

Audit of Lappeenranta-Lahti University of Technology LUT

4.3 Teaching, guidance and support for learning

Teaching and guidance support goal-oriented studies and the active role of students in their learning process

Based on the audit, LUT University provides a generally supportive, student-centred learning environment that encourages active student engagement and goal-oriented learning. The university operates within clearly defined regulations and guidelines relating to admissions, studies, curriculum requirements, progression, assessment, graduation, and recognition of prior learning. These regulations are publicly available and provide an important framework for educational delivery and quality management.

Students consistently highlighted the supportive nature of teaching staff and positively described learning environments where teachers were approachable, engaged, and responsive to student needs. Many students described experiences where teachers actively supported learners with different levels of prior knowledge and ensured that students could progress successfully through challenging courses. Students also positively identified learning experiences that effectively combined theory and practice, including project-based learning, laboratory work, group activities, industry-linked assignments, guest lectures, and practical applications.

The audit found strong examples of pedagogical approaches that promoted active learning, student participation, collaboration, and engagement. Structured courses with regular assignments, discussions, iterative projects, and interactive teaching approaches were particularly valued by students. Students also identified the importance of clear course structures, regular deadlines, feedback opportunities, and practical learning experiences in supporting their motivation, confidence, and understanding.

The university provides a range of supports intended to accommodate diverse student groups, including study guidance, counselling services, career supports, individual study arrangements, and supports for students with learning or attention difficulties. The growing diversity of the student body, particularly the increasing number of international students, has prompted the university to expand support services and develop additional preparatory and bridging supports. The audit found that the university demonstrates strong awareness of the challenges associated with supporting a diverse student population. Staff and students acknowledged ongoing efforts to strengthen orientation, integration, and support mechanisms for international students.

Career planning and work-life skills development are integrated into programmes through introductory courses, Career Services activities, employer engagement, and work-life perspectives within teaching. However, while many strong examples exist, the implementation of work-life integration and practical learning opportunities appears inconsistent across programmes. Students and staff both identified the need for greater consistency, stronger industry engagement, and more systematic integration of practical and professional learning experiences.

The university also demonstrates a strong commitment to ethical practice and academic integrity. Students commit to institutional ethical guidelines at the beginning of their studies, and the university has updated guidance relating to the responsible use of artificial intelligence within coursework and thesis work. The emergence of generative AI is recognised by the university as a major challenge for teaching and assessment practices, and the university has identified the need to reconsider traditional assessment approaches and develop new methods that remain appropriate within changing educational contexts. Staff acknowledged strong institutional efforts to provide support and guidance, but also highlighted the need for clearer institutional policies, shared practices, and strategic direction regarding AI in teaching and assessment.

The audit identified significant strengths within student support services and pedagogical supports. Staff in audit workshops highly praised the responsive, on-demand technical and pedagogical support provided by the Opetushelp and Digital Learning teams. However, the effectiveness of teaching quality, curriculum alignment, guidance, and support services remains heavily dependent on the commitment and practices of individual staff and programmes.

Students also identified areas where support and communication could be strengthened, including:

- More consistent orientation and support for international students;
- Clearer programme information and communication;
- Greater consistency in feedback quality;
- Improved contingency arrangements regarding key staff contacts;
- More transparent use of student feedback;
- Better alignment between assessment workloads and student expectations.

Staff similarly identified the need for stronger coherence, consistency, and scalability across programmes, particularly in response to increasing student numbers, workload pressures, technological change, and the growing diversity of student needs.

Overall, the audit team concludes that LUT University demonstrates many strengths in student-centred teaching, supportive learning environments, pedagogical engagement, and student support services. The university has established a strong foundation for active student learning and engagement. However, more systematic institutional oversight and consistency would further strengthen the quality and sustainability of the student learning experience across all programmes.