Fostering Social Dimension of Higher Education

Briefing Paper 3:

Multilevel Stakekolder Engagement with the Pyramid Inclusion Model Fosters Access in Higher Education Institutes

Developing strategies, policies and processes for inclusion have become imperative in higher education institutes (HEIs). Measures to develop inclusion face a significant amount of challenges, not the least that it is often only considered from a top-down perspective. University of Jyväskylä (JYU, Finland) has a dedicated employee hired to foster inclusion in the whole university level, but involving one person in an insititute of roughly 15 000 students, is not enough to reach all. JYU used Access4All project's Pyramid Inclusion Model to initiate and carry out access development activities in multi stakeholder levels.

Multilevel stakeholders in JYU reviewed Inclusion processes and context through the Access4All Pyramid Inclusion model. The following good practises were identified:

The good practices for students with individual needs include individual arrangements (e.g. extended exam time, using computer in exam, extra lighting, more

Figure 1

peaceful space, getting a website read out) and the assistance provided by the Finnish government. International students, in turn, have been considered by changing a course language into English.

In terms of ICT environments, available student resources (e.g. Student's Compass program and Student Life website) as well as good distance learning possibilities and the availability of online course materials can also be seen as good practices.

In terms of the accessibility of physical spaces, there are spaces available to students across the campus that support different learning styles. In addition, the newer campus (e.g. the Agora building) is quite accessible, and if the physical spaces are not suitable to students, teaching is moved to a more convenient location.

Good practices within the social environment dimension include multiple ways to complete a course,

multiple examination dates and reasonable course

Figure 2

demands.

In addition, courses on academic skills and wellbeing have been arranged both in English and in Finnish and the majority of teaching staff understands special arrangements very well.

Management support is provided in the form of having an official rector's decision to promote accessibility (accessible

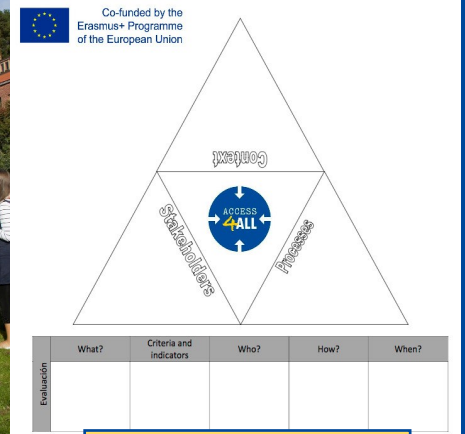| Evaluación	What?	Criteria and indicators	Who?	How?	When?

Figure 3

studying).

In terms of student counselling and guidance, there is the Godie activity, high-quality student counselling, study planning and thesis workshops. Finally, there is support for problems faced by staff in form of

"Even though accessibility practices have improved in the HEIs, there is always a need for continuous development. The Pyramid Inclusion Model is a useful tool for initiating dialogue between multilevel stakeholders."

trusted steward position within units and the students can be handled through the social policy representative within the student organization using a student-led approach.

In sum, examples of the good practices identified by the staff and students through the Pyramid Inclusion Model include solutions to meet the needs of individual students (e.g. extended time for exams or a more peaceful environment) as well as practices to improve inclusion in a more general level (e.g. student counselling and study planning).

In terms of wellbeing, digital resources are provided to students (Student Life website and Student's Compass program) as well as the possibility to talk to a Goodie.

Finally, course materials are widely available online, newer campus is viewed as quite accessible and the majority of teaching staff understand special arrangements very well. •

ACCESS4ALL enables the access and exchange of numerous policies and initiatives that seek to improve access to and continuation and success in Higher Education for under represented collectives and non-traditional learners. Higher Education Institutions interested in the inclusion of non-traditional learners and disadvantaged groups are invited to participate in the ACCESS4ALL open activities that each partner will hold in their campus.

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