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INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE STUDENTS' SATISFACTION WITH THE ORIENTATION PROGRAMME

Development ideas for Oulu University of Applied Sciences

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ABSTRACT

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The thesis was commissioned by the International Services of Oulu University of Applied Sciences. The objective was to study the satisfaction levels of the international exchange students regarding the orientation programme. The main theories in the thesis are benchmarking, orientation, peer tutoring and the current contents of the orientation days.

Both qualitative and quantitative research methods were used. Qualitative research was executed with an interview with the International Office of the comparison university, Hochschule Neu-Ulm. The quantitative research was done for the international exchange students studying in Oulu University of Applied Sciences in the spring term 2018. The survey was an online Webropol survey and it was about the satisfaction levels of the exchange students regarding the orientation days.

The research showed a good level of satisfaction with the current orientation programme. Peer tutoring was the only thing that received more critique on the survey for exchange students. In the discussion with the comparison university the length and the design of the schedule came up as a topic. Development ideas include the three topics that received critique: tutoring, design of the schedule and the length of the orientation programme.

Keywords: exchange student, international exchange, tutoring, orientation, orientation programme, benchmarking

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1 INTRODUCTION

The topic of this thesis is the orientation programme for international exchange students. The idea for the topic developed during the exchange students' orientation days in autumn 2017. As an international tutor, there was a chance to follow the orientation days close by. Studying the schedule of the orientation and comparing it to author's own experiences and another university's schedule seemed interesting and useful topic for a thesis. The commissioner of the work is the International Services of Oulu University of Applied sciences.

The goal is to come up with development ideas for OUAS International Services. The objectives of the thesis are presented more closely in the chapter 1.1. To reach the objectives a study will be made. One part of the study is a qualitative research conducted by a discussion. This discussion also provides material for the theory part of the thesis. The second part of the study is a quantitative research, which will be carried out as a survey for the international exchange students. The theory will be about benchmarking, orientation, peer tutoring and the descriptions of the current orientation days.

The theory of this thesis will cover benchmarking as a tool for developing organizations. Orientation and the current orientation programs will be clarified. OUAS orientation programme was monitored in January 2018. Orientation programs schedules as well as questions of the data collecting survey and discussion will be as appendices of this thesis.

1.1 Objective of the thesis

The main objective of the thesis is to collect information about the orientation days from the exchange students. The data collected will provide useful and current information on the orientation days and how the exchange students feel about the program of the orientation days. The survey conducted will inform the International Services about the coherence and usefulness of the orientation days as well as the exchange students' opinions on how successful the orientation days and tutoring are in general.

In addition to the survey for the exchange students, there will be research done by benchmarking. Another university has been chosen for the benchmarking process and their orientation day program will be compared to Oulu University of Applied Sciences orientation day program.

Research questions are as follows:

- Are the exchange students satisfied with the current orientation days' contents?
- Are the exchange students getting all the information they need for their studies and stay in Finland?
- What could OUAS develop in the orientation days provided to the exchange students?

The end product will be development ideas for the International Services. The development ideas will include suggestions on modifying orientation day content, arrival service and tutoring provided for the exchange students as well as ideas crafted from comparison university's orientation days.

1.2 Commissioner

Oulu University of Applied Sciences (OUAS) lies in Oulu, Finland. It is a medium sized university with around 9,000 students and 640 staff members. From the 9,000 students, 350 are international degree students. OUAS offers 24 different bachelor's degree programs, from which 2 are fully in English. There are also 8 master's degree programs and one offered in English. (Oulun Ammattikorkeakoulu, cited 30.4.2018.) Each year there are over 200 persons attending OUAS as an exchange student.

The International Services is in charge of both outgoing and incoming exchange students and it has 6 employees. International Services is responsible for the cooperation between OUAS and the partner universities. They manage the orientation days, arrival service and peer tutoring for the incoming exchange students. OUAS offers a variety of different student exchange programs to choose from. Erasmus+ is the most used one and it is intended for inter-European student exchange. (Oulu University of Applied Sciences, cited 30.4.2018.)

1.3 Comparison University

One method used in the research of this thesis is comparison. The orientation program of OUAS is compared to the orientation program of another University of Applied Sciences. The comparison university is Hochschule Neu-Ulm (HNU).

Neu-Ulm University of Applied Sciences (HNU) was chosen because of personal experiences of the author as an exchange student from August 2015 to July 2016. Head of Degree in International Business proposed HNU for its importance to OUAS as a partner university. HNU and OUAS have a cooperation, which allows students to graduate from both Universities. It is called a double degree programme and involves a student exchange longer than the usual one or two semesters (OAMK 2018, cited 30.4.2018). After the double degree programme the participating student graduates from both OUAS and HNU.

HNU lies in Bayern, Germany. There are currently more than 3,800 students who study in one of the three departments; Health Management, Information Management and Business and Economics, or in the Centre for Professional and Postgraduate Studies. On the autumn of 2017, 43 exchange students were studying in HNU. There are many nationalities attending the exchange programme and Chinese are one of the largest group. HNU has lately increased their cooperation with Latin American partner universities, and are expecting more exchange students from there in the future. (Miller, discussion 4.10.2017.)

2 BENCHMARKING

Benchmarking is a process, in which an organization learns from another. It is a way to openly learn from a better performing organization and utilize the learnings in the organizations own processes. People, who actually work with the processes being subject to benchmarking, should always be included in the comparison process. They have a better understanding on the organizations performance on the process in question and benchmarking can also be seen as a motivational asset. It encourages and motivates the employees to find a way to develop the processes. (Strömmer, Mäki-Hokkonen & Laatukskus 1998, 5.)

By doing benchmarking research, the organizations can estimate their goals. They can compare the goals to the other organizations performance and see if the goals are reachable and realistic. Benchmarking will give information beyond the numbers. By conversation, the organizations can learn not only how to set a realistic goal, but also how to reach it. (Strömmer et al. 1998, 5.)

Benchmarking can be sometimes confused to competitor analysis or company visits. As competitor analysis analyses the competing organization in the same field, the benchmarking process necessarily does not. In the benchmarking process the selected process is separated from the field of business, so benchmarking can be done with an organization operating outside one's own field. (Strömmer et al. 1998, 6.)

The Global Benchmarking Network has set a series of guidelines for ethical benchmarking. Conversations and actions that might lead to or refer to sharing or dividing markets or customers should be avoided, as well as cartels or bribes. Both parties should receive information of the same nature. The information received can only be passed to a third party with the consent of both parties. (Strömmer et al. 1998, 48.)

The benchmarking process can be put into 8-step process. Below is a figure modified from the source book ***Benchmarking – prosessiopas*** by Kari Tuominen (1993, 41). In this thesis and the benchmarking comparison in it, the process will not go all the way to establishing the new process.

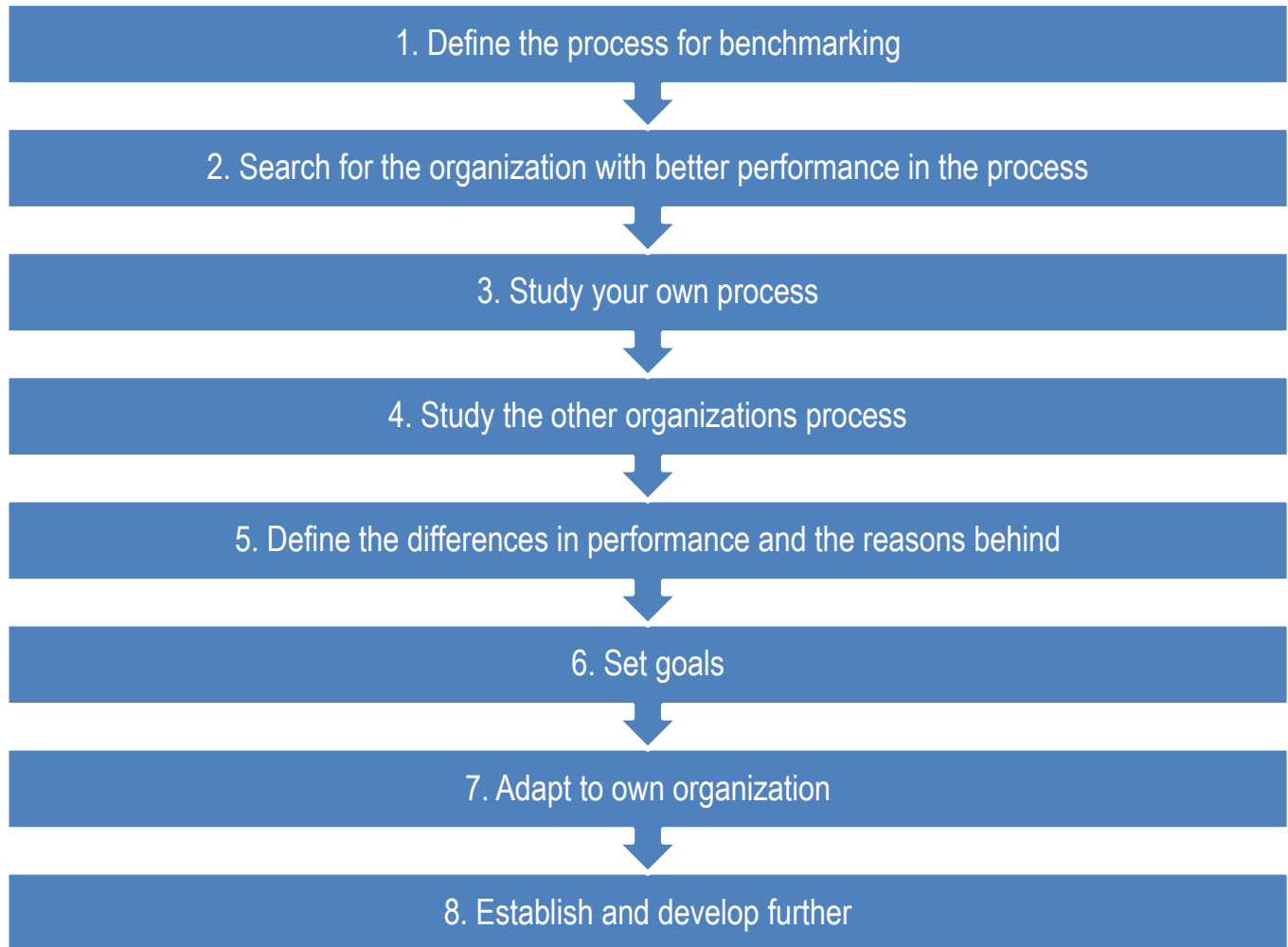


Figure 1. Benchmarking process modified from Tuominen (1993, 41).

The defined benchmarking process is usually one of the key elements for organizations success (Tuominen 1993, 46). In this case, it is a part of the international co-operation of OUAS. The orientation process of international exchange students can be measured with satisfaction surveys. Next step is to find a process that is performing better than the process than in the own organization. For this thesis, the author has a hypothesis based on her own experiences. In stages 3 and 4 of the benchmarking process the selected process, here orientation of new exchange students, is being studied. Both organizations processes have to be familiar, so they can be compared. A visit to the other organization is recommended with questions about the process in question (Tuominen 1998, 62). In making of this thesis, a visit was made to HNU and the questions were sent to the hosts in advance on their request.

In the 5th stage the differences of both organizations processes are defined. The fundamental goal is to understand the reason behind the differences in performance in the processes (Tuominen 1998, 69). After the differences are clear, it is time to set first goals for the process development. There should be both short term goals and long term goals (Tuominen 1998, 71). In the final two stages of the process the renewed process is introduced to the organization, established and developed forth (Tuominen 1998, 73-80).

3 ORIENTATION

Induction programme is a process usually referring to integration of a new employee at a new workplace. Induction works both ways. It is meant to introduce the new employee to the organization, as well as to introduce the organization to the new employee. (Paul 2017, cited 30.4.2018). Here, we can use a similar idea which can be used to fit the student orientation.

According to Eliza Paul (2017, cited 30.4.2018) there are several features to a good induction programme. Slightly modified, these will also fit to orientation of new exchange students. Some of the features that should be included are as follows:

- University policies, practices, objectives and regulations
- Duties and responsibilities as a student
- Set-up of login and administrative matters
- Introduction to key members of the staff
- A guided tour of the campus

An orientation programme that is planned in advance is the most beneficial to the student and to the organization. A schedule of the orientation should be available for students detailing the activities and the staff member responsible for each activity. Every person related to the orientation process should be informed about the schedule and possible changes. (Paul 2017, cited 30.4.2018.) In the following subtopics the tutoring policies of both OUAS and HNU will be clarified. OUAS orientation programme is shifted through as well as the HNU orientation programme. The subtopics of this chapter are stages 3 and 4 of the benchmarking process (see Figure 1).

3.1 Peer tutoring

Peer tutor is a student, who voluntarily participates in the guidance of new students. Peer tutor is not above the new student nor the new group by authority, but only shares his experience, knowledge and expertise as an older student. The role of the peer tutor is more significant in the beginning and fades when the new student or group grows to be more independent. (Härkönen 2003, 8.)

During the orientation, preferably on the first day, the peer tutors should be among the new students. In practice, tutors should be welcoming new students by the entrance or in the lobby of the new school. Tutors should be wearing clothing, which makes their position clear, for example unified clothing or name tags. Tutors have to be easily approachable and available for new students. If possible, the tutors should have a time slot with the new students. The contents of the tutors' class should not overlap with others that day or in the orientation, so the tutors and other parties participating in the orientation days have to be informed about the schedule and possible changes. (Härkönen 2003, 24-25).

One of the most important tasks the peer tutors have during orientation, is to start the process of group development. The first step, forming, is easier for some people than for others. Most of the group members are unsure, reserved, superficial in their communication and unsure of the roles and norms in the new group. As a tutor, one can with his own behaviour ease the nervousness and shyness of the group members. The new group can be guided, so that the general atmosphere among the group is welcoming and approving of all as individuals. (Härkönen 2003, 34-35). A group that is constructed with members from different backgrounds and in which variety of demographics are present is a heterogeneous group. These groups are likely to work highly effectively together, but can face some issues in the beginning. (Verderber, R & Verderber K. 2005, 232).

3.1.1 Tutor training in OUAS

Student union OSAKO is responsible for OUAS's tutors, their recruiting and training. OSAKO and the OUAS International Services work closely in cooperation. Tutor training consists of two evening seminars. Tutors can work as international tutor or as a tutor for Finnish degree students. If the tutor takes part in more training, they can also work as a well-being tutor. (OSAKO, cited 30.4.2017.)

Tutoring is worth 3 ECTS (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation system). These 3 ECTS are added to the tutors transcribe of records after they have provided OSAKO with the tutor pass, showing enough participation in tutoring duties, and a tutoring memo reflecting their own work as a tutor. (OSAKO, cited 30.4.2017.)

3.1.2 Tutor training in HNU

Tutors in HNU do not have a specific training for their tasks. They take part in meetings about the orientation days in advance. Tutors are provided with a tutor manual with a set of instructions, the material given to incoming exchange students and an e-learning platform with material about tutoring. Tutors are compensated for their work with a €200 scholarship. They can take part in the excursions and activities for exchange students free of charge. (Miller, discussion 4.10.2017.)

3.2 In Oulu University of Applied Sciences

Oulu University of Applied Sciences hosts the orientation days for all incoming exchange students. Orientation days include arrival service, joint orientation for all incoming students despite of their study fields and a campus orientation day, when their respectful study fields are more closely taken into account. Tutor students, staff of the International Services, study counsellor and some teachers take part in the orientation days. Main responsibility of organizing is on the International Service. The schedule for the orientation can be found as the appendix 1 of this thesis. In the chapter 3.2 and its subtopics author's own experienced are put to account.

3.2.1 Arrival Service

Oulu University of Applied Sciences provides an arrival service for incoming exchange students. The service is offered on two dates, before the start of the actual orientation from 8 am until 10 pm. During these times there are tutor students available to help the incoming exchange students. The students are advised before arriving on how to make their way from the Oulu Airport to OSAKO office. OSAKO office is within walking distance for the student housing most exchange students' use. At the OSAKO office there are tutor students welcoming the exchange students and handing out the keys to their student dorm rooms and apartments.

Tutor students have been assigned to all exchange students to make sure everyone are contacted even before arrival. If the exchange students arrive outside of the times of the arrival service, tutor students have been flexible. Some examples are holding on the exchange students keys or picking them up from the airport/train station outside of the offered arrival service.

3.2.2 Joint orientation day

Joint orientation day is held on one of the OUAS campuses. Incoming exchange students take part as one large group as they are presented with information regarding all. First information session is about practical and administrative matters, topics such as Finnish personal identity code, transferable ECTS credits, grading scales and library information. Information on the city of Oulu, public healthcare, cycling, public transportation and sport services and options are presented to the exchange students.

The students are provided with their personal information folders including enrolment certificate, arrival form, meal subsidy card, IT information along with usernames and passwords for all school computer systems, course enrolment information and maps of both the campuses and the city of Oulu. The folder and its contents are shortly scanned through together with the exchange students. After the first information session, lunch is available for students and staff in the school cafeteria.

After the lunch, the programme of the joint orientation day is not as formal. The International Services had invited different organizations and companies to host stands in the lobby of the campus building. There is a sort of a fair for students to attend. Present are few student organizations, representatives from the university library, student health care and the city of Oulu. International Service has their own stand as does the student union OSAKO and international tutors of OUAS. A local bicycle repair shop is at the campus selling used bicycles for students. The students are able to wander around the fair area freely, getting information on different organizations and taking part in some lotteries and competitions.

3.2.3 Campus orientation day

The following day the exchange students are divided into three groups according to their respectful study fields. Engineering students are to study at Kotkantie campus, Business and Economics students at Teuvo Pakkalan katu campus and Healthcare students at Kontinkangas campus. All three groups spend the morning at Kontinkangas campus, since it is the only one with the cafeteria open for lunch at the time.

Before lunch, the exchange students are taught how to use OUAS intranet, to do their own schedules with the schedule tool and to do course enrollments. Coordinators of International Services are in charge of the programme. International tutors are present and helping the exchange students along the way. All of the exchange students managed to enroll to their chosen courses and set up a personal schedule.

After lunch the exchange students of Business and Economics walk to their campus on Teuvo Pakkanen katu. From there on, the programme of the day is planned and executed by the international tutors. Tutors tour the exchange students around campus. Get-together games are organized for the students as well as a tour around the centrum of Oulu.

3.3 In University of Applied Sciences Neu-Ulm

In Hochschule Neu-Ulm (HNU) orientation for exchange students is three weeks long. This is held on the weeks prior to the start of the actual term. The orientation programme is divided into five distinct categories; study related, formalities, intercultural workshops, German language course and sightseeing. International tutors are assigned to each exchange student and they assist the tutee upon arrival to Neu-Ulm. Arrival service is guaranteed for three days before the start of the orientation. The schedule is shared with the exchange students on the first day of the orientation. A picture of the orientation schedule can be found as an appendix 2 of this thesis. Following subtopics coherence is justified by the orientation schedule and discussion with the international coordinators Ms. Miller and Ms. Briel (4.10.2017).

3.3.1 Study related orientation

Study related information sessions are held in during the first two weeks. First sessions related to studying matters are welcoming session, where students receive their schedules for the orientation, and tour around campus to get familiar with the building. The students are divided into two groups for the next study related sessions. Both groups of exchange students are provided with information on studying at HNU and HNU library services.

Exchange students join again as one larger group for information on health care services and constructing their personal schedules for the semester. When making the schedules, international tutors are also present at the session and available to assist the exchange students when needed.

3.3.2 Formalities

There are only two timeslots in the orientation days schedule for formalities. On the first week in the formalities session the exchange students are checked for their insurances and residence permits and advised in matters regarding. The students are provided with a chance to open a German bank account by a local bank. Advice is given on payment of the student union membership. The students would get their student cards as the transaction has gone through. The next session for formalities is on the third week of the orientation. Students together with the tutors and staff of International Services visit the City Office of Neu-Ulm to register as a resident of the city.

3.3.3 Intercultural workshops

The intercultural workshops are more fun, interactive and integrating for the exchange students. Two of these workshops is held by tutors. The exchange students are asked to prepare a presentation about their home country with their countrymen. This is how each country represented among the exchange students is presented to fellow classmates.

Intercultural training session is organized by the International Office. This is again held twice and the group of exchange students is divided in two. The International Office at HNU notes that these intercultural workshops are in the schedule mainly for integrating reasons.

3.3.4 German language course

All exchange students are given a chance to participate to a two-week long German language course. The course is offered on three different levels, from which the exchange students can

choose the appropriate one to match their skill level. These pre-semester courses are worth 2 ECTS and the courses also continue seamlessly onto semester courses.

3.3.5 Sightseeing and other activities

As the orientation lasts for three weeks HNU organizes a small, one-day, excursion each weekend. The exchange students can participate for these sightseeing excursions by buying a ticket from the tutors for a small price. The State of Bayern financially contributes for the integration of exchange students, so only a small percentage from the value of each excursion has to be covered by the students themselves. For autumn semester 2017 the excursions were targeted at Munich, Lake Constance and Neuschwanstein castle.

Some optional free time activities are also organized by the tutors during orientation. On the first weekend there is an Ulm City Tour and Pub Crawl in the neighbouring city of Ulm, in order to integrate new exchange students to their new home town area and as a group. On the first two weeks there are two parties, one only for HNU exchange students and one for all Erasmus exchange students in Neu-Ulm and Ulm. Last week of the orientation, the tutors have organized a brewery tour and tasting for the exchange students. The meaning of this tour is to integrate the students to German past-time culture and integrate them as a group.

4 RESEARCH METHODS

Two different types of research methods were used in the making of this thesis. Both serve an individual purpose. The qualitative research was made to possibly gain new ideas for the orientation day and to get a better understanding on how the orientation days are organized in HNU. The quantitative research was made to find out whether the current orientation days schedule needs improvement or not. In the following subtopics both survey methods used are presented.

4.1 Quantitative survey for students

Target group for the survey were exchange students studying in OUAS during the spring semester 2018. These students attended the orientation days in January 2018. The latest exchange students were chosen because the orientation days are still fresh in their minds. The questions were about the arrival service, tutoring, contact from OUAS and the orientation day's schedule. Most of the questions were presented in a statement form and scaled from 1 (totally disagree) to 4 (totally agree). Two were open questions and one yes/no question. There were total of 12 questions. List of the questions can be found on appendix 3.

Quantitative survey was chosen so the results would show satisfaction levels of more than just few individuals (Hirsjärvi, S., Remes, P. & Sajavaara, P. 2008, 190). Survey was published online with Webropol survey tool. Link to the survey was posted on Facebook group "Oulu UAS Exchange Students Spring 2018" and the link was seen by 148 people. This was the best channel to reach most of the exchange students at a time. The survey was open for one week. One reminder message was sent during the week and another on the day the survey closed. International tutors were also asked to promote the survey.

4.2 Qualitative interview for coordinators

International coordinator Ms. Christina Miller from HNU was interviewed face-to-face about the orientation days at HNU. The interview was a casual theme interview with some questions, listed in the appendix 4. The questions formed a structure for the interview, but the discussion was not restricted to the specific questions and answers. Present was also Ms. Lilia Briel, who would start

working as a college of Ms. Miller during the next semester. The interview was held in the premises of HNU. International coordinators were chosen for the benchmarking process for their participation and hands-on experience on the orientation of new exchange students.

Qualitative research method was chosen because of the scope of the matter. It was important to be able to get more reasoning on the topic than a quantitative survey would have given (Hirsjärvi, S. et al. 2008, 200). The schedule and the work the International staff at HNU puts into the orientation needed to be fully understood in order to later do comparison and benchmarking with the OUAS orientation days. Questions for the interview were sent to Ms. Miller prior to the meeting in Germany and they were formed on the basis of the orientation schedule Ms. Miller had provided earlier.

5 RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

The data collection gave answers on two different ways. The answers for the qualitative and quantitative research are explained in the following subtopics. For the chapter 5.2 discussion and the orientation schedules are utilized and this chapter is stage 5 of the benchmarking process (see Figure 1).

5.1 Survey for exchange students

The survey had total of 13 responses. A sample this small will be able to provide a general responses to the stated questions. Below the answers to all the statements and questions of the survey are presented. In the figures 2 and 3 the mean values of certain statements are presented.

Statement 1: I was satisfied with the amount of contact from my assigned tutor before arriving to Oulu. Possible answers were from 1 (totally disagree) to 4 (totally agree). 7,69% (1) of the respondents totally disagreed with the statement, 15,38% (2) of the respondents disagreed. 30,77% (4) of the respondents agreed with the statement and 46,15% (6) totally agreed.

Statement 2: I was satisfied with the amount of contact from OUAS International Service before arriving to Oulu. Answering options were same as in statement 1. None of the respondents totally disagreed with the statement. 7,69% (1) of the respondents disagreed, 23,08% (3) agreed and 69,23% (9) totally agreed.

Statements 1 and 2 show that generally the exchange students are satisfied with the contact from the tutors and OUAS International Services. On the first statement the average from the answers is 3,15, which is between the options agree and totally agree. On the second statement the average was higher, 3,62 which is closer to the option totally agree than the option agree. Majority of the exchange students were happy with the amount of contact.

Question 3: Was there any information you would have needed before arriving to Oulu, but did not receive? If yes, please elaborate. Question 3 was an open question. 3 respondents answered, from which 1 answer was dismissed. This means that 84,61% (11) of the respondents, who did not

answer, did get all the information needed before arriving. 7,69% (1) of the respondents felt like they would have needed some more information.

"I would like to receive straight informations and not a lot of links where I should find by myself all I needed"

The feedback on question 3 is probably from an exchange student, who would have needed the information in a clearer package. Vast majority however are pleased with the information received and do not feel like there was any information missing.

Statement 4: I got all the assistance I needed from the arrival service operated by tutors. Again the answer options were from 1 (totally disagree) from 4 (totally agree). 23,08% (3) of the respondents disagreed with the statement, while none totally disagreed. 15,38% (2) agreed with the statement and 61,53% (8) totally agreed. This means that roughly 1 out of 4 exchange students did not receive enough assistance from the arrival service provided, while 3 out of 4 agreed or totally agreed with the statement.

Statement 5: The orientation days schedule was sent to all exchange students prior to arriving as a PDF file. I found the schedule coherently written. None of the respondents totally disagreed with the statement, but 15,38% (2) disagreed. 46,15% (6) agreed with the statement and 38,46% (5) totally agreed. Total of 11 out of the 13 respondents agreed or totally agreed that the orientation schedule is well written, which shows that the exchange students feel that it is easy to read and understand.

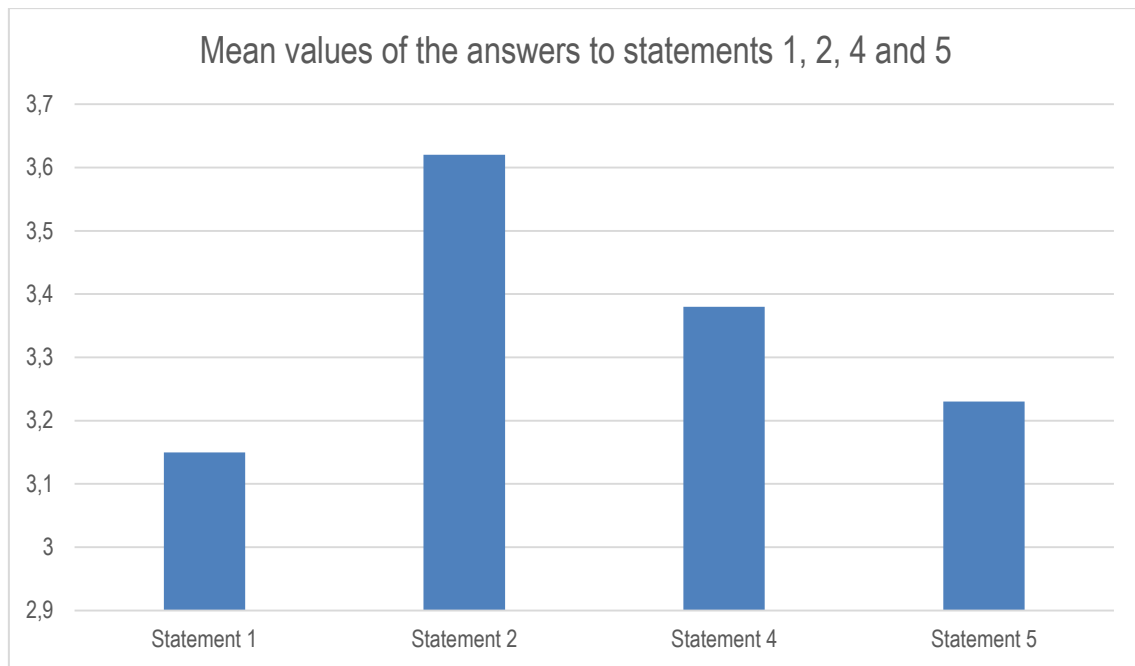


Figure 2. Mean values of the answers to statements 1, 2, 4 and 5.

Statement 6: I got all the information needed for my studies at OUAS during the orientation days. Options to answer were again from 1 (totally disagree) to 4 (totally agree). 7,69% (1) of the respondents disagreed with the statement and none totally disagreed. 38,46% (5) agreed and 53,85% (7) totally agreed. With this information it can be determined that the content of the orientation programme responds to the exchange students needs very well, by over 90% of the students feel they got all the information needed.

Statement 7: I think there was enough time for the orientation. Option was similar as before. None of the students totally disagreed with the statement. 7,69% (1) disagreed, 38,46% (5) agreed and 53,85% (7) totally agreed with the statement. Over half of the exchange students totally agreed that the two day orientation is enough. Over 90% feel they totally agree or agree with the statement.

Statement 8: I was satisfied with the structure of the orientation. (Common information for all -> information about Oulu -> campus specific orientation and IT matters -> campus tours and getting to know each other). None of the respondents totally disagreed or disagreed with the statement. 46,15% (6) agreed and 53,85% (7) totally agreed with the statement. This means that 100% of the students are satisfied with the current structure of the orientation.

Statement 9: I found the tutors roles at the orientation necessary. Answer range was from 1 (totally disagree) to 4 (totally agree). 23,08% (3) of the respondents totally disagreed and 15,38% (2) disagreed with the statement. This mean that nearly 40% of the students feel that the tutors are not necessary during the orientation days. 30,77% (4) agreed and another 30,77% (4) totally agreed that tutors roles during the orientation is necessary. Average of the answers is 2,69, between disagree and agree.

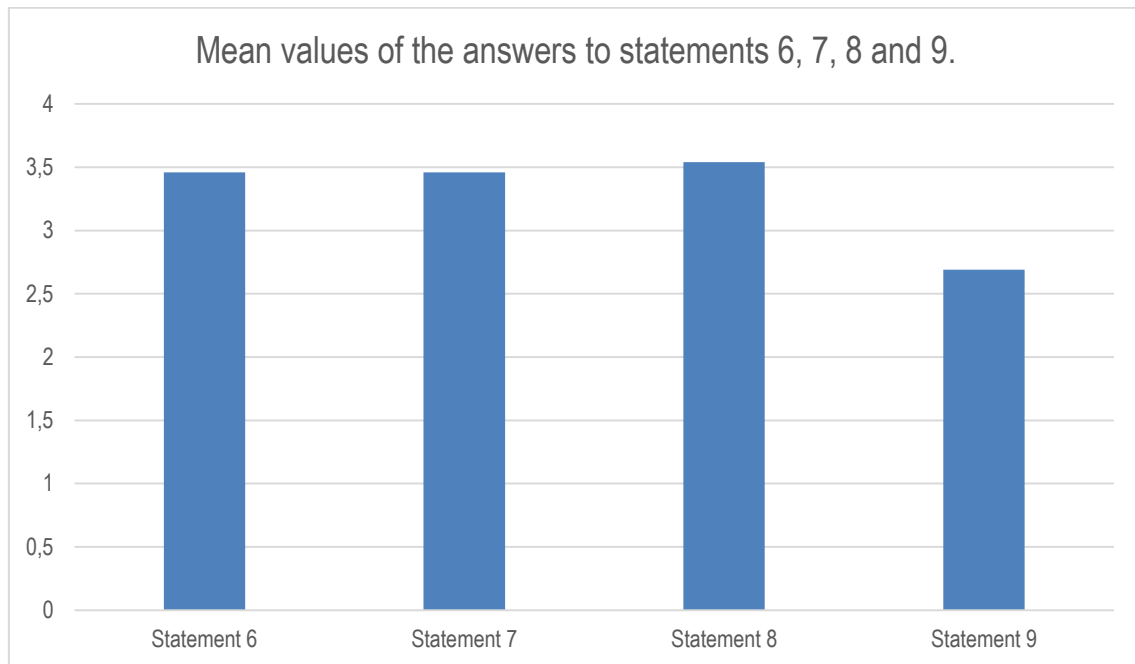


Figure 3. Mean values of the answers to statements 6, 7, 8 and 9.

Statement 10: I was assisted by tutors during the orientation days. Options for answer were yes and no. 69,23% (9) answered that they were not assisted by tutors. 30,77% (4) were assisted by tutors. Roughly one third of the exchange students were assisted by tutors. It is possible that some of the 9 respondents, who answered no, did not need assistance at all and therefore did not ask for any from the tutors. Table below shows the graphics of the responses.

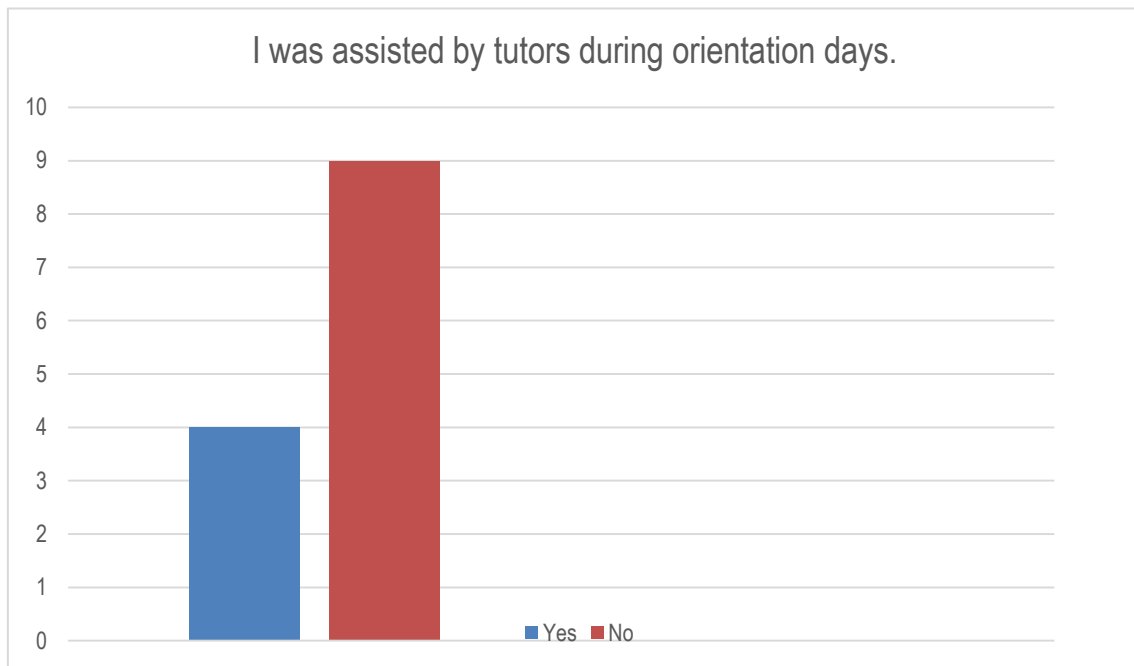


Figure 4. Question 10: I was assisted by tutors during orientation days.

Question 11: Do you feel like there was anything of importance left out from the orientation days? If yes, please elaborate below. 61,54% (8) of the respondents did not answer to the question. This means that they did not feel anything important was left out. 23,08% (3) answered to the open question. Two answers were dismissed. One respondent stated that he is studying in the DevLAB programme in OUAS and was not sure if the orientations differ. He mentioned that personally he did not feel anything was left out from the orientation. Two other answers were as follows:

“Too many informations and too many associations (e.g. Ouas, Psoas, Osako, Osasto, etc) to remember all together, too much confusion.”

“Maybe also something like showing the sport center, swimming pool, stuff like that. Make some deals with local organizations that offer fun activities like go-karting etc.”

One of the respondents feels that there was too much information to remember during the orientation days and he felt confused. Another respondent feels like there could have been more

activities, informing about local free time possibilities and more get-together activities outside school.

Statement 12: What is your general satisfaction level concerning the arrival service, international tutors and the orientation days? Answer options were from 1 (poor) to 4 (excellent). None of the respondents answered with values 1 and 2. This means that 100% of the respondents are satisfied or very satisfied in general. 30,77% (4) of the respondents answered with value 3 and 69,23% (9) with value 4.

5.2 Comparison with HNU

The interview with Ms. Miller and Ms. Briel was prearranged to get better understanding on how their orientation days are organized. Most of the questions and answers form a source for chapters 3.1.2 and 3.3. Last part of the discussion was planned to get some thoughts on the OUAS orientation days from just the schedule. From the chapter 2 Benchmarking, below the differences in the processes between OUAS and HNU are explained.

First thing that Miller and Briel addressed was how busy and complicated the OUAS orientation schedule looks. In their opinion there was more information on the schedule than needed. In HNU the exchange students are provided with a clearer, colour organized schedule that is quite stripped from information. The personnel organizing the orientation days have a more specific schedule. In OUAS the schedule looks plainer in visuals, but it offers a lot of information to the exchange students. Both schedules can be seen as appendix 1 and 2.

HNU has a three week orientation before the semester start, whereas OUAS only have two days. This is probably the biggest difference and explains most of the differences in the content of the orientation days. In the two day orientation, OUAS does not have time to organize excursions or language courses. HNU has time to sort schedule so, that there is enough time in between the main informative sessions. Miller said that this helps the International Office manage the flow of questions from exchange students. They sort out one matter at the time and answer questions related to the matter before moving to another matter.

During the first day of orientation OUAS holds a market place event for the exchange students. Representatives from different organizations, such as student unions, library and the city of Oulu, have their own stands where they can engage exchange students. The students get valuable information on the organizations and happenings during their exchange. International coordinators from HNU thought that the market place is a great idea, but they feel that it might be challenging to get all the organizations together at the same time. HNU does not have a similar event in their schedule, where to students could get to know local student organizations.

Miller and Briel thought that it is a good idea to have all the students together first for the information regarding all and only then separate sessions from campus specific orientation. At HNU all the exchange students attend classes at the same campus, so they do not have the need to separate students by their study field. To get all the exchange students in somewhat manageable groups, HNU also has some of the activities during the orientation in two different groups.

Tutoring is a lot like in HNU and OUAS. Both universities rely on their international tutors on the arrival service. Tutors have a role during the orientation in both universities helping the International Services in the orientation, some activities tutors are fully responsible. What is different is the compensation the international tutors receive. In OUAS the tutors get 3 ECTS and a diploma. In HNU the tutors get a €200 scholarship. During the discussion the tutor pass OUAS uses was mentioned. HNU did not really have a solid method of tracking their tutor activity and they were interested in hearing more about the method OUAS uses.

6 CONCLUSION AND DEVELOPMENT IDEAS

The results of the quantitative research give OUAS International Services coherent, up-to-date information about the successfulness of the orientation days they host. Since OUAS is an intercultural organization and practices active international cooperation the exchange students satisfaction on the organization is important knowledge.

The survey results are showing that the International Services has done very well in organizing the orientation days and including all the information exchange students need during their studies. General satisfaction level is 100% and there seems to be only few individuals who are not satisfied with certain matters. All the main points of successful induction described in chapter 3 actualize in the orientation days' programme.

Tutoring is the matter that the exchange students are most displeased. From the 13 respondents 3 said that they were not satisfied with the contact from tutors before arriving, 3 did not get the assistance they needed during arrival service, 5 did not feel the tutors' roles during the orientation days were necessary and 9 said that they had not been assisted by tutors during the orientation.

International tutors go through the training by student union OSAKO. It would be worth finding out if there is a problem in the tutoring skills or if the tutors' roles during the orientation is not made clear to the exchange students. If the case is the latter, the tutors could be given more visible responsibilities during the orientation. If the tutors would lead more activities independently, the exchange students would perhaps realize that the tutors are actually a big help for the International Services and feel like they are getting assistance from the tutors directly.

From the discussion and benchmarking part of the research there were two noticeable points. First is the difference in the length of the orientation programme. If possible, adding some more time to the orientation programme could allow room for a looser schedule. This was requested by one respondent and another stated that he would have wanted more content in the orientation programme. Use of time also came up during the discussion with HNU international coordinators. HNU has significantly longer orientation programme and they feel that the two day orientation would be too short.

The second point that was noticeable was the design of the orientation days' schedule. This came up in both the discussion with HNU international coordinators and whilst doing benchmarking. Both schedules can be found as appendices 1 and 2. HNU provides their exchange students a clearer, simpler, more timetable like schedule. OUAS contracts their as a list. During the discussion OUAS schedule was seen as too informative. 38,46% of the respondents totally agreed with a statement "I found the schedule coherently written".

The design of the schedule could be updated to a simpler form. Schedule similar to the current could be used internally, for staff and tutors. Exchange students could be provided with a schedule stating only basics, like the topics of information sessions, times and locations. The schedules could be done for each study field separately. This would only provide the students with the schedule concerning them. In the current schedule all the information is available for all the students.

7 DISCUSSION

I find the topic of international exchange very interesting, so I would like to express thanks to the OUAS International Services for accepting my proposed topic for this study. Since I proposed the topic and put it forward to the International Services myself, I got to work fairly independently on this thesis. I duly hope that the study will be useful and appreciated.

The time management regarding the making of this thesis was not sufficient. The first schedule planned did not hold. Even though my own experiences as an international tutor, an exchange student and the interest in the topic, I found it difficult to find the personal resources to complete the study.

To my surprising the quantitative research nearly became an issue. This was due to the difficulty of finding respondents. If the questionnaire would have been presented to the exchange students earlier in the semester, I reckon the response rate would have been greater. The qualitative research on the other hand was extremely pleasant to do. I had a wonderful opportunity to visit HNU on the spot. Ms. Miller and Ms. Briel of HNU were of great assistance and I got many ideas from them regarding the direction of the study.

I do not feel that the research I have done exploited any data previously unknown to the International Service, but reinforce already known information. The validity of the study would definitely be better with a larger sample of exchange students studied over several orientation days. This way singular incidents, like errors in the schools computer systems, would not have an effect on the end result.

There might be a possibility to research the international tutoring forwards in another thesis, possibly in cooperation with OSAKO. It was the matter that did not impress the exchange students as much according to the survey. It is my hope that this thesis provides the International Services coherent information about the current state of the orientation programme and the exchange students' satisfaction with the orientation as a whole.

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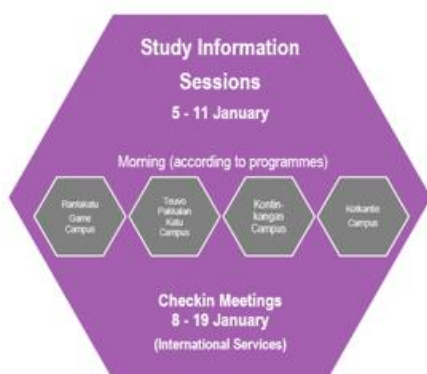
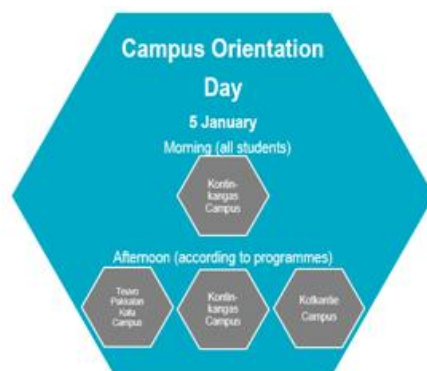
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OAMK

Oulu University of Applied Sciences / **DRAFT** Orientation Days for Exchange Students, 4 - 5 January 2018

N.B.! Orientation days are mandatory for all exchange students

*Last updated: 19 December 2017. Programme changes and link updates possible. Times and venues subject to change.
Check for the latest version by reloading or refreshing the document in your browser.*



THURSDAY, 4 JANUARY 2018**Oulu UAS' Joint Orientation Day**

Location: Kontinkangas Campus, Kiviharjuntie 4, 90220 Oulu, Main Lobby, see [map](#).
For all exchange students!

FRIDAY, 5 JANUARY 2018**Campus Orientation Day****Kontinkangas Campus**

Morning location: Kontinkangas Campus, Kiviharjuntie 4, 90220 Oulu, see [map](#)

Afternoon location: Kotkantie Campus, Kotkantie 1, 90250 Oulu, for campus tour only, see [map](#).

Exchange Study Programmes:

Health Care & Nursing (incl. Concept Creation 15 ECTS or from Oulu DevLAB)

Occupational Therapy (incl. Concept Creation 15 ECTS or from Oulu DevLAB)

Physiotherapy (incl. Concept Creation 15 ECTS or from Oulu DevLAB)

Social Services

Biomedical Laboratory Sciences

Dental Health Care

Optometry

Vocational Teacher Education

Kotkantie Campus

Morning location: Kontinkangas Campus, Kiviharjuntie 4, 90220 Oulu, see [map](#)

Afternoon location: Kotkantie Campus, Kotkantie 1, 90250 Oulu, for campus tour only, see [map](#).

Exchange Study Programmes:

Demola (separate meetings, join your major exchange study programme!)

Oamk LABs (full programmes 30 ECTS or Oulu DevLAB, Oulu Game LAB)

Civil Engineering

Information Technology (Web Technologies (2-year)

Teuvo Pakkalan Katu Campus

Morning location: Kontinkangas Campus, Kiviharjuntie 4, 90220 Oulu, see [map](#)

Afternoon location: Teuvo Pakkalan katu 19, 90130 Oulu, Room A211.3, see [map](#).

Exchange Study Programmes:

Business and Marketing

Business Information Technology

MONDAY, 8 JANUARY 2018 --->

Study information sessions according to exchange study programmes with international academic coordinators.

Checkin meetings with international administrative coordinators on different campuses according to exchange study programme.

THURSDAY, 4 JANUARY 2018

- 8.30 - Oulu UAS' Joint Orientation Day**
Location: Kontinkangas Campus, Kiviharjuntie 4, 90220 Oulu, [see map](#).
- 08.30 - 09.00 Welcome Coffee & Tea, Louhi Building, Restaurant Alwari, close to Main Lobby**
 Start your day with a refreshing cup of coffee or tea and get to know our team and other exchange students.
 Coffee/tea and [pulla](#) (a Finnish sweet bun) offered by International Services!
 Welcome words by Sami Niemelä, Team Manager, [International Services](#)
- 09.00 - 09.40 Practical & Administrative Information, Honka Building, Hall 118A**
 Sami Niemelä & Bastian Fähnrich, International Services
 Introduction to website "Practical Information", <http://u.oamk.fi/exchangepracticalinfo>
- 09.40 - 10.00 Information Folder & Documents for Exchange Students**
 Enrolment certificate
 Arrival form (Personal Identity Code information)
 Meal subsidy card & [Amica](#) restaurant instructions
 In Case of Emergency card
 IT information
 IT usernames and passwords
 Oulu and Campus Maps
- 10.00 - 10.30 Oulu University of Applied Sciences in a Nutshell, Honka Building, Hall 118A**
 Katja Kurasto, International Services (Instagram contest)
- 10.30 - 11.30 Student Union OSAKO & Student Card, Honka Building, Hall 118A, Laura Lääveri, OSAKO**
Erasmus Student Network (ESN) Oulu, Mihaela Ivanova, ESN Oulu
- 11.30 - 12.15 Lunch Break, Alwari Restaurant**
- 12.15 - 12.45 Accommodation Information – PSOAS, Vuokko Pirilä, Honka Building, Hall 118A**
 N.B.! All exchange students residing in [Väikkylä](#) should sign their rental agreements during the Market Place time slot in room D2052. N.B.! Take your passport and a copy of your passport with you when you go to sign your rental agreement.
- 12.45 - 14.15 Market Place – Get Information from Interactive Stands, Louhi Building, Main Lobby**
[PSOAS](#), Signing rental agreements, Marjukka Pitkänen, [PSOAS, Room D2052](#)
[Oulu10 Service Point](#), Hanna Korpiaho, Susanna Kattilakoski
[Oulu Tourist Information](#)
 OSAKO Student Union & Field-Specific Student Associations ([OTRO](#), [OSASTO](#), [KULTTI](#), [OTE](#) & [LUVA](#))
 Erasmus Student Network Oulu (ESN Oulu) [Mihaela Ivanova](#)
 International Tutors of Oulu UAS – Stand & Photo Booth
[Oulu Entrepreneurship Society](#)
 AIESEC (International Association of Students in Economics and Management) [Anastasia Shiverskikh](#)
 Library of Oulu UAS, Leena Ojala & Saija Toppila
 International Services of Oulu UAS, T-Shirts, Q&A
[Cycling - Recycled Bicycles](#), [Mikko Saukkonen](#) & [Matti Kielenen](#), Sale in the assembly hall during the event!
 Sports Services, [Aki Henttilä](#)
 Student Health Care, City of Oulu, Minna Järvinen
- 14.15 - 15.00 Wrap Up & Awarding Prizes, Louhi Building, Main Lobby**
 Piritta Nätyнки, International Services

FRIDAY, 5 JANUARY 2018 – KONTINKANGAS CAMPUS

Exchange Study Programmes:

Health Care & Nursing, Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, Social Services, Biomedical Laboratory Sciences,
Dental Health Care, incl. Concept Creation 15 ECTS or from Oulu DevLAB

10.00 - 12.00 General & Safety Information, Personal Profiles in Pairs, Kontinkangas Campus, Room NN

Bastian Fährnich, International Coordinator

Getting to know each other by means of creating personal profiles in pairs.

Safety information.

Check in meetings for next week by Doodle appointment – book a time after your timetable has been confirmed in the afternoon study information session. The Doodle link will be available in the evening of 5 January)

12.00 - 13.00 Lunch on Kontinkangas Campus, Restaurant Alwari**13.00 - 14.30 Kontinkangas & Kotkantie Campus Tour, Start on Kontinkangas campus in Room NN**

Health & Social Care: Tutor Students

N.B.! Students of Kotkantie Campus incl. Oamk LABs full and partial programmes (DevLAB and Game LAB) join in for the Kontinkangas campus tour and afterwards proceed to Kotkantie Campus, together with health and social care students studying Oulu DevLAB fully or partially!

14.30 - 15.00 Course Enrolment Information on Kotkantie Campus, Room NN

See <http://u.oamk.fi/exchangepracticalinfo> > Studying at Oulu UAS > Enrolling to courses

MONDAY, 8 JANUARY 2018 – KONTINKANGAS CAMPUS

Exchange Study Programmes: see above.**08.30 - 10.00 Study Information by International Academic Coordinators**

Information about studies, timetables, academic conduct, assessment, course choices and enrolment based on learning agreement and choice of courses etc.

Special Fields in Health Care, Room D3066

(Biomedical laboratory science, dental health care, optometry, radiography and radiation theory):

Mika Paldanius, international academic coordinator

Biomedical laboratory science: Annikki Savolainen, Mika Paldanius, tutor teacher

Dental health care: Meeri Ojonen, tutor teacher

Optometry: Stefan Diekhoff, tutor teacher

Radiography and radiation theory: Anneli Holmström, tutor teacher

Social services and rehabilitation, Room B2024

(Occupational therapy, physiotherapy, social services):

Eija Mämmälä, international academic coordinator

Occupational therapy: Maarit Virtanen, tutor teacher

Physiotherapy: Piirjo Orell, tutor teacher

Social services: Riikka Huttunen, tutor teacher

10.00 - Vocational Teacher Education, Room B2024

Esa Virkkula, international academic coordinator

09.00 - Study Information by International Academic Coordinators

Information about studies, timetables, academic conduct, assessment, course choices and enrolment based on learning agreement and choice of courses etc.

Health Care & Nursing, Room F3000

(Emergency care, nursing, midwifery, preventive health care)

Piia Hyvärä, international academic coordinator

Emergency Care: Rajja Rajala, tutor teacher

Nursing: Markus Karttunen, tutor teacher

Midwifery: Minna Manninen, tutor teacher

Preventive health care: Juna Tervaskanto-Mäntäusta, tutor teacher

FRIDAY, 5 JANUARY 2018 – KOTKANTIE CAMPUS

Morning Location: Kiviharjuntie 4, 90220 Oulu, see [map](#).

Afternoon Location: Kotkantie 1, 90250 Oulu, see [map](#)

Exchange Study Programmes:

Morning joint session and campus tour with students from Health & Social Care.

Morning and afternoon: Oamk LABs (full programmes 30 ECTS cr. Oulu DevLAB, Oulu Game LAB), Civil Engineering, Information Technology (Web Technologies (2-year)

10.00 - 12.00 General & Safety Information, Personal Profiles in Pairs, Kontinkangas Campus, Room NN

Bastian Fähnrich, International Coordinator

Getting to know each other by means of creating personal profiles in pairs.

Safety information

Checkin meetings for next week by Doodle appointment – book a time after your timetable has been confirmed in the afternoon study information session. The Doodle link will be available in the evening of 5 January)

12.00 - 13.00 Lunch on Kontinkangas Campus, Restaurant Alwari

13.00 - 14.30 Kontinkangas & Kotkantie Campus Tour, Start in Room NN

Oamk LABs (full programme!) and Performing Arts: Tutor Students

Information Technology, Engineering & Natural Resources: Tutor Students

N.B. Students of Kotkantie Campus incl. Oamk LABs full and partial programmes (DevLAB and Game LAB) join in for the Kontinkangas campus tour first and afterwards proceed to Kotkantie Campus with everyone else!

14.30 - 15.00 Course Enrolment Information, Room NN

See <http://u.oamk.fi/exchangepracticalinfo> > Studying at Oulu UAS > Enrolling to courses

15.00 - Study Information by International Academic Coordinators

Information about studies, timetables, academic conduct, assessment, course choices and enrolment based on learning agreement and choice of courses etc.

Civil Engineering: Heidi Hedström, Room 1432 – shifted to 2500 (Meeting Room 2)

STUDY INFORMATION BY INTERNATIONAL ACADEMIC COORDINATORS

– **DIFFERENT TIMES & VENUES:** *Information about studies, timetables, academic conduct, assessment, course choices and enrolment based on learning agreement and choice of courses etc.*

MONDAY, 8 JANUARY 2018

Location: Kotkantie 1, 90250 Oulu, see [map](#)

08.30 - Information Technology (incl. Demola): Anne Keskitalo, Pekka Silven, Kotkantie Campus, Room 1430 (Meeting Room 3)

WEDNESDAY, 10 JANUARY 2018

Location: Rantakatu 3, 90100 Oulu, see [map](#)

10.00 - Oulu Game LAB: Ms Anna Salomaa, Rantakatu Game Campus, Rantakatu 3, Main Hall

THURSDAY, 11 JANUARY 2018

Location: Kotkantie 1, 90250 Oulu, see [map](#)

09.00 - Oulu DevLAB: Ms Ulla-Maija Seppänen & Mr. Janne Karjalainen, Kotkantie Campus, Oamk LAB facilities

FRIDAY, 5 JANUARY 2018 – TEUVO PAKKALAN KATU CAMPUS

Morning Location: Kiviharjuntie 4, 90220 Oulu, see [map](#).

Afternoon Location: Teuvo Pakkalan katu 19, 90130 Oulu, see [map](#), Room A211.3.

Exchange Study Programmes:

Business and Marketing, Business Information Technology

08.30 - 11.30 Enrollment into the studies via Peppi (student database), schedules via [lukkariit.oamk.fi](#) (schedule tool) PLEASE HAVE YOUR LEARNING AGREEMENTS WITH YOU

Piritta Nätyrki, International Coordinator

Lunch on Kontinkangas Campus, Restaurant Alwari

12.30 - Walk (1,1 km) to TPK campus - afternoon location: Teuvo Pakkalan katu 19, 90130 Oulu, see [map](#)

12.50 - Activities with tutors; getting to know each other, tour around the campus + tour around the city of Oulu

MONDAY, 8 JANUARY 2018 – TEUVO PAKKALAN KATU CAMPUS

Exchange Study Programmes: see above.

Study information sessions according to exchange study programmes with international academic coordinators.

Checkin meetings with international administrative coordinators on different campuses according to exchange study programme

HNU ORIENTATION SCHEDULE

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/hnuinternational5718/>

1. I was satisfied with the amount of contact from my assigned tutor before arriving to Oulu.
2. I was satisfied with the amount of contact from OUAS International Service before arriving to Oulu.
3. Was there any information you would have needed before arriving to Oulu, but did not receive? If yes, please elaborate.
4. I got all the assistance I needed from the arrival service operated by tutors.
5. The orientation days schedule was sent to all exchange students prior to arriving as a PDF file. I found the schedule coherently written.
6. I got all the information needed for my studies at OUAS during the orientation days.
7. I think there was enough time for the orientation days.
8. I was satisfied with the structure of the orientation. (Common information for all -> information about Oulu -> campus specific orientation and IT matters -> campus tours and getting to know each other)
9. I found the tutors roles at the orientation necessary.
10. I was assisted by tutors during the orientation days.
11. Do you feel that there was anything of importance left out from the orientation days? If yes, please elaborate below.
12. What is your general satisfaction level concerning the arrival service, international tutors and the orientation days?

1. How many exchange students come to HNU each year?
2. How are the tutors trained?
3. What compensation the tutors get?
4. How does the arrival service work?
5. Who has designed the orientation days schedule?
6. Has there been significant changes in the programme recently?
7. Have you collected feedback from the students?
8. Who pays for the excursions?
9. What is the idea behind the intercultural workshops?
10. Rating the importance of different aspects in the orientation days.
11. What kind of ideas come to mind when observing the orientation schedule of OUAS?