were defined as follows:

- Outstanding international level means work which is recognized as a major contribution within international academic communities and which could, if offered, be published by the leading international publishers or in the leading international journals with the most rigorous editorial standards (but irrespective of where it has actually been published).
- Good international level means work which is of undisputed relevance for international academic communities and which could be published by well-known international publishers or in well-known international journals (but irrespective of where it has actually been published).
- Fair international level means work which is of possible relevance for international academic communities and might stand a chance to be published abroad or by well-known national publishers or in well-known national journals (but irrespective of where it has actually been published).

5.2 Guidelines for the panels

The panels were asked to base their grades primarily on the submitted bibliography, but also on other submitted material, and on the additional information they receive during their visit to department. The panels were asked to take into account originality, depth, and breadth of past (1999–2003) and ongoing research activity, current importance of the research themes, multi- and interdisciplinarity and relevance for other research areas, education and training of researchers (postgraduate and postdoctoral), collaboration and joint publications with foreign researchers and research units. Research was included in the evaluation on condition that it was manifested in the output of the department and could be observed in the submitted material. The result was that some research-based activity had to remain outside the evaluation.

It was brought to the attention of the panelists that so called national studies which might not be published by leading international publishers, may still provide evidence of international excellence if they can be compared favorably with similar studies in other countries. In the absence of current examples, standards in cognate research areas where international comparisons do exist will need to be adopted. Thus, research on Finnish law was to be compared with e.g. research on German law at a German university, or a department of Finnish language with a department of French in France or a department of Swedish in Sweden. Thus, the choice of a nationally justified topic should not have a negative effect upon the grading. However, if a department fails to produce any serious work with a wider international interest the panel was asked to consider carefully the reasons for that.

5.3 Implementation and comments

Comments from the panels

Some panels were unsure of whether the grades could be considered independently, one not affecting the other. *“It was noted in discussion that there was considerable inter-dependence of the two dimensions of evaluation, although the degree and kind of this inter-dependence varies from one discipline to another. In addition, the different histories and orientations of the disciplines considered mean that one or other dimension has more salience for different*

departments in relation to the evaluation process as a whole. This made it difficult for the panel to apply the two dimensions consistently across the departments considered.” (Panel IV)

The panels thought that the definition of Dimension I was very clear, and the feedback from the panels showed that they clearly understood the need for the grading to be dependent of the research field in question. On the other hand, some panels felt the grading criteria to be too restrictive. According to the panel, *“following the rule, it is almost impossible to reach grades 7 and 6, which require that one-half or one-third of the submitted reports should be outstanding”*. The panel also remarked that the grades were not at equal intervals on the scale, which could be considered somewhat misleading (Panel III).

Dimension II was considered difficult. Giving grades based solely on publications was somewhat problematic: *“The panel believes that it would have been more appropriate to develop alternative criteria, and take a broader view of a department’s exchanges with the world outside, in terms of practical interventions, providing expertise, presence in public arenas and so on.”* (Panel IV) The panels, in their own words, graded this dimension rather intuitively.

Giving the grades as integral numbers was also disputable. The panels were therefore urged to substantiate the numerical grading with written statements, e.g. ‘strong 5’. One of the panels put it aptly: *“It was felt that the value of the numerical grading required by the process was limited. It therefore recommends that the numerical grades that it has awarded are not to be used in isolation, but are rather to be understood in relation to the detailed commentary provided in individual departmental reports.”* (Panel IV)

The panels were troubled with the fact that the guidelines concerning the select bibliography, namely the requirement that each person listed on the research active staff should have at least one publication in the select bibliography, did not allow for the different career stages of individual researchers: *“...including the most inexperienced ones, has to be represented by at least one report. The selection rules have brought in a considerable number of dissertations written in Finnish. Even a high-quality Finnish-language publication does not always meet the criterion that without considerable additional work or re-writing it could be published by well-known international publishers or in well-known international journals’.* (Panel III) Some panels remarked that the total evaluation of individual departments could also have been influenced by the disparity in the submitted material: some departments had emphasized social relevance and its visibility in their

work, while others placed the emphasis almost solely on academic criteria (Dimension I). (Panel III)

The concept of 'submitted material' was considered somewhat unclear. *"We also had some difficulties in using the evaluation guidelines for Dimension I. We were not clear about what constituted 'the submitted work', as the full bibliography was numerically weighted for good reasons towards the local and ephemeral."* (Panel VI)

All in all, the panel chairs considered the evaluation a success, and thought the results achieved now could be replicated even if the panel members were changed.

Comments from the departments

Feedback from the departments' contact persons uncovered some doubts about the evaluation criteria and the objectivity of the evaluation. Using a department as the research unit was questioned, and evaluating e.g. a research project would have been preferred in order to get to the actual substance of the work.

Some departments saw discrepancy in the way different panels weighed the criteria, while it was generally understood that each panel used the same criteria. Fine-tuning the criteria when the departments were already gathering the evaluation material caused some confusion. The departments felt that the evaluation organization had not provided them with adequate information on the criteria. Dimension II was criticized, and, in some cases, viewed as unjust: *"The department is involved in many projects which were not included in the reports."*



6. PANEL VISITS

The panels visited the University on the following dates:

Panel I	June 7–9, 2004
Panel II	November 1–3, 2004
Panels III and IV	August 30 – September 1, 2004
Panel V	September 6–8, 2004
Panel VI	August 25–27, 2004

Each visit lasted three days, and the evaluation proceedings were recorded during the visit. The panelists had received the evaluation material and guidelines in advance.

The panels were given a framework with proposed starting, finishing, and lunch times to help schedule their work. Each panel began their visit with an opening speech by the rector or vice-rector, giving a concise overview of the University of Tampere, and shortly describing the purpose of the research evaluation. This was followed by an introductory speech by the evaluation officer, going through the evaluation objectives and schedules, and introducing the report model to the panelists. They were also given additional information about the departmental visits. After the introductions, the panels were organized (introduction of members, questions and answers), orientated, and given the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the publications.

In the afternoon on the first day, the panels were expected to outline their reports, and discuss the questions they wished to ask during the departmental visits. The main purpose of the visits was to deepen and clarify the picture that the panel had formed of the departments' research, based on the submitted evaluation material. To make the orientation of the panel members as easy as possible, the departments had been asked to submit a list of the people who would be present during the departmental visit (although these lists were subject to change). Day one ended with the rector's dinner, where the panelists had a chance to meet members of the executive group.

Day two was reserved for departmental visits. Each department was allocated one hour, regardless of the size of the department. The departments had been given instructions to have 6–8 members of the

staff present, preferably from each active research group, including post-graduate students. The panel visit was opened by a short introduction (max 10 minutes) by the department's representative, followed by a general discussion providing the panelists with an opportunity to ask questions and acquire further information. The majority of the questions concerned external funding, postgraduate studies, and the impacts of the department's research. It came as a bit of a surprise that the panels also asked many questions about teaching, graduate studies, and the cooperation between the different University departments.

Each panelist, save one panel (due to scheduling difficulties), visited every department assigned to them. The panelists considered the departmental visits important and revealing, and generally expressed hopes of extended visiting time. Panelists were able to make the relevant questions in such depth as is possible in the time allocated to the visits.

The third and last day was reserved for the final revision of the departmental reports. The panels wrote the reports themselves, with technical assistance provided by the evaluation office. All panels were given a standard report template, which they also adhered to. An electronic form of the template had been installed on the computers in the working areas, with the possibility of downloading the template to each panel member's own computer. The recommended length of the report on each department was 1–3 pages. The panelists divided the reporting tasks evenly between themselves so that each member was responsible for 1–2 departmental reports. The panelists also worked in pairs or smaller groups. The final versions were joint efforts, in which the whole panel commented on the report, displayed on a wide screen with one of the panel members and/or the project secretary/evaluation officer typing in the panelists' comments. The evaluation report was a joint statement.

All panels completed their reports by the end of the third day, as planned. Some panel members had to leave before the final revision but they had approved the main points of the reports before departing. Due to the confidential nature of the reports, the panelists were asked to leave all written material in the working areas when they had finished.

6.1 Comments from the panels

All panels were extremely pleased with the practical arrangements of their three day visits. The panelists felt that the departmental visits had been

very useful in clarifying many of the questions raised in the panel meetings. However, it was generally hoped that the departmental visits could have lasted longer.

6.2 Comments from the departments

The contact persons' opinions on the success of the departmental visits varied considerably. Some considered the discussions with the panelists very rewarding and the questions posed by the panelists relevant, while others thought the matters discussed were irrelevant to the evaluation of quality: "*Based on the discussion, it was impossible to deduct much of anything about the outcome of the evaluation.*"

The comments from the panels, the contact persons, and the departmental heads all stressed the need for longer departmental visits. It was proposed that the panels should have separate discussions with the different departmental groups, so that the panelists could form a realistic picture of what the activities of the department are, and what kind of research resources they have.

6.3 Comments from the evaluation organization

The panels also functioned well from the evaluation organization's point of view. The preselection of the panel chairs was seen as a major fact contributing to the success; the panels were able to begin their work without delay once they had been organized. The panels did not have secretaries, and appointing secretaries was not considered necessary at any stage of the process.

The evaluation organization answered numerous questions made by the panels throughout the process. The panels required additional information about, among other things, the grading, the criteria for compiling the evaluation material, and the statistics. Some panels wanted additional information about international contacts, the arrangements of the departments' postgraduate studies, the number of postgraduate students, the funding of postgraduate studies, the average graduation times, the yearly intakes of students, and the age distribution of the staff. The evaluation organization answered the questions in as much detail as possible, getting valuable help from the Planning office and the Department of finance. As

some details could only be given by the departmental representatives, the panels were instructed to talk to them directly during the departmental visits.

The University provided the panelists with 1–2 computers with Internet access, several laptops, and the use of printers and photocopiers. Some technical difficulties were encountered but for the main part the work proceeded well. Technical support was provided by the University computer and technical services. The project secretary (and the evaluation officer, when needed) was present in the same working area with the panelists, answered questions, and gave technical assistance. The project secretary and/or the evaluation officer were also present during all of the departmental visits.

The panelists stayed in hotels close to the University main campus. They were satisfied with both the level of their accommodation and its location, being at a walking distance from the University. The project secretary met the panelists at their hotels on the morning of first visiting day, and took them to the University. Panels I, III, IV and VI were provided working areas in the new University building Pinni B (lecture halls and a room for group work). Panels II and V worked in a meeting room in wing A of the University main building. Although the location and facilities of Pinni B were excellent (e.g. a restaurant located in the same building), some panelists felt the working areas to be too sterile and, due to the lack of windows, cramped. The panelists were offered a chance to switch e.g. to the computer room, and they could also familiarize themselves with the evaluation material in the University library or in their hotel rooms. For the main part, the panels did want to work in the meeting and lecture rooms provided by the University.

Due to the tightness of the schedule, no “extracurricular” activities were arranged for the panelists, save for the rector’s dinner on the first night.

7. REPORTS

All panels adhered to the report templates they were provided with. The reports consisted of three parts: 1) Introduction, i.e. How the work was organized, 2) Departmental evaluation, incl. General comments, Quality and characteristics of publications, Summarizing statements, and 3) Comments on the process. The second part of the report included the departmental evaluation. The reports were confidential, and only the evaluation officer had access to them prior to their publication. The rector and the executive group opened the reports on November 11, 2004.

All department heads (or vice-heads, when requested) received the results of the evaluation in print at the same time in the morning of November 15, 2004 via internal mail. An accompanying letter from the rector covered the consequences of the evaluation, and emphasized the main goal of the evaluation, i.e. for the units to use the results in developing their research strategies. The panels' reports were not edited in any manner but published as they were. Attached to the reports were the guidelines given to the panels, the names of the panelists, and the panels' work schedules. The joint discussion about the reports was held in the afternoon of the same day for all department heads and deans (or vice-heads and deans, when requested), and heads of other units. The department heads had been offered the opportunity to invite 1–2 other people from their department. The executive group was also present. The opening speeches were given by the rector and the evaluation officer. Time was also allotted for general discussion, in which all department heads had the opportunity to comment on the report and results of their department, and ask questions. All reports were published for the staff on the University Intranet after the joint discussion. At the same time, the evaluation organization gave out a press release (see Appendix E). The publication of the evaluation results was covered in at least Tampere's leading paper *Aamulehti*, and the provincial news of the Finnish broadcasting corporation YLE. The reason behind first publishing the evaluation reports on the University Intranet was to give the departments time to process the results before general publication. On December 12, 2004, the research council made the decision of publishing the evaluation reports on the research evaluation Internet site.

This final report of the research evaluation covers the whole of the evaluation process, the successes and problems experienced, and

the feedback received. Feedback was collected from the panelists, the department heads, contact persons, and the staff taking part in the panels' departmental visits. The panelists were offered the opportunity to give feedback on the process, and possible problems, in their reports. All department heads were e-mailed with a proposal for an interview, in which they could discuss the strategies of their departments, and the use of the evaluation results therein. The interview also focused on the expectations set by the department on the University concerning its strategies, and ways of supporting the development of research. The project secretary conducted telephone interviews of 15 department heads / vice-heads between November 29 and December 2, 2004. For practical reasons, one department head answered questions via e-mail. The departments' contact persons were asked for feedback on the implementation and effects of the evaluation process. The questionnaire was sent to 44 contact persons at the end of October, and 26 answered (approximately 60 %). Replies from the staff members partaking in the panel visits were only a few.

8. RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of the evaluation, that is, the panel reports on individual departments, will be published as a separate report.

The goal of the evaluation was to acquire a general view of the level of research conducted in the University. A clear idea of the current research is the starting point for the development of future research activities. Thus, in addition to evaluating the level of current research, the evaluators were asked to propose ways of improving future research.

8.1 Summary of the panels' proposals

The research conducted at the University of Tampere is at a high international level. The results show that the majority of the departments have reached a good international level in their research work, at least a five on a seven-point scale. The most successful departments were The Institute of Medical Technology which reached the top grade, History, Information Studies, Journalism and Mass Communication, Philosophy, Regional Studies, and the School of Public Health. In addition, the report identified a number of recent developments across different disciplines with promising future potential.

The evaluation reports yielded a number of suggestions. All panels stressed the fact that the research in the University is rich with potential which may remain implicit due to the lack of determined, strategic planning.

Departments' research strategies and foci

All six panels suggested clarification and improvement of the departments' research strategies so that the departments would be able to make more focused decisions on developing their research. What the panels sought for was not necessarily unity of the research topics but coherence in some basic principles, such as how the construction of research groups is facilitated; where the researchers are encouraged to publish; how the graduate students are integrated into the department's research activities; and what the department's recruitment policy is.

Towards a cooperative research culture and international cooperation with high-level partners

The panels made several suggestions on how to facilitate the forming of research groups, and how to strengthen the cooperation of researchers both inside and outside the University. The multidisciplinary nature of the University is an advantage, and it should be utilized to find interesting new research themes. The panels also emphasized the importance of systematically strengthening international cooperation both on a departmental level and on the University level. The partners of the cooperation should be carefully considered. The University should support the departments in having foreign visiting researchers for longer periods of time.

Systematic and determined financing

The panels propose that both the departments and the University as a whole should use more strategic planning when competing for external research funding. Since most of the research is dependent on external funding, the development of the funding should be monitored more carefully.

Systematic and determined publishing

The departments should employ more strategic planning especially in international publishing. The publishing policy should also be more ambitious, and aim for an international publishing profile. Also, young researchers should be encouraged to publish internationally earlier on in their career.

Research training and career development

The report also emphasized the University's role in research training and in the future career development of the researchers. At the moment, most departments do not have any post-doc positions, and therefore have difficulties in keeping talented researchers in the house and ensuring academic offspring. This in turn leads to a limited number of long-term senior researchers, hindering the possibility of applying for extremely competed external research funding (e.g. being included in the Academy of Finland's Centres of Excellence).

8.2 Departments' feedback on the evaluation

The feedback from the contact persons disclosed that the departments generally discussed the evaluation, especially the evaluation process, in some manner prior to the publication of the results. It was notable that the evaluation process encouraged the departments to actively consider research-related topics and, consequently, supported strategic thinking. Actual strategic discussions and possible measures were to be undertaken after the publication of the results.

Several contact persons and department heads were of the opinion that gathering and categorizing the material already revealed the actual status of the department's research. In some departments discussions on their research practices and aims were held jointly for the first time.

Comments from the contact persons:

"Gathering the material was an eye-opener on what has been done already, and evaluating the work."

"From the start, we wanted to motivate gathering the evaluation material by emphasizing that it would also be a useful tool for our department to use in research development."

"It was good for the work community --- to become aware of the relevance of research in evaluating our results, and of research evaluation being conducted in the future as well."

"Especially the practical relevance of the department's activities, and the extent to which the department takes part in social discussion, was a surprise."

The process of gathering the material disclosed matters whose importance had not previously been considered in the departments, such as the importance of proper publication databases, and the overall importance of documentation.

In general, the departments did not think that the evaluation brought forth any major surprises. This indicates the validity of the evaluation. Although the evaluation did not necessarily produce entirely new information, it strengthened and made explicit existing knowledge in a way which accentuated the departments' strong points, and made it easier to tackle possible weaknesses.

The department heads disclosed that the departments aim to use the evaluation results in the manner intended: to outline, define, or change the department's strategy.

Comments from the department heads:

"Already the manner of working with the material, and making the wholeness visible in an unprecedented way, was important."

"The evaluation process is an integral part of building a strategic consciousness."

"We are going to use the evaluation results constantly when we plan ahead and set our goals."

"The evaluation confirmed that our decision to place emphasis on certain research areas has been beneficial for our research activity."

"Are we really as good as the evaluation says?"

"Motivates us to find ways of improving even more in the future."

"It is important for each department to consider the results critically --- how the department is able to identify with the results, and try to learn from the facts which are true from the department's point of view."

Similar statements were also made by the department heads in the joint discussion held about the departmental reports. For the future development of the university, it is essential to establish a collective state of willingness to improve, and ensure the continuance of the discussion.

9. CONSEQUENCES AND FUTURE PLANS

The rectorate had outlined the general consequences of the evaluation in the beginning of the process. The consequences were specified after the publication of the results. In the beginning of February 2005, the results of the research evaluation were thoroughly discussed in the meetings concerning the departments' overall performance in the year 2004. The criteria for evaluating departmental research results were manifold, and only partly influenced by the findings of the research evaluation. It was not the aim of the research evaluation to rank the departments according to their result rating, but rather give credit to the departments which had done well and support promising efforts, and the departments which had not done as well but could present clearly defined development plans.

Since the publication of the results, the rectorate has especially emphasized the need of clarifying the research strategies. The rectors will visit the departments during spring 2005 and discuss the use of the evaluation results, and the proposed strategic plans, together with the departments. The strategies of individual units will be used in the process of updating the strategy of the University as a whole by the end of 2005. The rectorate has made a conscious decision to develop the University strategy through dialogue: the aim is to discuss matters related to research strategy in different forums and from various view points. The development proposals resulting from the evaluation will be systematically discussed on levels of subject of study, department, faculty, and university. The responsibilities are divided so that the research council, chaired by vice-rector Arja Ropo, will negotiate the strategy concerning the university level, while the faculties, departments and study subjects will make the decisions on matters concerning the individual units. There are plans to create a discussion forum for young researchers (Young Research, workshops in spring 2005). The goal is to ensure interaction between the different levels, both horizontally and vertically, and make use of the often tacit knowledge and ideas of the different actors. Discussions conducted on different levels will also bring forth the variety in research emphasis and logic, as well as the connections between individual research projects.

The next evaluation has not yet been scheduled. In principle, continuous academic evaluation will be supplemented from time to time with separate research evaluations arranged by the University. The primary focus should

now be on the actions taken after the research evaluation, e.g. the concrete results of the evaluation in given departments. Research-related processes will also be reviewed as part of developing University's quality assurance.

9.1 Views and comments from the department heads

The department heads were asked how they proposed to use the results of the evaluation on the departmental level, and how they thought they should be used on the University level.

Regarding the discussions of the strategy on the University level, the department heads commented as follows.

The departments' research strategies can mainly be characterized as implicit and tacit. However, as they control everyday research activities and decisions, making the strategies explicit and open to discussion might make research-related issues clearer and more manageable.

The University's role in creating the research environment was emphasized. Interest displayed by the University management, as well as research investment, would send a clear message to all those wishing to develop their research.

The department heads hoped for university level guidelines on at least

- The discussion of what focusing means in research, e.g. are the centres of excellence getting all the resources?
- University's role on the national level of higher education, "*what is unique about the University of Tampere?*"
- Matters of international vs. national relevance, "*not forgetting national goals*"
- Publishing
- The relationship between teaching and research, and ways of integrating the two
- Ensuring the quality of research training
- The third mission of research, "*what we mean by impact*"

In the interviews, several department heads touched on the problems of areas of emphasis and the difficulties with focusing; what they wished for was balance between the extensive and the narrow approaches. Questions

of meaning were also discussed; could focusing be used to define how the research is conducted instead of what the subject of the research should be?

The need for parallel and interacting self and external evaluations was also apparent. In other words, the department heads hoped that a critical attitude towards external pressures would be adopted and the uniqueness of the University of Tampere taken into consideration. They also wanted to know what the strategy's practical implications would be. The underlying concern was most likely that of strategic planning leading into the centralization of resources and the downsizing of study subjects or departments.

The department heads also hoped for the time to discuss the strategy on a departmental level so that its components could truly come from within the departments. University level strategic planning should be more transparent to afford a real possibility of comparing development on the departmental level to the big picture; "*we should aim for the merging of centralized preparations and decentralized discussion*". This kind of openness and the opportunity to truly take part in the strategic planning would also add to the commitment of the researchers and departments.

The department heads were also asked what kind of concrete support measures the University could provide for the development of research. The proposals covered all the central areas of research: actively seeking and developing different, innovative forms of funding; help with applying for funding (especially EU); funding for the development and starting phases of new projects; funding for long-term international visits which could also be utilized in research training; guidance with article publishing; workshops on scientific writing for post-doc researchers also; supporting systematic research group activity; a University 'graduate school'; and increasing the number of post-doc positions.

9.2 Views and comments from the panel chairs

The panel chairs wished to discuss the evaluation with the University rectorate prior to the publication of the results. The following issues were covered in the meeting.

The chairs discussed strategic leadership and its prerequisites. While strategic leadership is easier in large departments, size is not the only

influencing factor. Focusing is always a challenge and it is imperative for the departments themselves to set their foci. The University management can, however, facilitate focusing by requiring methodicalness and asking for departmental foci to be included when presenting profit plans, results evaluation, and strategic processes. The panel chairs emphasized the importance of research management and, among others, the significance of recruitment policy in research development. It should be kept in mind that these are not the only solutions to problems related to the management of strategic planning and focusing but that the departments' research will inevitably depend on the know-how available. It would be preferable to both upkeep the research tradition and at the same time have an innovative orientation to research, i.e. undertaking new challenges. The chairs also proposed developing the University's publishing policy through mutual discussions between the University and the departments.

The chairs considered the publications alone to be somewhat insufficient for evaluating research quality. Although the panels were requested to mainly consider the publications, they did also take into account the resources and conditions influencing research. The chairs also wished to inform the departments that the numeric grades should not be given too much weight; as the departments were generally very heterogeneous, the final grading tended to drift towards the average. The chairs also wanted to emphasize that this first evaluation should be perceived as a starting point for future development. The critique received by the departments and the evaluation process itself offers valuable learning experiences for both. In the chairs' view, long-term development can only be achieved through continuous and various evaluations.

The grading of the second dimension, focusing on the practical and contextual importance of the research, raised a lively discussion on defining both the relevance of research and the so-called policy aspect, and how these connect to the universities' mission of serving society. Both serving the society and the relevance of the research should be taken into account from the start when formulating research questions, theories, and methodology. These would then be inherent in the conducted research, and allow the research findings to be 'translated' into a form utilizable by policy makers and other users of the information. This would not (necessarily) mean research made to order but recognition of the fact that most good research includes this aspect of social relevance.

In the future, if the University wishes to evaluate its success with the third mission and the relevance of research, the chairs recommend starting with self-evaluation. This would also help uncover the meanings attached to these concepts by the departments. The chairs emphasized that on a national level, the universities themselves should define what kind of indicators they want to use when defining the relevance of the research. The chairs also recommended a more systematic use of self-evaluation in other types of future evaluations as well.



10. EPILOGUE

It is worth asking whether conducting an expensive and strenuous evaluation is profitable. Would not a self-evaluation have yielded the same results? The use of external evaluators is justified at least in offering us a possibility to test the validity of our own opinions, and also in raising general discussion. The primary value of an external evaluation is in supplementing and giving additional structure to the self-evaluative viewpoint. It is also possible that what is self-evident to the heads of the departments is not necessarily that to individual researchers or the leaders of research groups. The University displayed initiative and courage in undertaking the evaluation of its own free will and in its own manner. This will give the University a head start once research evaluation becomes a standard part of all university level evaluation practices, as expected.

Discussion themes following the evaluation have included problems in setting foci which is often associated with the views of narrowing research to few top-level units or certain topics; taking into consideration the aspect of serving the society in evaluating quality; and assessing the relevance of research especially in a multidisciplinary, socially oriented university. Additional themes have been the career development of young post-doc researchers, and ensuring the research opportunities of senior researchers.

The discussions on strategy and focusing have a tendency to awaken fear and resistance, especially in multidisciplinary universities. Setting foci can be seen to pose a threat to unconstrained basic research, and possibly as having an inhibiting effect on new research ideas. Some also view it as a sign of giving in to the outside pressures of market and other forces opposing academic values. How then should a multidisciplinary university, believing in expansive education and unconstrained research, view strategic planning and focusing? How could they be best utilized in terms of research? These, as well as the other previously mentioned themes, will be addressed in connection with the University strategy. The central mission and challenge in these processes is to recognize and take into account the multifaceted nature of the University community.

The research evaluation conducted on the University level has also been a challenge due to the lack of a shared evaluation tradition. This in turn can be seen to follow the diversity and differences of the disciplinary research traditions, occasionally manifesting in very concrete ways, such as not

having enough common ground to understand each other. These cultural differences, caused by the independent nature of the disciplines, are partly inevitable and there is no reason to attempt to change this fact. However, in developing research activities there are times when these differences may become obstructions to cooperation and possibly even inhibit the formulating of new research questions.

Evaluating the whole University at the same time can also cause tensions best described as socio-psychological challenges to the community. The fact that the neighboring department is evaluated at the same time, by the same criteria, and even by the same evaluators, awakens feelings different from those caused by e.g. discipline-specific evaluations conducted on a national scale. It is very difficult to avoid making comparisons inside the University, even if the evaluation is specifically conducted to provide a point of reference for international comparison between units of the same discipline. When implementing the evaluation and considering its results, the aim should be to support the horizontal interaction and unity of the community instead of weakening it.

There is undoubtedly room for improvement in the evaluation process. However, the evaluation can be considered a success in that it has refocused the attention on research as the University's core mission and hence added to the self-knowledge of the University.

APPENDIX A

Project schedule

Spring 2003	<p>Research council of the University of Tampere discusses the evaluation process on a general level</p> <p>Rector appoints the executive group and the evaluation officer (May 27, 2003)</p>
Summer 2003	<p>Planning and collecting of background information</p>
Fall 2003	<p>Work begins on the practical aspects of the evaluation</p> <p>Choosing departmental contact persons</p> <p>Conferencing with contact persons and heads of departments</p> <p>Preparing the collection of evaluation material, discussing the criteria for choosing panelists</p>
Winter 2003–2004	<p>Collecting the departmental evaluation material, providing supportive guidance</p> <p>Deciding the evaluation criteria and scale</p> <p>Choosing candidates for the panels, sending the invitations</p>
Spring 2004	<p>Choosing panelists, scheduling the panel visits, other planning</p> <p>Sending evaluation material and guidelines to the panelists</p>
Summer/fall 2004	<p>Panel visits</p>
Fall 2004	<p>Collecting evaluation feedback, making decisions on the consequences of the evaluation</p> <p>Publishing departmental panel reports</p>
Winter 2004–2005	<p>Writing and publishing the final report</p>



APPENDIX B

People involved in the planning and management

Research council of the University of Tampere

(1 January 2002 – 31 July 2004)

Vice-rector Marja Jylhä, Chair
Professor Pertti Alasuutari
Professor Yrjö Haila
Professor Marjatta Hietala
Professor Martti Juhola
Researcher Niina Koivunen
Professor Anna Mauranen
Professor Eeva Moilanen
Researcher Kaarina Nikunen
Professor Kaarle Nordenstreng
Professor Eero Pantzar
Professor Olli Silvennoinen
Head of Research Services Hannele Auffermann, Secretary

Executive group

Vice-rector Marja Jylhä, Chair (until 31 July 2004)
Vice-rector Arja Ropo, Chair (from 1 August 2004)
Evaluation officer Tiina Soini, Secretary
Professor Kalervo Järvelin
Professor Päivi Korvajärvi
Professor Anna Mauranen
Professor Simo Oja (until 31 July 2004)

Evaluation officer

PhD Tiina Soini (from 19 May 2003)

Project secretaries

MA Taina Sahlander (12 January 2004 – 31 March 2005)
M. Sc. Admin. Maria Virtanen (23 August – 20 September 2004)



APPENDIX C

Evaluation Panels

I Panel

The Hypermedia Laboratory
Department of Information Studies
Mathematics (Department of Mathematics, Statistics and Philosophy)
Statistics (Department of Mathematics, Statistics and Philosophy)
Department of Computer Sciences

II Panel

Medical school
Institute of Medical Technology

III Panel

Department of Women's Studies
School of Public Health
Department of Sociology and Social Psychology
Department of Social Policy and Social Work
Research Institute for Social Sciences

IV Panel

Department of Nursing Science
Department of Education
Department of Teacher Education
Department of Psychology
Department of Journalism and Mass Communication

V Panel

Department of Management Studies*
Department of Law*
Department of Economics, Accounting and Public Management*
Department of Regional Studies*
Department of Political Science and International Relations
Tampere Peace Research Institute

VI Panel

Philosophy (Department of Mathematics, Statistics and Philosophy)
Department of History
School of Modern Languages and Translation Studies
Department of Music Anthropology
Department of Speech Communication and Voice Research
Department of Literature and the Arts

* From 1 August 2004.



APPENDIX D

Panel members

I Panel

Chair:

Professor Olli Martio, University of Helsinki, Finland

Panel members:

Professor Maristella Agosti, University of Padua, Italy
Professor Elisabeth Davenport, Napier University, Edinburgh, UK
Professor Timo Koski, University of Linköping, Sweden
Professor Raine Koskimaa, University of Jyväskylä, Finland
Professor Thomas Ottmann, University of Freiburg, Germany
Professor Alan Smeaton, Dublin City University, Ireland

II Panel

Chair:

Professor emeritus Aimo A. Salmi, University of Turku, Finland

Panel members:

Professor Thomas Arendt, University of Leipzig, Germany
Professor Christine Van Broeckhoven, University of Antwerp, Belgium
Professor Heidi-Ingrid Maaros, Tartu University, Estonia
Professor Jan Olofsson, University of Bergen, Norway
Professor Bo Risberg, Göteborg University, Sweden
Professor Gunnar Sedin, Uppsala University, Sweden
Professor Kjetil Taskén, University of Oslo, Norway
Professor Alexander Zharkovsky, Tartu University, Estonia

III Panel

Chair:

Professor emeritus Klaus Mäkelä, University of Helsinki, Finland

Panel members:

Professor Sara Arber, University of Surrey, UK
Professor John Scott, University of Essex, UK
Professor Clive Seale, Brunel University, UK
Professor Clare Ungerson, University of Southampton, UK
Professor Alicja Wolk, Karolinska Institutet, Sweden

IV Panel**Chair:**

Professor emeritus Isto Ruoppila, University of Jyväskylä, Finland

Panel members:

Professor Frank Achtenhagen, Georg-August-Universität Göttingen, Germany

Professor Jan Ekecrantz, Stockholm University, Sweden

Professor Ingalill Rahm Hallberg, Lund University, Sweden

Professor Celia Lury, Goldsmiths College, University of London, UK

V Panel**Chair:**

Professor Tuomo Martikainen, University of Helsinki, Finland

Panel members:

Professor Walter Carlsnaes, Uppsala University, Sweden

Professor Vuokko Niiranen, University of Kuopio, Finland

Professor Paavo Okko, Turku School of Economics and Business Administration, Finland

Professor Rune Premfors, Stockholm University, Sweden

Professor Kaarlo Tuori, University of Helsinki, Finland

VI Panel**Chair:**

Professor Auli Hakulinen, University of Helsinki, Finland

Panel members:

Professor Graham Caie, University of Glasgow, UK

Professor Anna Czekanowska, Warsaw University / Catholic University of Lublin, Poland

Professor Östen Dahl, Stockholm University, Sweden

Professor Simo Knuutila, University of Helsinki, Finland

Professor Matti Peltonen, University of Helsinki, Finland

Professor Eero Tarasti, University of Helsinki, Finland

Professor John Walton, University of Central Lancashire, UK

APPENDIX E

Press Release

November 15, 2004

Research of High Quality at the University of Tampere

The research conducted at the University of Tampere is at a high international level according to a comprehensive research evaluation completed in November 2004. The results show that the majority of the departments have reached a good international level in their research work, at least a five on a seven-point scale.

The most successful departments were The Institute of Medical Technology which reached the top grade, History, Information Studies, Journalism and Mass Communication, Philosophy, Regional Studies and the School of Public Health. In addition, the report identified a number of recent developments across different disciplines with promising future potential.

This international evaluation was the first external evaluation to assess the research performance of the six faculties and the special institutes at the university. The evaluation was carried out by six external panels which consisted of international experts from various fields and universities in ten European countries. The evaluation focussed on the quality of the academic output of individual researchers and research groups. The evaluators were specifically asked to address the quality of the submitted publications from a field-specific international perspective.

Rector Krista Varantola emphasizes the strategic value of this research evaluation for the multi-faculty university but also reminded of the importance of high-quality teaching for a successful overall performance of the university. The quality of research and teaching go hand-in-hand and must be viewed together when deciding about the measures needed to strengthen the university's research and teaching profile. It is also worth pointing out in this context that the numbers of masters' and doctoral degrees completed annually at The University of Tampere have consistently reached the target levels agreed between the university and the Ministry Of Education.

The report made a number of suggestions of how to clarify and improve the research strategies of individual departments, how to facilitate the formation of research groups and how to systematically strengthen international cooperation and the international publishing profile. The

report also emphasized the responsibility of the university in the training of researchers and in their future career development.

In her comments Rector Varantola also stressed the value of the feedback available in a thorough and extensive evaluation. It will help individual researchers and departments to formulate their explicit research strategies for the future. The University of Tampere has every chance of success in the face of tough international competition.

For further information please visit our website:
www.uta.fi/tutkimus/arviointi/index_eng.html

Tampereen yliopisto tänään ja huomenna

Yliopiston sisäisiä kehittämisehdotuksia, muistioita ja raportteja

- 1 Esittelyjärjestelmän ja hallinnon kehittäminen. Seminaariraportti (1981)
- 2 Ehdotus Tampereen yliopiston henkilöstöpoliittiseksi ohjelmaksi. HEPO 1 -työryhmän ehdotus (1981)
- 3 Henkilöstön kielikoulutuksen selvitystyö (1981)
- 4 Opetusjaostotutkinnot kehittämislain piiriin. Toimikunnan raportti (1981)
- 5 Tampereen yliopiston kesäyliopistotoimikunnan muistio (1981)
- 6 Kiinteistöyksikön KTS 1982–86 (1981)
- 7 Attila-työryhmän muistio (1982)
- 8 Hallintoasetustoimikunnan ehdotus (1982)
- 9 Kansantalouden koulutusohjelman opiskelijavalinnan ongelmia Rehtorin asettaman toimikunnan muistio (1982)
- 10 Lukuvuosina 1970/71–1981–82 Tampereen yliopiston tiedekunnissa suoritettut lisensiaattitutkinnot ja hyväksytyt väitöskirjat (1982)
- 11 Sanojenkäsittelytyöryhmän ehdotus (1982)
- 12 Opetusjaostojen hallinnollisen aseman uudelleen järjestäminen (1983)
- 13 Yliopettajan virkojen muuttamista koskeva selvitys (1983)
- 14 Silmäys Tampereen yliopiston asemaan korkeakoululaitoksessa (1983)
- 15 Tampereen yliopiston liikunta- ja palvelutyöryhmän muistio (1983)
- 16 Selvitys Tampereen yliopiston henkilöstökoulutustoiminnan vaiheista vuosilta 1973–1983 (1983)
- 17 Korkeakoulutuksen tutkimus Tampereen yliopistossa (1984)
- 18 Atk:n hyödyntämistä yliopistossa suunnittele- van työryhmän muistio (1984)
- 19 Tieteentutkimus Tampereen yliopistossa (1984)
- 20 Tutkimustoiminnan kehittämissuunnitelmia: yhteiskuntatieteellinen tiedekunta (1984)
- 21 Tutkimustoiminnan kehittämissuunnitelmia: humanistinen tiedekunta (1984)
- 22 Tutkimustoiminnan kehittämissuunnitelmia: taloudellis-hallinnollinen tiedekunta (1984)
- 23 Tutkimustoiminnan kehittämissuunnitelmia: lääketieteellinen tiedekunta (1984)
- 24 Tutkimustoiminnan kehittämissuunnitelmia: kasvatustieteiden tiedekunta (1984)
- 25 Opintosuoritusrekisteriin liittyvät ongelmat. Rehtorin asettaman työryhmän raportti (1984)
- 26 Tampereen yliopiston täydennyskoulutuskeskuksen Hämeenlinnan toimipaikan kehittäminen v. 1984–1990 (1984)
- 27 Tampereen yliopiston henkilöstön osallistuminen yliopiston ulkopuoliseen henkilöstökoulutukseen vuosina 1973–83 sekä sisäisen ja ulkopuolisen henkilöstökoulutuksen sisältöjen ja kohderyhmien tarkastelua (1984)
- 28 Kansanperinteen laitoksen soitinkokoelman sijoittaminen. Työryhmän muistio (1984)

- 29 Opetusjaostojen opiskelijavalinta 1970–1984 (1985)
- 30 Tampereen yliopiston kansainvälisten asiain keskus. Center for International Programs – University of Tampere. Suunnitteluryhmän muistio (1985)
- 31 Hallinnon atk Tampereen yliopistossa. Muistio (1985)
- 32 Muistio vakuutusalan tiedekuntaopetuksen kehittämisestä (1985)
- 33 Sopimustutkimusopas. Toimittanut Matti Jussila ja Juhani Pehkonen (1985)
- 34 Tampereen yliopiston avoimen korkeakouluopetuksen järjestämistä pohtineen työryhmän muistio (1986)
- 35 Kunnallisopetuksen kehittämistyöryhmän raportti (1987)
- 36 Kansantalouden koulutusohjelman asema ekonomin tutkinnossa, kansantaloustieteen laitoksen opiskelijavalinta ja koulutusohjelman vaihdot. Rehtorin asettaman työryhmän muistio (1987)
- 37 Ympäristöpolitiikan tutkimuksen ja opetuksen kehittäminen Tampereen yliopistossa. Rehtorin asettaman työryhmän muistio (1987)
- 38 Työtieteellisen jatkokoulutuksen järjestäminen Tampereen yliopistossa. Rehtorin asettaman suunnittelutyöryhmän raportti (1987)
- 39 Selvitys Tampereen yliopiston henkilöstön koulutustarpeista (1988)
- 40 Nuorisotyön koulutuksen kehittämistyöryhmän raportti (1988)
- 41 Informaatiojärjestelmän kehittämistä pohtineen työryhmän muistio (1988)
- 42 Sopimustutkimusopas. Toimittanut Marja Jukola-Aho (1989)
- 43 Matemaattis-luonnontieteellisen tiedekunnan perustamisesta Tampereen yliopistoon (1989)
- 44 Tampereen yliopiston ja kansaneläkelaitoksen yhteistyösuunnitelmat (1989)
- 45 MS-DOS -käyttäjän ohjelmaopas (1990)
- 46 Venäjän tutkimuksen opintokokonaisuus (Russian Studies Program) (1991)
- 47 Kansainvälisen henkilövaihdon lisääminen lähivuosina (1991)
- 48 Kansantaloustieteen koulutusohjelman opiskelijavalinnan kriteereitä ekonomin tutkinnossa pohtivan työryhmän muistio (1992)
- 49 Tutkintorakennetyöryhmän muistio (1993)
- 50 Yleisen vakuutuslaitoksen suunnittelutyöryhmän muistio (1994)
- 51 Nuorisotyön tutkinnon suunnittelutyöryhmän muistio (1994)
- 52 Muistio kansainvälisen opiskelijavaihdon kehittämistarpeista (1995)
- 53 Nuorisotyön koulutuksen kehittäminen ja sosiaalipedagogiikan opetuksen käynnistäminen. Rehtorin asettaman työryhmän muistio (1995)
- 54 Vakuutusalan koulutuksen järjestämisen puiteratkaisu. Rehtorin asettaman työryhmän muistio (1996)
- 55 Opetuksen ja tutkimuksen tietostrategia. Mihin opetus ja tutkimus pyrkivät? Minne ne eivät halua joutua? Rehtorin asettaman työryhmän muistio (1997)
- 56 Kaikki hyvin työssä? Tutkimus Tampereen yliopiston työoloista (1999)
- 57 Tampereen yliopiston opettajankoulutuksen strategia vuosille 2000–2004. Rehtorin asettaman työryhmän muistio (2000)

- 58 Selvitysmiesten raportit 2000. Rehtorin asettamien selvitysmiesten raportit (2000)
- 59 Tutkijana Tampereen yliopistossa. Tutkimushenkilöstö oman ammatillisen osaamisensa arvioijana ja kehittäjänä (2001)
- 60 Tampereen yliopiston työolotutkimus (2002)
- 61 "Sitä ei voi enää nimittää pelkäksi vitsailuksi" Selvitys sukupuolisesta häirinnästä ja ahdistelusta Tampereen yliopistossa (2003)
- 62 Tasa-arvo opettajankouluttajan silmin. Tampereen yliopiston opettajankouluttajien näkemyksiä tasa-arvosta sekä sukupuolen merkityksestä koulussa ja opettajankoulutuksessa (2003)
- 63 Mentorointi osaamisen ja hiljaisen tiedon välittäjänä. Tutkimus Tampereen yliopiston henkilöstönkehittämisyksikön mentorointiohjelmasta (2003)
- 64 Yksi lukuvuosi – neljä periodia. Lukuvuosityöryhmän muistio (2003)
- 65 Neljän suomalaisen monialaisen yliopiston hallinnon itsearvioinnin yhteenvetoraportti (2004)
- 66 Neljän monialaisen yliopiston hallinnon arviointi. Ulkoisen arviointiryhmän raportti (2004)
- 67 Opinnäytetyö ja sen ohjaus. Ajatuksia ja esityksiä hyvistä käytänteistä (2005)
- 68 Research Evaluation of the University of Tampere 2004. Panel Reports (2005)

