



Investigating Applicant Journey: A Case Study in the English Vocational Education and Training in Business Qualification

Manimala Murgan

2024 Laurea



Laurea University of Applied Sciences

Investigating Applicant Journey:
A Case Study in the English Vocational Education and Training in
Business qualification.

Manimala Murgan
Leading Transformational Change
Master's Thesis
December, 2024

Manimala Murgan

Investigating the Applicant Journey: A Case Study in the English Vocational Education and Training in Business Qualification.

Year

2024

Number of pages

73

Given the increasing importance of the applicants' experience, the student admissions department in Omnia wants to create an enjoyable and rewarding application journey that ultimately attracts a pool of highly qualified candidates and nurtures their academic achievements. The study was aimed at applicants in the English vocational qualification in Business studies at Omnia.

The purpose of this study is to find out the applicants' satisfaction levels, challenges, and pain points that they experienced during their application process. The goal is to improve the online application by gaining a good understanding from the experiences the applicants had during their application journey from their perspective. Addressing applicants' challenges and difficulties will positively contribute to the enhancement of the online application process through providing a smooth and user-friendly experience.

This study utilizes the Double Diamond design, where the data were collected using qualitative methods. The collected data were then interpreted using inductive thematic analysis. The findings were finalized, and actions for further improvement were identified and highlighted using the Fishbone Diagram and the 5 Whys technique. In the final stage, the author proposed solutions as a foundation for continuous improvement in the process of enhancing the online application in the coming years as a part of the development process in Omnia.

The study proposed two areas, usability quality and information quality which were identified in the root cause analysis, to be further researched to meet the evolving needs of the digital age. Addressing these areas will support the continuous improvement of Omnia's services and help the institution remain responsive and adaptable to the evolving expectations of applicants and stakeholders.

Keywords: qualitative research, fishbone diagram, 5 Whys technique, root-cause analysis.

Content

1	Introduction	5
1.1	Content of the study	10
1.2	Purpose of the study	11
1.3	Study scope.....	12
1.4	Research questions	12
2	Theoretical Review.....	14
2.1	Human-Centered design (HCD)	15
2.2	Qualitative research.....	16
2.3	Fishbone diagram	18
2.4	Root cause analysis (RCA)	19
2.5	5 Whys techniques.....	20
2.6	Service Design	21
3	Research Methods	23
3.1	Discover - data collection	24
3.1.1	Ethics during research	31
3.2	Define -data analysis	32
3.2.1	Inductive thematic analysis.....	32
3.2.2	Findings and summary	36
3.3	Develop - ideation	42
3.3.1	Insights gathering.....	42
3.3.2	Using 5 Whys technique	47
3.3.3	Conclusion	49
4	Development project	50
4.1	Summary of Root cause analysis	51
4.2	Validity and limitations	53
5	Summary and conclusion	54
5.1	Shaping the future through Transformational Change.....	56
5.2	Proposal for future research	56
5.3	Conclusion	57
	References.....	60
	Figures	66
	Tables	67
	Appendices	68

1 Introduction

In today's ever-changing world, new forms of resources are needed to fulfill the future demand of the workforce, which is equipped with new and upgraded skills.

Espoo is becoming a famous hub for immigrants and international companies such as Nokia, Kone, Neste, Rovio, and many more. Jukka Mäkelä, the mayor of Espoo (Helsinki Times, March 2024), states that "we are working towards attracting companies that need individuals with advanced expertise and talented skills". Seitama (2022) states that "it is important to pay attention to an individual's interests along with their working life, particularly for immigrants and students with an immigrant background" (Seitama et al. 2022.)

Omnia, the Joint Authority of Education in the Espoo Region, is a Vocational education and training (VET) provider in Espoo (Education in Espoo, March 2024). Omnia is one of the leading educational providers, delivering a range of rich services through lifelong learning to address the rising demands for a skilled workforce. In line with that, Omnia offers vocational qualifications in the English language for those who are interested in obtaining the degree in English medium.

In recent years, English vocational qualifications have attracted applicants with foreign backgrounds, resulting in a drastic increase, especially in Business, Practical Nursing, Restaurant & Catering, and Information & Communications Technology studies at Omnia. In line with this, the admission office frequently receives inquiries, such as how to proceed with the online application and inquiries related to admission requirements and language tests. This indicates the challenges and possible frustrations faced by applicants during their online application journey. According to Rains (2017), it is crucial for higher education to prioritize students, who represent both consumers and products. A better understanding of prospective students' experiences at each stage of their journey to strategically engage them in higher education. The service-based economy in today's trend is solely based on the needs and preferences of the service users. In another word, the customization of services is a good way to meet the users' needs, challenges, goals, and overall experiences. (K. Ojasalo & J. Ojasalo, 2015).

It is understandable that applying to higher institutions, universities, and colleges can be a daunting experience for an applicant. Therefore, understanding and anticipating the needs of the applicant is crucial to creating a user-friendly application process that is simple and clear to them. In this study, the author explores the online application journey of the prospective students (applicants) who apply to the English vocational qualification in Business. The

objective of this study is to identify those areas for further improvement to create greater satisfaction and pleasant application journey at Omnia.

Vocational Education and Training

Vocational education in Finland is free for students as it is supported financially by the state of Finland (Laukia & Juutilaine 2017, 29). The studies are conducted in Finnish, Swedish, and English. These qualifications are suitable for young people and adults who are eager to upgrade their skills through education and internships.

According to Stenström, et al. (2014), in vocational qualifications studies, students are well prepared with theoretical skills and necessary practical experiences in the form of internships, which allows them to transition smoothly into the workforce.

On the official website of Studyinfo, published by the Finnish National Agency for Education (EDUFI), it states that the qualifications of (VET) education in Finland range from:

- Vocational upper secondary
- Further vocational
- Specialist vocational

Vocational qualifications are done in school-based programs or competency-based assessments through studying for a full degree, as a specific unit, or by selected competent areas” (Finnish National Agency for Education (EDUFI), Opintopolku).

Background of the study

Vocational education is becoming popular in Finland because it attracts people of all ages who are interested in upgrading their skills to meet the new skills requirements in today’s working life (Ilola, Lahtinen & Saarinen 2023, 11.) The flexible study paths that enable the students to participate in practical work tasks and apprenticeships give them an opportunity to gain experience in real-time situations.

Through personalized and flexible training, Omnia prepares students to gain the skills and knowledge they need to remain competitive in today's job market (Omnia 2024).

Omnia offers the following vocational qualifications in English.

- Business
- Cleaning and property services
- Information and Communications Technology
- Restaurant and Catering Services
- Social and Health Care: Practical Nurse

This study is motivated by the lack of prior research that captured how applicants feel and experience their application journey at Omnia. Are applicants getting the information they need? This study aims to address the gap by identifying new insights to knowledge that can enhance and increase the applicants' satisfaction level.

Along with that, the admissions department also receives numerous inquiries related to language requirements, tests, and how to fill out the online applications. This clearly shows that this area needs improvement in terms of providing excellent applicant services. This study will lead to new ideas and insights that can improve the process in this area by understanding the problems from the applicants' point of view. Due to time and resource constraints, this study was focused on vocational qualifications in Business studies to explore many great insights with better quality. Additionally, the results of this study can be used as a reference for other English vocational qualifications in the future.

The role of the admissions department in Omnia

The admissions department oversees all the activities pertaining to student selection processes. The main role of the admissions department is to review, evaluate, process, and manage applications. The admissions department in Omnia sets the date and time of the language proficiency test and sends invitations to all the applicants who do not meet the language requirements to attend the language tests. Taking part in the language proficiency test is compulsory, failing which their applications will not proceed further. Language proficiency tests are conducted at Omnia's facilities in Espoo, Finland.

Among other duties, the admissions department in Omnia also acts as the central hub for all applicant interactions, especially matters related to their language skills, such as:

- verifying language credentials
- coordinating language tests

Applicants for vocational studies at Omnia do not have to take the entrance examinations. However, applicants' language skills are assessed to ensure that they have sufficient language skills to study in the chosen course. English and Finnish language requirements differ by course; for example, the language requirement for vocational qualification in Business is B2 level for English and A1 level for Finnish. The language levels are in line with the standards outlined by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).

If an applicant's native language is Finnish or English, they are not required to sit for the language test, and their application will be moved to the next level in the selection process. For those applicants whose native language is neither Finnish nor English, it is compulsory to take the language tests. However, they may be exempt from taking tests if they can provide valid language certificates that meet the required proficiency levels.

Moreover, Omnia does not recognize any other language certificates obtained from online language proficiency assessment tools such as IELTS, Duolingo, etc. (Omnia 2024). Therefore, it is compulsory to successfully pass both the language tests in order to move forward in the student selection process. Applications will be rejected and will not be advanced if the applicant fails one or both tests (Omnia 2024). This process is shown in the flow chart in figure 1.

The language proficiency tests are planned and organized accordingly in each intake throughout the year by Omnia's admissions department. Applicants are required to submit their language certificates to the online applications or send them by email to the admissions department.

Those applicants who have the following language certificates will be exempt from taking the language proficiency tests at Omnia (Omnia 2024):

- Having at least level 4 (intermediate) in all sections of the YKI or the National Certificate of Language Proficiency in both English and/or Finnish.
- Diploma studies completed in English in Finnish basic education.
- Diploma studies completed in Finnish upper secondary or vocational studies done in English and/or Finnish.
- Degree done in Finnish higher education with English and/or Finnish as the language of instruction.
- Obtained grade C or higher in advanced (A-level) in the Finnish Matriculation Examination done in English and/or Finnish.

Received applications are accessed and divided into two parts: one with those who met the language requirement and one which is not. Applications of those applicants who meet the language requirement for the qualification will automatically proceed to the selection process.

While those who do not have the required language skills will be invited to the language proficiency test. The admissions department will invite those applicants who do not meet the language requirement to the language tests. The admissions department will then evaluate the test results. Once the language proficiency results are updated, the selection list with the qualified applicants will be sent to all the vocational studies department heads, respectively. The head of department in each study will then make the final decision of student selection according to Omnia's selection procedure and return the lists to the admissions department to distribute the results to the applicants. After receiving the final decision, the admissions department will notify all applicants of the student selection result by email.

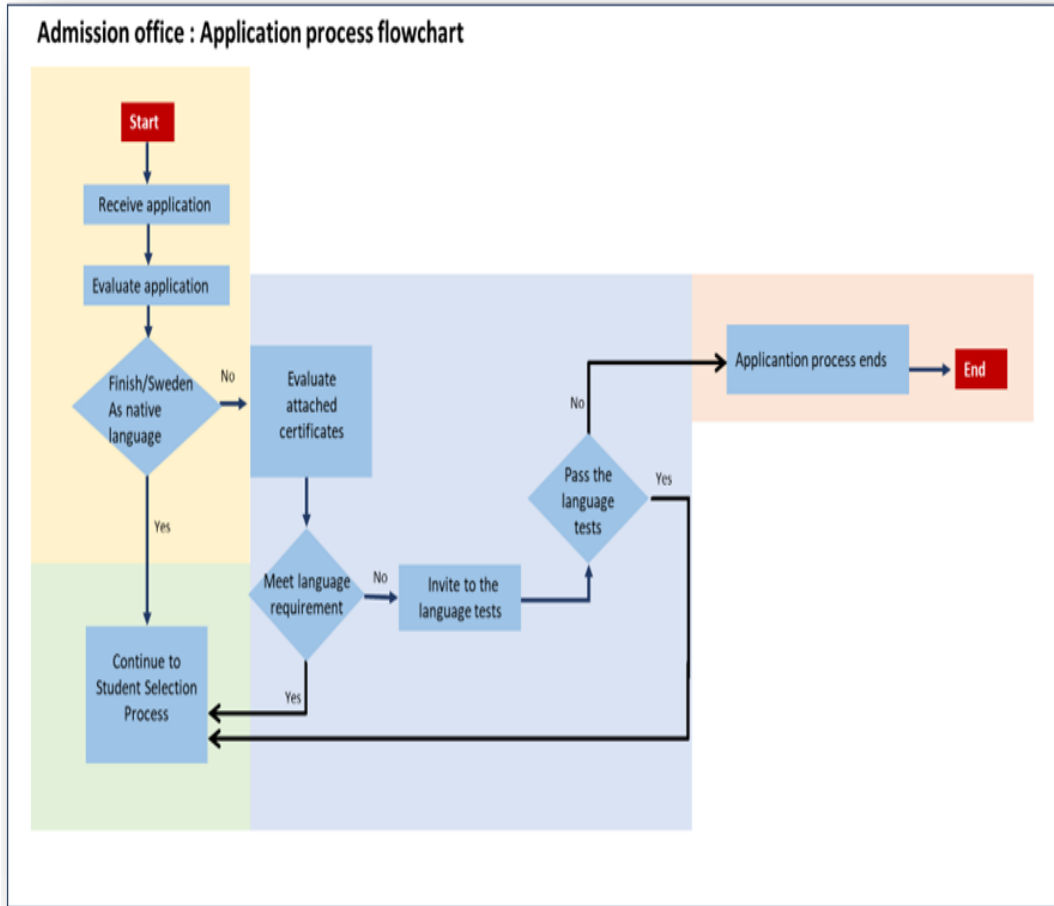


Figure 1: Application process flow chart

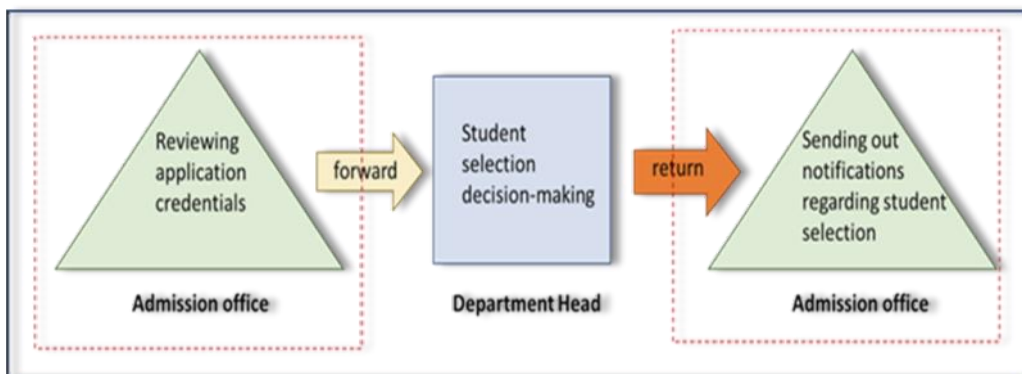


Figure 2: Student selection work flow

1.1 Content of the study

This study is divided into five chapters; the first chapter starts with an introduction, which includes a thorough explanation of vocational education and training, the role of the admissions department in Omnia, and detailed information regarding the purpose and scope, as well as the research questions used in the interview sessions.

The second chapter covers a comprehensive theoretical foundation for this study, including a well-crafted, human-centered design that places the users' needs at the forefront. The author believes that the best way to gain a better understanding of how applicants felt and experienced throughout their journey is by utilizing qualitative research methods, specifically the in-depth interviews. The study also used a fishbone diagram and root cause analysis (RCA) to conduct a thorough investigation by voting and brainstorming. Service design integrates multiple perspectives that enhance both functionality and satisfaction through efficient and user-centered services. Combining these theories leads to a holistic approach that understands complex issues within the study. Service design integrates multiple perspectives to create effective, user-focused services that improve both usability and user satisfaction.

Chapter three describes the methods used to obtain a clear picture and solutions to tackle the problems. Researched data is the foundation of this study, where the author utilizes double diamonds: discovery, define, and develop phases that help to better understand and interpret the collected data. Qualitative methods with open-ended interviews were used to collect data from six students who are studying vocational qualifications in business and who had started their studies in August 2024. The collected data was compiled and evaluated using the thematic analysis method. A fishbone diagram and the 5 Whys questioning techniques were used to find the root cause for further improvement.

The fourth chapter outlines the development project by addressing and visualizing root causes of key problems and interactions. During the brainstorming session with experts from the admissions department, the author identified key issues addressing the problem and found solutions to find corrective actions that will be proposed for further development. The author applies the root cause analysis to focus on the major factors that needed to be improved for future improvement. Therefore, the 5 Whys technique was applied to identify the root cause of the two topmost areas for further development. The author also discloses the validity and the limitations of this study at the end of chapter four.

Chapter five describes a well-defined summary of this study. The author offers insights into shaping the future through transformational change and proposes directions for future research. The overall conclusion includes suggestions for continuous improvement, along with a detailed list of references, figures, and tables shown in this study.

1.2 Purpose of the study

According to Cook (2010), to provide excellent service, it is critical for organizations to concentrate on exceeding their customers' expectations (Cook 2010, 17.)

Providing a pleasant application journey is about offering a neat, easy-to-use interface that makes the applicant feel satisfied throughout their application journey (Saffer, 2009-2011). Applicants feel satisfied and happy when they are provided with needed information clearly and correctly without constantly looking for help or clarification from others.

Blending experiences and personal preferences can create a lasting impression that is associated with adding real value for customers. J. Fitzsimmons (1999, 7) and M. Fitzsimmons (1999, 7) both express that effective services help to address key customer needs, evolve with those needs, and eventually fit well with the customer's values and current practices. Therefore, it is crucial to explore and understand the applicant's journey from their perspective.

Given the increasing importance of applicant experience in educational services, the admissions department is aiming to be ahead in delivering excellent applicant experience in Omnia. In line with that, focusing on how to meet applicant excellence will be the top priority to the admissions department by setting high standards for the applicant experience.

This study was focused on the vocational qualification in business studies. The purpose of this study is to identify the problems and difficulties that the applicants had during their application journey at Omnia. The author believes that by recognising these can help the admissions department upgrade and enhance their services to create an excellent applicant experience in Omnia for all their prospects. In addition, these efforts will also help to foster a positive reputation for Omnia as a provider of exceptional educational services.

The objective of this investigation is to provide actionable insights to help the admissions department set an excellent path towards smoother and more supportive services rented to the applicants.

These efforts were particularly focused on:

- Tapping into the satisfaction levels of applicants
- Identify challenges and frustrations during the application process

1.3 Study scope

This study focuses on improving the admissions services provided to Omnia's prospects or the applicants. Efforts to upgrade and enhance customer services are currently in progress in all the departments related to applicant and student services in Omnia. In line with this, the author wanted to use the findings gained through this study for further improvement to meet Omnia's efforts to deliver an exceptional experience to students and applicants (prospects). The author believes that by identifying areas of improvement through the findings of this study, it helps to streamline the processes, enhance communication level, gain applicant trust, and provide an efficient admissions experience.

The targeted areas are:

- Exploring applicants' perceptions, satisfaction, and pain points throughout their online application process.
- Identify specific challenges faced by applicants (e.g., language testing, document submission, communication gaps, etc.) to gather actionable insights to improve the application process and make it smoother, more supportive, and applicant-friendly.
- Explore the role and effectiveness of the admissions department in providing guidance, support, and clear communication to applicants and identifying specific services that applicants find useful or lacking.

The limitation of this study is due to the application cycle that is only available for a specific period. Thus, this prevents the author from implementing changes immediately. Moreover, the results of this study are specific to the applicants who applied to the English vocational qualification in Business studies and may not fully reflect the experiences of applicants in other vocational qualifications in English and in Finnish.

1.4 Research questions

Interviews were conducted as part of this study to gain actionable insight into applicants' experiences, behaviors, preferences, and challenges during the application process.

Applicants were asked five targeted questions focusing on these three key concepts: pain points and challenges, user journey mapping, and opportunities for improvement.



Figure 3: Key concepts (Stickdorn)

Pain points and challenges

According to Belinga (2024), the benefits of pain point analysis consist of two phases; first to improve customer experience and increase customer satisfaction. Secondly, having a good understanding of customer needs and frustrations inspires innovative solutions that better cater to customer demands (Belinga 2024).

Journey addressing the pain points, such as problems and frustration, along with the difficulties experienced by the applicant during the online application process, gives an opportunity to find solutions to meet their needs and preferences.

These questions were raised in the interview sessions:

- What sparked your interest in English Vocational (VET) in Business?
- How did you find the language proficiency test?

Applicant Application Journey

Stickdorn, (2018) cites that a journey map is used to investigate the key steps of the user's experience in each interaction with the organization. Moreover, the journey map helps to define the gaps that customers encounter throughout the service (Stickdorn et al. 2018, p. 44-45).

Identifying the journey of an applicant leads to ways to correct adjustments or add new working concepts to reduce the frustration felt by the applicant. This approach will help the study tap into their emotional responses, frustrations, and motivations throughout the application process.

These questions were raised in the interview sessions:

- Could you describe your application journey?
- What would be your satisfaction level with your application journey on a scale of 1 to 5?
- What can you say about the services you received from the admissions department throughout your application journey?

Opportunities for improvement

While completing an online application can be a challenging and frustrating experience for applicants, a target-oriented solution is needed to help them move forward. Hence, by gathering insights based on their experiences, this study aims to create a positively engaging, applicant-friendly approach that not only attracts applicants but also helps them navigate their journey with ease and confidence.

Therefore, the outcome of this study will help to create a more user-friendly application process with clear, easy-to-follow steps and descriptive labels, which will allow the applicants to overcome any challenges they face during the application process (Jehanne 2023).

These question was raised in the interview sessions:

- What suggestions, if there are any, would you offer to improve the application process for future applicants?

2 Theoretical Review

This chapter focuses on the Human-Centered Design (HCD) approach. The theory is to focus on the problem-solving methodology by gaining a deep understanding of applicants' behavior patterns and needs through observation and implementation of new ideas. In principle, the ability to understand users' needs through empathy and user-centered research will produce practical and effective solutions. Applying the HCD framework helps to see the problem or a case from the user's perspective. Using this framework, the study can benefit developing the whole process through people's involvement in the process and the workplace. (Shikht 2022).

This study aims to improve the overall applicant experience by improving usability, accessibility, and user satisfaction. It is fundamental to listen, show empathy, and understand the needs of every applicant in the process of improving their experiences in Omnia.

Interpreting data often reveals patterns, trends, or totally different insights based on how it is interpreted. Abbott & McKinney (2013) suggest that various factors can affect the research findings, such as what type of data were collected, the methods used to collect them, the measures applied, and the specific research questions guiding the study.

To observe the behaviors of the applicants to the English vocational qualification in Business at Omnia, a service design approach is used in this study. Service design is a study that focuses on cases and involves human-centered research; therefore, it will be a useful tool to gather deeper understanding and insights from applicants. As Duntemann (2024) notes, "a good tool will help the researcher to improve his work, but if he needs to move forward the way he thinks, then use an incredible tool" (Duntemann 2024).

2.1 Human-Centered Design (HCD)

To understand humans' behaviors and subjects in relation to their feelings, we need a human touch approach that can create a bond between customers and the products or services rented to them. In other words, having a personalized touch and engagement with the customer allows finding a tailored solution for them.

Not all the services created for public meet its goal and according to Kitch (2023), this could be because the design was created based on the creator's viewpoint rather than the customers. This transformation has resulted in a change in a designer's role from creating visually appealing products and experiences to creating the design process. Human-centered design (HCD) is a mix of deals between humans and digital interfaces (Kitch 2023). HCD helps to create a user-friendly approach to problem-solving processes by understanding what customers want from the product or service.

HCD is gaining popularity as one of the best approaches to understanding the users' needs, as it emphasizes empathy, collaboration, and iterative problem-solving by deeply understanding what the user wants and needs (TVS Next, 2023). Unlike machines, humans respond better in a friendly and pleasant manner when approached with empathy. There is no doubt that digital can handle many tasks efficiently, save time, and help with making decisions. A perfect integration of human expertise and digital is important to a positive customer experience (Walker, 2021).

User Experience (UX)

According to Norman & Nielsen (1988), user experience (UX) is how the end-user feels and experiences every interaction when using a product, application, or service. Norman (1988) cites that exploring (UX) in education enables us to gain a deep understanding of user experience throughout the whole journey of applying to the institution. It is an effective way to figure out what students want, what bugs them, and their needs during the admissions process (Norman et al. 1988).

Based on these insights, institutes can make the process easier and more pleasant for the students by creating tailored and user-friendly experiences and achieve a far better output (MoldStud 2024). In this study, the author aims to leverage user insights to understand the users, or in this case, the applicants, and continuously refine the admission strategies that meet the applicants' needs and expectations.

However, user experience details alone are not enough. This is where service design comes in. Using service design to create a positive applicant experience can significantly increase applicant satisfaction and engagement. UX optimization and service design should go hand in hand, with equal effort from both sides. While considering the end-user experience is just as important as the logistics of delivering that experience, good UX and service design are essential to creating and delivering a successful experience (Polaine, A., Løvlie, L., & Reason, B. 2013, 19.)

Delivering a great customer experience requires considering the people and processes behind it, and there's no point in building something that users don't need or can't use. Internal issues can impact the quality of the user experience. Optimizing internal processes improves the employee experience, which, in turn, creates a better user experience.

2.2 Qualitative Research

Saldana (2011) has quotes that “qualitative research is used to explore the rich complexities of human experiences, behaviors, and social dynamics, where the researchers explore and interpret phenomena through their unique perspectives”. Qualitative research indeed thrives on flexibility and a willingness to embrace unexpected discoveries, which can enrich our understanding of complex issues. By discussing a range of qualitative methods like interviews, ethnography, and case studies, Saldana (2011) illustrates how each approach offers unique avenues for exploring and interpreting data (Saldana 2011).

According to Leavy (2011), a qualitative interview reflects oral history, which emphasizes participants’ points of view in open-ended interview sessions with each participant. Since research is a process, there isn't a single right way to approach it. Data collection techniques evolve from time to time. Digital technologies enable the researcher to re-view the data as many times as possible to gain a good understanding of the data by video recording and e-interview (Leavy 2011, 35-36.)

Qualitative data consists of non-numerical data, video or audio, and data gathered through thoroughly studying human behaviors, such as their opinions and/or experiences. Unlike quantitative research, which deals with statistics and numbers (Bhandari, 2020).

Goulding (2022) mentions that the results obtained from the qualitative research data are often filtered from the viewpoint of the data collector and can be considered subjective. She also argues that in such cases, personal discipline and self-conscious examination for bias can assist the findings to prevent excessive subjectivity (Goulding 2022, 24.)

She further describes that the phenomenology methodology uses only the data derived from the participants’ views and experiences. Therefore, the selection of participants will be those who have been through or experienced a particular case related to the research topic. Typically, data is collected through interviews (Goulding 2022, 28.)

Table 1: Types of qualitative research methods, illustrated by Bhat

One-on-one interview	This is a basic way of conducting an in-depth one-to-one interview in which researchers interview participants individually to thoroughly observe and gain deeper exploration of respondents' beliefs and motivations. One-to-one interviews also enable experienced researchers to gather meaningful data by asking insightful questions and probes. Usually, the interview will last from 30 minutes to two hours. Moreover, face-to-face interviews allow the researchers to gain further insights through reactions and observing body language.
Focus groups	This method involves a small number of people who represent the targeted group or market. The goal is to answer detailed questions about the "why," "what," and "how." Unlike face-to-face meetings, focus groups can be attended through online surveys, making data collection easier. They are more expensive than other online methods, but they're great for exploring new products and ideas.
Ethnographic research	To gain a good understanding of the cultural, social, and behavioral dynamics, researchers often use the in-depth observation to analyze people and their natural environments.
Case study research	Case study research involves the analysis of an organization and business. It uses in-depth investigation and a comprehensive understanding of data collection and interpretation.
Record keeping	This method relies solely on the collected documents and sources for data, such as getting the data from a library, where researchers can review books and reference materials to gather relevant data for new research.
Process of observation	In this method, the research uses subjective methods to gather systematic information through observing quality differences by relying on the five senses: sight, smell, touch, taste, and hearing, instead of measurements or numbers.

In this study, the author uses qualitatively derived data obtained from students who have just started their studies in autumn 2024. The author chooses the current batch because their memories are still fresh with the experiences they encountered during their application journey.

Grounded Theory

The process of analyzing a series of data in grounded theory helps to create new theories. An inductive approach is used to identify the causes of problems by using only the data collected through interview sessions without having prior thoughts or hypotheses (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

Researchers use grounded theory to gain a detailed data using the open-ended investigation. The process allows the researcher to stay organized and focused on uncovering fresh, original insights and systematically interpreting the findings.

2.3 Fishbone diagram

A fishbone diagram is a tool that researchers in many disciplines found very useful to work on the most possible main cause of the problem (Chandraprabhudev 2023). A fishbone diagram was mainly used in quality control projects. Nevertheless, it has also proven to be effective in a variety of applications (Chandraprabhudev 2023).

It is useful for activities such as:

- Analyzing complex problems
- Identifying root causes
- Providing new perspectives
- Detecting bottlenecks
- Accelerating problem solving

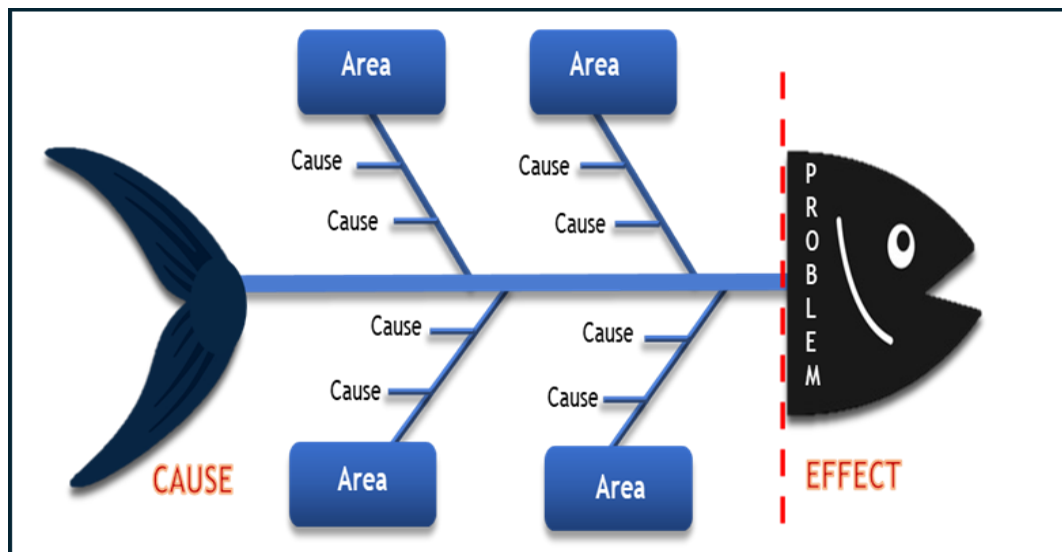


Figure 4: Fishbone diagram (modified)

In this study case, a fishbone diagram is used to further analysis the areas for future improvement in both the online application process and the admissions services to applicants in order to increase applicant satisfactions throughout their application journey in Omnia.

Upon gathering data from the thematic analysis, the author further analyzes the data to look for the root cause that can be helpful in tackling the right problem. The author divides the root causes into four categories: usability quality, information quality, user interface quality, and service interaction quality (Gata & Gilang 2017, 4).

2.4 Root cause analysis

Guevara (2024) points out that root cause analysis (RCA), is an idle tool to identify the root cause of a problem from the very beginning of a process. Instead of placing the blame on individuals, the focus is primarily on the process itself.

Guevara (2024) identifies three factors that contribute to a problem:

- Physical causes are issues related to the physical parts of the system, such as: B. Hardware malfunction, device error, or machine failure.
- Human causes are the result of mistakes made by the person themselves due to insufficient training, lack of expertise, or inability to perform the task correctly.
- Organizational issues, such as ineffective structure or not having proper systems, can lead to problems like unclear instructions and poor decision-making.

In this study, the author will be using these five steps in RCA technique to identify the root cause.

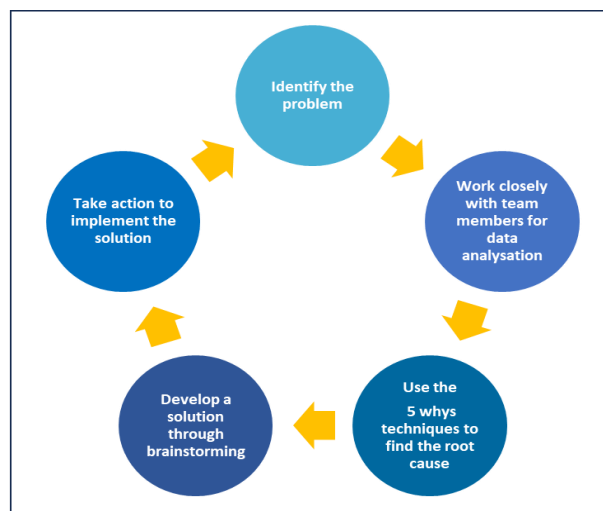


Figure 5: Steps in Root cause analysis process

2.5 5 Whys techniques

The 5 Whys technique, popularized by Taiichi Ohno, also known as the father of the Toyota production system, used the root cause to identify a problem by repeatedly asking why until identifying the fundamental issues related to the problem (Wikipedia contributors 2024).

Evolving organizations and business are always looking for ways to refine their processes and workflows to boost efficiency and quality. The 5 Whys Technique offers a practical solution, helping teams to understand the causes behind inefficiencies or blockages.

By breaking down each layer of a problem, it reveals opportunities for meaningful improvements and empowers organizations to make process changes that address the core issues rather than just symptoms.

This is done by repeatedly asking "why" at least five times to uncover its core cause rather than stopping at surface-level explanations (Traeger 2024).

These steps are shown in figure 7.

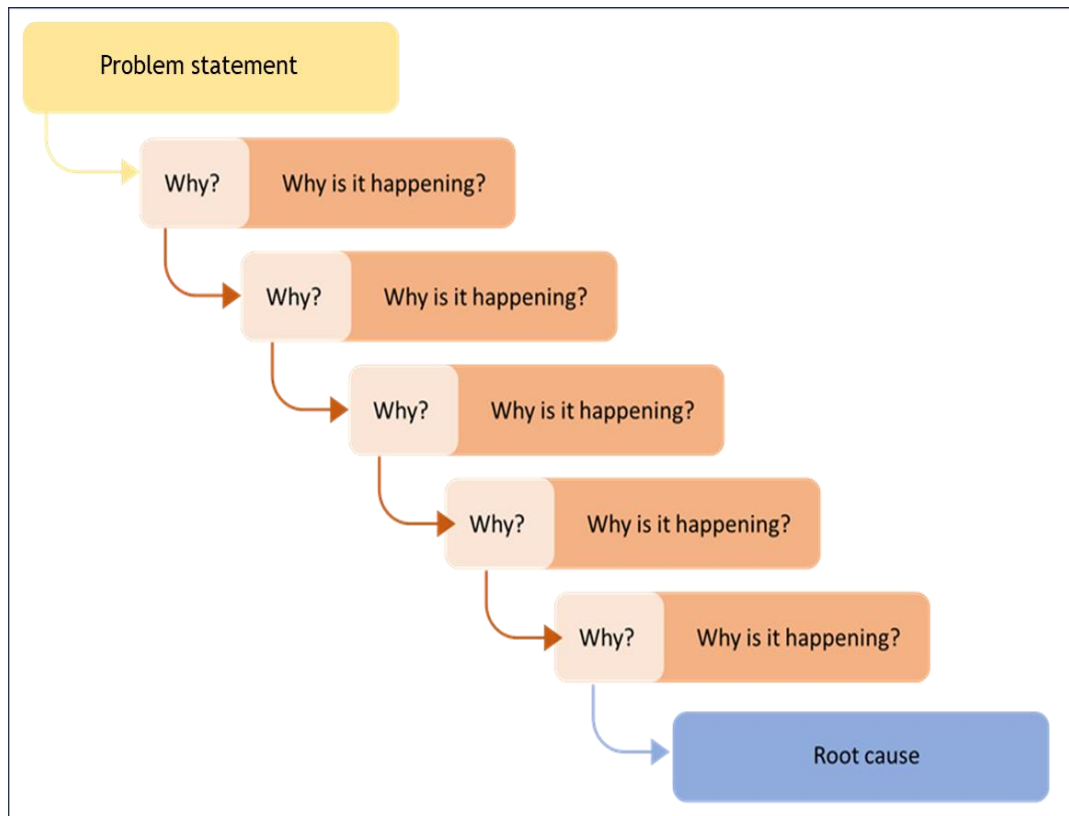


Figure 6: Illustration of the 5 Whys technique.

2.6 Service Design

There is no doubt that designs are making new waves in recent businesses and organizations. A good design can reflect both the company's values and personality and, at the same time, enhance the user's connection to its services. The way one person sees and understands a concept or service can differ from another person. Thus, a good design makes all the users' access, and gain benefits using the services or products (Harris 2017).

A well-designed service is crucial in today's evolving user behaviors. It is also crucial for service designers to know not only what the users want and need to know but also how to

deliver or communicate in a manner that engages with the users (Service Design Trend Predictions, 2024.) Moreover, according to Wetter-Edman (2014), service design is an application that uses human-centered design methods by creating practical services to improve and transform human experiences and outcomes Wetter-Edman (2014, 38.)

Human-centered concepts is a service design that emphasizes research-driven strategies, enhanced activities, and the creation of friendly application experiences to meet the needs of the applicants while they embark on the online application journey (Stickdorn, Hormess, Lawrence & Schneider, 2018). In the human-centered featured design, people will be placed at the center of the development process (Landry 2020). The journey of these applicants towards English (VET) in Business qualification represents a crucial phase characterized by a multitude of decisions, inquiries, and interactions.

The focus of this study is to identify gaps and find corrective actions that can increase applicants' experience. Therefore, the author adopted a human-centered approach by focusing on prospective students, or applicants, as the primary subject of investigation. For this purpose, the double diamond method is utilized to capture all relevant details within the targeted time frame by using a series of processes called the 4 D's: discover, define, develop, and deliver.

Double Diamond Design

The double diamond design process is a guide that helps to refine an initial concept into a well-defined problem and develop the most effective solution.

The double diamond framework, a research methodology endorsed by the British Design Council (Design Council 2005), has profoundly shaped this project. Emphasizing user needs, desires, and behaviors, organizations prioritize user satisfaction and engagement (Costa 2018). Introduced in 2005, the double diamond framework continues to influence contemporary design practices (UXPin 2024).

The double diamond approach captures the essence of Design thinking. Its main advantage is the ability to spot and address issues before they turn into major obstacles (Vogelsang 2024). In this study, a double diamond is used to understand applicants' problems and find ways to delight them by creating creative solutions that meet their needs and expectations.

The process has four phases:

- Discover
- Define
- Develop
- Deliver

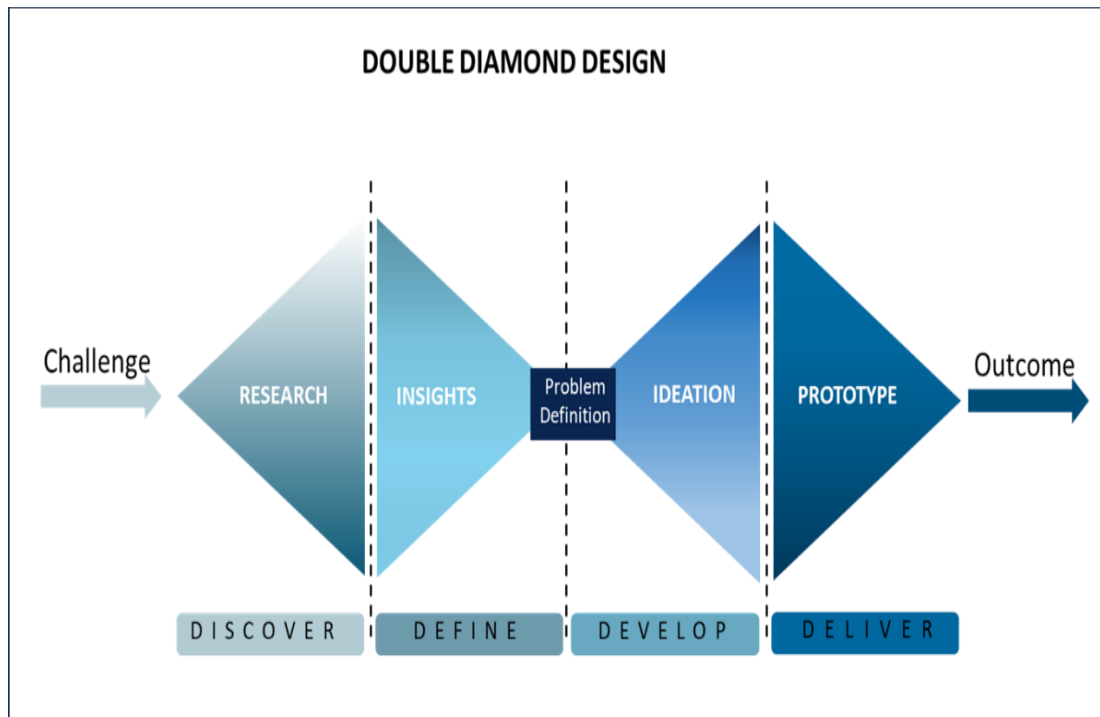


Figure 7: Double Diamond model, by British Design Council (modified).

3 Research Methods

This study serves as a pioneering effort to explore applicants' journey with their online application at Omnia. The admissions department is eager to find out what the applicant feels and experiences during their online application period. By understanding these factors, the study aims to enhance the admissions office's services and improve the overall applicant experience.

The author hopes to enhance admissions services by working in the areas that need improvement and coming up with a new strategy to serve applicants in the future. The findings will certainly help to make the most favorable approach that ensures that every applicant feels supported, informed, and valued at every stage of their interaction with Omnia.

According to Goodwin 2009, human-centered product and service design is not easy to come up with a uniform design that can exactly determine someone's experience because of differences in people's attitudes, behaviors, and perceptions (Goodwin & Cooper 2009, 74). Before addressing a problem, it's important to fully understand it. A good research plan helps to discover facts in a smooth and fast way, identifying the issues (Goodwin et al. 2009, 174.)

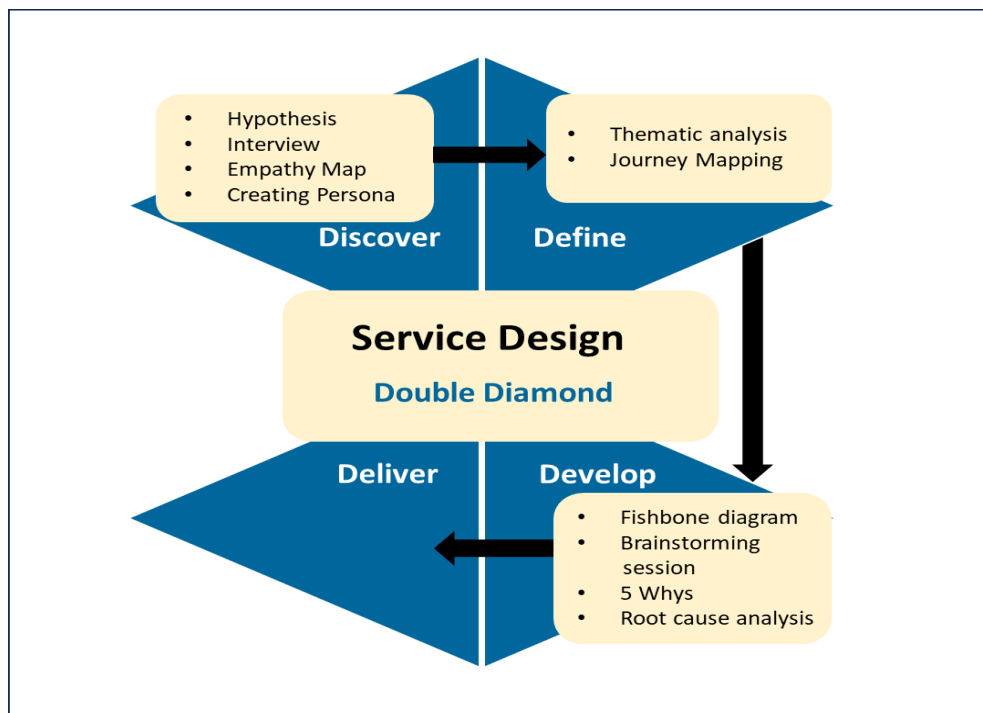


Figure 8: Service Design processing flow (Double diamond model, modified)

The author first carried out the study by conducting a qualitative method by using an in-depth interview with the English vocational students in Business studies. The collected interview transcripts were analyzed thoroughly using the inductive thematic analysis process, besides creating empathy maps that help to pinpoint the applicant's needs, gain- and pain-points, whilst identifying the sensorial experience.

In the second phase, the author uses the fishbone diagram to identify those areas that indicate the root cause of the problems or areas that need improvement.

In the third phase, the focus was on how to develop and share clear ideas for excellence in applicant services from the admissions department perspective. This is done using the 5 Whys technique and the root cause analysis.



3.1 Discover - data collection

Discovery phase focuses on identifying applicants' expectations, by conducting user research and gathering insights to recognize their needs, desires, and aspirations. Empathizing with applicants enables this study to look at the bigger picture with a clear and precise understanding of what it looks like from the applicants' perspectives (Patel 2016).

A hypothesis is more than a simple guess; it should be informed by prior research and well-established theories (McCombes 2022). A directional hypothesis emphasizes that ongoing improvements in the application process are expected to positively impact applicant satisfaction (Konopka 2023).

Hypothesis was created with a thoughtful plan based on the feedback from applicants and using it to refine the applicant journey and make the application journey accessible and engaging. This ongoing improvement will lead to a better experience for applicants in Vocational Education and Training (VET) for Business Qualifications, ultimately increasing satisfaction and completion rates.

Interview

Researchers often use in-depth interviews in collecting qualitative data, which helps the participants express their views and perceptions from their own words and point of view (Knott et. al. 2022). The discovery phase in this study helps to see applicants' pain points through the lens of the applicants.

The author started conducting interview sessions, utilizing in-depth questions using qualitative methods to learn more about their good and bad experiences, satisfaction level, and what their expectations, needs, and desires are. Paying attention to the applicants' pain points allows the author to find solutions that meet the applicants' expectations and experience in a tangible way.

These can result in:

1. Increase applicant satisfaction
2. Reduce applicant problems
3. A better admissions service for applicants

Allowing applicants to actively contribute ideas and suggestions provides an effective basis for improvement that makes a difference in delivering exceptional applicant experiences.

Qualitative research using an in-depth interview is used in this study to provide services that not only satisfy applicants' needs but also delight them.

Before the interview

The case study is about investigating the applicants' online application journey, which focuses on the English vocational qualifications in Business studies. The author selected participants from the most recent application period, spring 2024, who started their studies in August 2024. The main idea of choosing this batch is because the author believes that their recent experiences and insights are far more realistic and accurate than the earlier batch.

Before choosing the students for the interview, the author gave a brief presentation outlining the purpose and objectives of the interview to all the students; among others, they were told that participation is entirely voluntary and the interview will be conducted anonymously, meaning no names or identifying information will be collected or published.

The author also explained about questions asked in the interview. This is to give an opportunity to all the students to share their thoughts and experiences to the six students who will be participating in the interview. The students are encouraged to collectively gather their application experiences and share them with the six volunteer students. In other words, those participating in the interview will likely represent all 25 students.

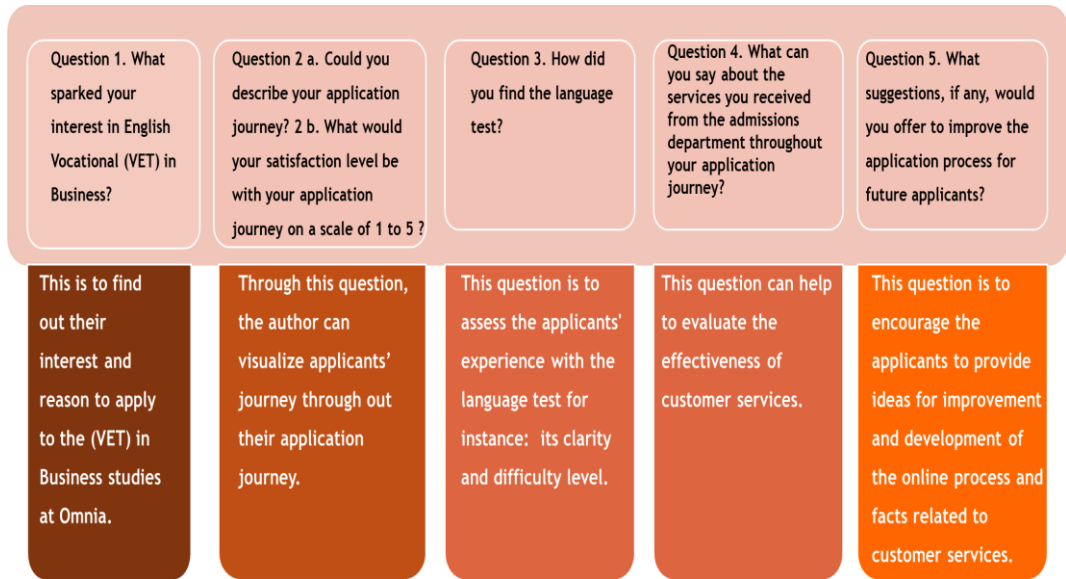


Figure 9: Questions raised in the interview sessions

Six students, four boys and two girls aged 17 years old, coming from the USA, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Nigeria, Libya, and Vietnam, volunteered to participate in the interview. Information about the six interviewees can be found in table 2.

Table 2: Details of participants who attended the interviews

#	Interviewee	Age	Gender	Origin country	Type of Interview	Interview date
1	Student 1	19	Male	Myanmar	Face- to-face	26.9.2024
2	Student 2	21	Female	Sri Lanka	Face- to-face	26.9.2024
3	Student 3	19	Female	Kenya	Face- to-face	26.9.2024
4	Student 4	17	Male	Libya	Face- to-face	26.9.2024
5	Student 5	17	Male	United States, USA	Face- to-face	26.9.2024
6	Student 6	18	Male	Philippines	Face- to-face	26.9.2024

During the interview

The author makes sure that the setting and scene created for the interview sessions make the participants feel welcomed and comfortable. A comfortable meeting room was used to conduct interviews with snacks and beverages for the participants. Open-ended questions were raised, and everyone was given ample time to voice out their thoughts, critics, suggestions, and comments.

The following five questions were asked during the interview:

1. What sparked your interest in English Vocational (VET) in Business?
2. a. Could you describe your application journey?
b. What would be your satisfaction level with your application journey on a scale of 1 to 5?
3. How did you find the language proficiency test?
4. What can you say about the services you received from the admissions department throughout your application journey?
5. What suggestions, if there are any, would you offer to improve the application process for future applicants?

All the information during the interview session, such as what the participants thoughts, beliefs, and needs were recorded to obtain a good understanding of their experiences and, at the same time, to find out possible challenges or difficulties they had encountered along the way.

Visualizing applicants' insights using empathy maps

In this study, building empathy maps during the development phase enables the author to benefit by revealing insights while focusing on the deeper level to understand the applicant's needs and recognize their challenges. These approaches create opportunities to think and feel like applicants. According to Loannidou & Konstantikaki (2008), it is important to put ourselves in the applicant's shoes to think and feel like them. Only then can we understand the applicant's journey from their perspective (Loannidou & Konstantikaki (2008, 4.)

In this study, the empathy maps illustrated what the interviewees say, do, think, feel, hear, and see. By focusing on these four areas, the study can see the big picture of the user's experience (Gibbons 2018). The mapping of the applicants' experiences during their application journey can assist in addressing areas for improvement and solutions to provide advanced services and satisfying experiences.

Drawing an applicant journey gives the admissions team a deeper understanding of how the applicant feels and experiences from their perspectives. Furthermore, this will help the team to connect on a personal level, making interactions more meaningful and effective (Brown 2018). Empathy plays a vital role in human-centered design.

Solving a problem effectively requires a deep understanding of both the issue and the person experiencing it (Brown 2018). Customers being the purpose of the business are important for the business to succeed, and satisfied customers will open the door to growth (Lee 2023, 28). Furthermore, according to Jeavons (2020), the empathy map is a powerful approach to experiencing how a user sees and feels in their situation.

Exploring what users say, do, think, feel, hear, and see, the author can truly understand the customer's pain points. By doing so, this study can honestly think from the applicant's perspective about their experiences and feelings during the application journey.

The empathy map shown in the figure 5, was created based on the input gathered from the interview sessions, by identifying their needs, gain- and pain-points, during their application journey at Omnia.

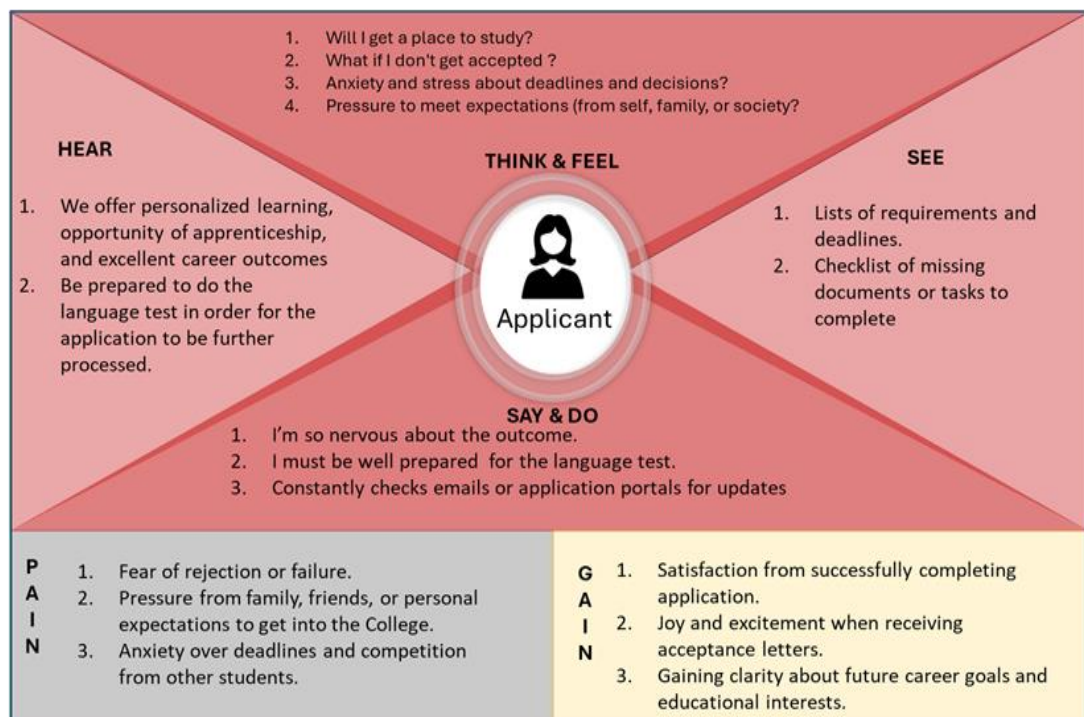


Figure 10: Empathy map

Creation of persona

The primary objective in designing, constructing, or developing a product, good, or service is to make it useful, beneficial, profitable, and valuable (Pruitt & Adlin 2006, 4.) Focusing on the users' needs through the creation of personas enables the team members to visualize and understand the users' needs and feelings about the services or product (Pruitt et al. 2006, 12.)

Personas are a memorable way that helps the team members to interpret the data and communicate insights successfully. Personas also help the team make decisions with a shared vision. By doing so, they ensure that the product or services ultimately deliver value to the users (Pruitt et al. 2006, 601-609).

In this study, the author has created two fictional personas: one for the boys and one for the girls that reflects all six real students who had participated in the interviews. By doing so, the author is able to understand the needs, goals, and challenges of applicants during their application journey at Omnia.

The following steps were used to create the persona:

- First, data was analysed to find the behaviours and attitudes of each of the interviewees during the interview.
- Secondly, data was analysed from the recording that was recorded during the interview. Thirdly, transcripts were thoroughly checked for the same occurrence of behaviours and attitudes.
- Finally, by using the rich understanding of the data, a persona was created, defining participants' goals, opportunities, and pain points such as confusion or frustration that users encounter during their application journey.

In this study, personas are created using fictional names and avatars. These personas represent both male and female students who share similar traits and goals, guiding the design process to create the best applicant experience (Miller 2020).

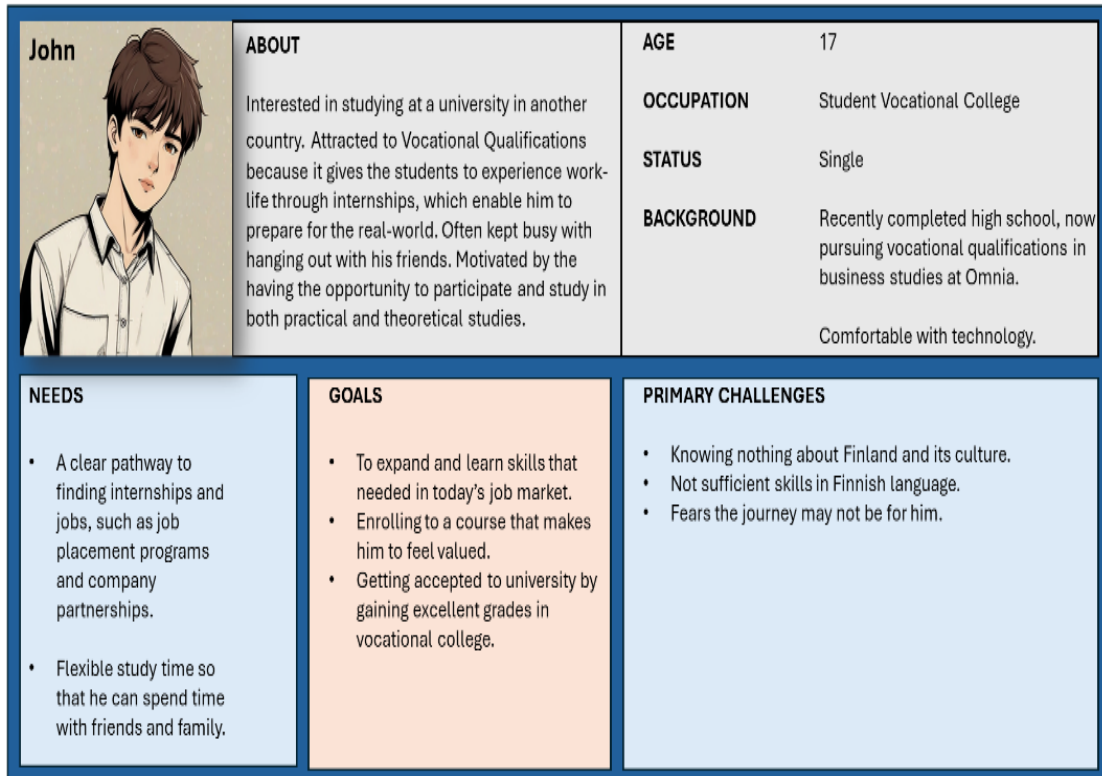


Figure 11: Persona represents male students.

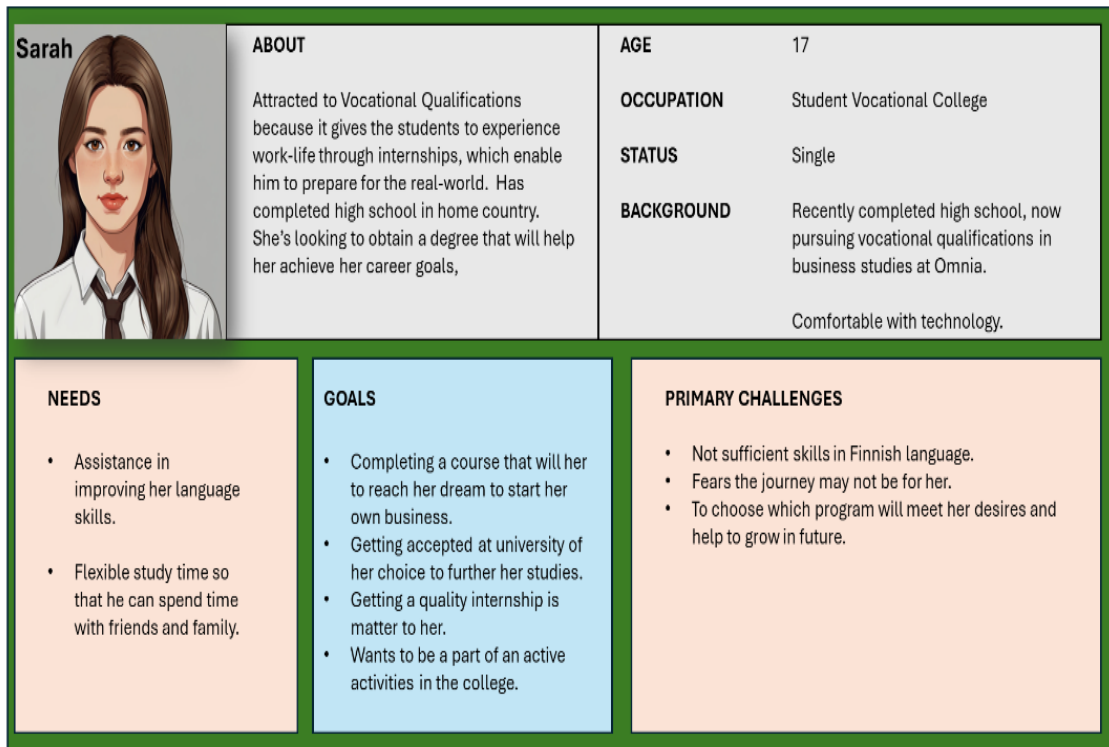


Figure 12: Persona represents female students.

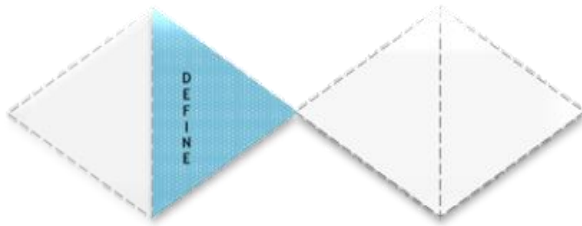
3.1.1 Ethics during research

Integrity between scientific research and public trust is bound to good practices, principles, and ethical considerations that are essential in each stage of the research process (Bhandari 2021). Organizations need to ensure that employees comply with the best practices to uphold participants' rights and well-being in research conducted in their premises (Denison 2024).

Ethical consideration and integrity used in this study ensure reliable results and maintain student trust. Students were provided with a brief presentation regarding the study's purpose and objectives prior to the interview. It was emphasized that interviews would be conducted anonymously, meaning no personal names or identifying details would be collected or published.

Table 3: Principles involved in this study

Integrity and Trust	Study was conducted in respect of accuracy, honesty, and transparency, by which the values were clearly defined right at the beginning of the interview by explaining the objectives and securing voluntary participation.
Ethical Considerations	By upholding a true responsibility, the author conveyed the information with clear communication, and anonymized interviews in order to build trust, ensuring that participants can provide honest responses without concern for privacy breaches. This also encourage the participants to provide their honest responses without worrying about their privacy being compromised.
Essential at Every Stage	The study's ethical oversight started in the very beginning by clearly informing the purpose and protections pertaining to this case study during a brief introduction session held in the vocational qualification in business class. Ethical standards handling the data were maintained throughout this study by ensuring students' privacy and preserving anonymity in the reporting. These measures helped eliminate bias and ensured the results accurately captured participants' experiences.
Voluntary participation	All participants were chosen on a voluntary basis where they can stop participating in the interview whenever they want without having any fear feelings.



3.2 Define - data analysis

The defining phase is an important phase as problems are identified and interdisciplinary teams are set up to discuss those areas of improvement with practical suggestions to ensure that applicants have a good experience using the service. In this phase, the interview transcripts were analysed using inductive thematic analysis. This allows the author to experience how the applicant themselves felt and experienced during their application journey.

3.2.1 Inductive thematic analysis

Braun & Clarke (2006) argue that when working with a big data set, a flexible, accessible, and transparent tool like thematic analysis enables you to interpret patterns, also known as themes, in detail. Both inductive and deductive thematic analysis gives researchers a great opportunity to explore and examine data for their research. Inductive analysis extracts result directly from the transcripts through a methodical process of sorting and classifying them.

The deductive analysis is derived from an already predicted theory by focusing on confirming or challenging the researched topic. However, thematic analysis not only organizes and defines data; it also often helps researchers interpret and uncover deeper insights related to the research topic (Boyatzis 1998).

Coding is a way to describe the meaning of a sentence by choosing a suitable label. In other words, it is like a specific keyword that is used to represent the text. The method in qualitative analysis is about providing detailed descriptions based on each code. This method is useful when there is more than one person involved in the coding process. Applying the codes makes the data simpler to analyse and highlights patterns, differences, and connections between the text segments (Rosala 2022).

The goal of coding is to interpret the main themes within the data set or interview transcripts by looking at important or main concepts. In this study, the author used line by line to code the transcripts to gain a broader understanding and insights of the online application process.

Applying thematic analysis to this study enables the author to code data using a structured approach to identifying, categorizing, and interpreting patterns. A code usually represents the meaning of a whole text into a short label, stating key ideas of the text that can be found in the dataset or interview transcripts (Braun et al. 2022, 59.)

This approach also breaks down the journey into specific stages, such as initial motivations, application challenges, and factors influencing decision-making. The author used Microsoft word to code manually, as shown in the YouTube video (Kriukow, 2020), to code the inductive thematic because it is convenient to identify the recurring themes, emotions, obstacles, motivations, and expectations that the participants encounter during their online application journey at Omnia.



Figure 13: Steps in inductive analysis (source: Braun and Clarke,2006) modified.

In this study, the author uses inductive thematic analysis to interpret the raw data from the transcripts to explore how the applicant had experienced their application journey at Omnia. Six students were interviewed for this purpose, and the report is based on the transcripts collected during the interview sessions.

The process begins with the author becoming thoroughly familiar with the data to gain a deeper understanding. The first step is to create a word document and place the transcripts, through tables and columns to write the code names line by line.

<p>Question 2. What would be your satisfaction level with your application journey on a scale of 1 to 5?</p> <p>Student 1 A good</p> <p>Student 2 A good</p> <p>Student 3 A good</p> <p>Student 4 A good</p> <p>Student 5 A good</p> <p>Student 6 A good</p> <p>Question 3. How did you find the language test?</p> <p>Student 1 The questions was abit difficult in Finnish but the english was ok. At first also practicing but afterwords to the instructor properly I was able to write with ease. The time table given was suitable and the test day was also ok. It's very convenient. It was okay. Some parts were challenging, but I think I did my best.</p> <p>Student 2 The questions was abit difficult in Finnish but the english was ok. The time table given was suitable and the test day was also ok. Some parts were challenging in Finnish test.</p> <p>Student 3 English it was like learning in 6th grade or something, it was super easy but the Finnish was abit tough for me. I would say that studied it before in school and when I came and did the test was like, well, please correct, honestly, it was tougher than I expected. I'm a bit worried about my performance.</p> <p>Student 4 The test was easy I find the english was easy and the Finnish a little bit difficult. I received fast and friendly support during the test like I hope to</p>	<p>change the test time and they just change the time for me. I struggled with some of the questions.</p> <p>Student 5 The test was easy I find the english was easy and the Finnish a little bit difficult. I was very nervous during the Finnish test because for me it was so difficult and I think level B1.1, so really very difficult.</p> <p>Student 6 The test was easy I find the english was easy and the Finnish a little bit difficult. I was spending a lot of time learning in general, like reading and gathering vocabulary and that helps me a lot. It was a good experience overall, even if I have some parts difficult, I did practice a lot.</p> <p>Question 4. What can you say about the services you received from the admissions department throughout your application journey?</p> <p>Student 1 I was having some problem with the language test format, and when I approach the admissions department, they help me to change it from afternoon to morning. It was really helpful for me because I use planned to go to a movie with my friends in the evening. Thank you. Otherwise I might Miss A movie. The admission department was so cooperative and friendly.</p> <p>To me it was not that long, I took advantage of the waiting time to continue learning and enhancing my skills, ensuring that I would be well prepared regardless of the outcome.</p> <p>Student 2 For me it was ok. After the test I was a bit nervous waiting for the results and I really want to go to be selected. So I wrote email asking the admissions department about my result, they told me my application is still under process and they will inform once the decision is made. They answer me quickly and I feel ok and less scared. They are very friendly.</p> <p>Student 3 Once when I send them questions about the language certificate, they answered very fast and it was helpful. To me it was not that long, it gave</p>	<p>me just enough time to stay focused and excited about the outcome without feeling anxious.</p> <p>Student 4 Oh for me also, it felt reasonable, and I appreciated the efficient process.</p> <p>Student 5 For me it was ok. After the test I was a bit nervous waiting for the results and I really want to go to be selected. So I wrote email asking the admissions department about my result, they told me my application is still under process and they will inform once the decision is made. They answer me quickly and I feel ok and less scared. They are very friendly.</p> <p>Student 6 To me it was not that long, it gave me just enough time to stay focused and excited about the outcome without feeling anxious.</p> <p>Question 5. What suggestions, if any, would you offer to improve the application process for future applicants?</p> <p>Student 1 Online test can be helpful because I am coming from jamaica very far.</p> <p>Student 2 On line test will be much more convenient for having students who are interested to apply to Oulu. I am coming from north so it might be good if I can do online test.</p> <p>Student 3 Maybe it might give light some opportunity for the international students from other countries as well. Excepting IELTS also can be helpful.</p> <p>Student 4 On line test will be much more convenient for having students who are interested to apply to Oulu.</p> <p>Student 5</p>
--	--	---

Figure 15: Extract from interview transcriptions 4 - 6.

<table border="1"> <tr> <th>Q1</th> <th>Q2</th> <th>Q3</th> <th>Q4</th> <th>Q5</th> <th>Q6</th> </tr> <tr> <td>Student 1</td> <td>Student 2</td> <td>Student 3</td> <td>Student 4</td> <td>Student 5</td> <td>Student 6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Student 7</td> <td>Student 8</td> <td>Student 9</td> <td>Student 10</td> <td>Student 11</td> <td>Student 12</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Student 13</td> <td>Student 14</td> <td>Student 15</td> <td>Student 16</td> <td>Student 17</td> <td>Student 18</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Student 19</td> <td>Student 20</td> <td>Student 21</td> <td>Student 22</td> <td>Student 23</td> <td>Student 24</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Student 25</td> <td>Student 26</td> <td>Student 27</td> <td>Student 28</td> <td>Student 29</td> <td>Student 30</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Student 31</td> <td>Student 32</td> <td>Student 33</td> <td>Student 34</td> <td>Student 35</td> <td>Student 36</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Student 37</td> <td>Student 38</td> <td>Student 39</td> <td>Student 40</td> <td>Student 41</td> <td>Student 42</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Student 43</td> <td>Student 44</td> <td>Student 45</td> <td>Student 46</td> <td>Student 47</td> <td>Student 48</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Student 49</td> <td>Student 50</td> <td>Student 51</td> <td>Student 52</td> <td>Student 53</td> <td>Student 54</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Student 55</td> <td>Student 56</td> <td>Student 57</td> <td>Student 58</td> <td>Student 59</td> <td>Student 60</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Student 61</td> <td>Student 62</td> <td>Student 63</td> <td>Student 64</td> <td>Student 65</td> <td>Student 66</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Student 67</td> <td>Student 68</td> <td>Student 69</td> <td>Student 70</td> <td>Student 71</td> <td>Student 72</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Student 73</td> <td>Student 74</td> <td>Student 75</td> <td>Student 76</td> <td>Student 77</td> <td>Student 78</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Student 79</td> <td>Student 80</td> <td>Student 81</td> <td>Student 82</td> <td>Student 83</td> <td>Student 84</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Student 85</td> <td>Student 86</td> <td>Student 87</td> <td>Student 88</td> <td>Student 89</td> <td>Student 90</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Student 91</td> <td>Student 92</td> <td>Student 93</td> <td>Student 94</td> <td>Student 95</td> <td>Student 96</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Student 97</td> <td>Student 98</td> <td>Student 99</td> <td>Student 100</td> <td>Student 101</td> <td>Student 102</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Student 103</td> <td>Student 104</td> <td>Student 105</td> <td>Student 106</td> <td>Student 107</td> <td>Student 108</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Student 109</td> <td>Student 110</td> <td>Student 111</td> <td>Student 112</td> <td>Student 113</td> <td>Student 114</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Student 115</td> <td>Student 116</td> <td>Student 117</td> <td>Student 118</td> <td>Student 119</td> <td>Student 120</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Student 121</td> <td>Student 122</td> <td>Student 123</td> <td>Student 124</td> <td>Student 125</td> <td>Student 126</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Student 127</td> <td>Student 128</td> <td>Student 129</td> <td>Student 130</td> <td>Student 131</td> <td>Student 132</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Student 133</td> <td>Student 134</td> <td>Student 135</td> <td>Student 136</td> <td>Student 137</td> <td>Student 138</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Student 139</td> <td>Student 140</td> <td>Student 141</td> <td>Student 142</td> <td>Student 143</td> <td>Student 144</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Student 145</td> <td>Student 146</td> <td>Student 147</td> <td>Student 148</td> <td>Student 149</td> <td>Student 150</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Student 151</td> <td>Student 152</td> <td>Student 153</td> <td>Student 154</td> <td>Student 155</td> <td>Student 156</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Student 157</td> <td>Student 158</td> <td>Student 159</td> <td>Student 160</td> <td>Student 161</td> <td>Student 162</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Student 163</td> <td>Student 164</td> <td>Student 165</td> <td>Student 166</td> <td>Student 167</td> <td>Student 168</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Student 169</td> <td>Student 170</td> <td>Student 171</td> <td>Student 172</td> <td>Student 173</td> <td>Student 174</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Student 175</td> <td>Student 176</td> <td>Student 177</td> <td>Student 178</td> <td>Student 179</td> <td>Student 180</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Student 181</td> <td>Student 182</td> <td>Student 183</td> <td>Student 184</td> <td>Student 185</td> <td>Student 186</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Student 187</td> <td>Student 188</td> <td>Student 189</td> <td>Student 190</td> <td>Student 191</td> <td>Student 192</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Student 193</td> <td>Student 194</td> <td>Student 195</td> <td>Student 196</td> <td>Student 197</td> <td>Student 198</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Student 199</td> <td>Student 200</td> <td>Student 201</td> <td>Student 202</td> <td>Student 203</td> <td>Student 204</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Student 205</td> <td>Student 206</td> <td>Student 207</td> <td>Student 208</td> <td>Student 209</td> <td>Student 210</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Student 211</td> <td>Student 212</td> <td>Student 213</td> <td>Student 214</td> <td>Student 215</td> <td>Student 216</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Student 217</td> <td>Student 218</td> <td>Student 219</td> <td>Student 220</td> <td>Student 221</td> <td>Student 222</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Student 223</td> <td>Student 224</td> <td>Student 225</td> <td>Student 226</td> <td>Student 227</td> <td>Student 228</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Student 229</td> <td>Student 230</td> <td>Student 231</td> <td>Student 232</td> <td>Student 233</td> <td>Student 234</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Student 235</td> <td>Student 236</td> <td>Student 237</td> <td>Student 238</td> <td>Student 239</td> <td>Student 240</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Student 241</td> <td>Student 242</td> <td>Student 243</td> <td>Student 244</td> <td>Student 245</td> <td>Student 246</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Student 247</td> <td>Student 248</td> <td>Student 249</td> <td>Student 250</td> <td>Student 251</td> <td>Student 252</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Student 253</td> <td>Student 254</td> <td>Student 255</td> <td>Student 256</td> <td>Student 257</td> <td>Student 258</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Student 259</td> <td>Student 260</td> <td>Student 261</td> <td>Student 262</td> <td>Student 263</td> <td>Student 264</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Student 265</td> <td>Student 266</td> <td>Student 267</td> <td>Student 268</td> <td>Student 269</td> <td>Student 270</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Student 271</td> <td>Student 272</td> <td>Student 273</td> <td>Student 274</td> <td>Student 275</td> <td>Student 276</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Student 277</td> <td>Student 278</td> <td>Student 279</td> <td>Student 280</td> <td>Student 281</td> <td>Student 282</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Student 283</td> <td>Student 284</td> <td>Student 285</td> <td>Student 286</td> <td>Student 287</td> <td>Student 288</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Student 289</td> <td>Student 290</td> <td>Student 291</td> <td>Student 292</td> <td>Student 293</td> <td>Student 294</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Student 295</td> <td>Student 296</td> <td>Student 297</td> <td>Student 298</td> <td>Student 299</td> <td>Student 300</td> </tr> </table>	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Student 1	Student 2	Student 3	Student 4	Student 5	Student 6	Student 7	Student 8	Student 9	Student 10	Student 11	Student 12	Student 13	Student 14	Student 15	Student 16	Student 17	Student 18	Student 19	Student 20	Student 21	Student 22	Student 23	Student 24	Student 25	Student 26	Student 27	Student 28	Student 29	Student 30	Student 31	Student 32	Student 33	Student 34	Student 35	Student 36	Student 37	Student 38	Student 39	Student 40	Student 41	Student 42	Student 43	Student 44	Student 45	Student 46	Student 47	Student 48	Student 49	Student 50	Student 51	Student 52	Student 53	Student 54	Student 55	Student 56	Student 57	Student 58	Student 59	Student 60	Student 61	Student 62	Student 63	Student 64	Student 65	Student 66	Student 67	Student 68	Student 69	Student 70	Student 71	Student 72	Student 73	Student 74	Student 75	Student 76	Student 77	Student 78	Student 79	Student 80	Student 81	Student 82	Student 83	Student 84	Student 85	Student 86	Student 87	Student 88	Student 89	Student 90	Student 91	Student 92	Student 93	Student 94	Student 95	Student 96	Student 97	Student 98	Student 99	Student 100	Student 101	Student 102	Student 103	Student 104	Student 105	Student 106	Student 107	Student 108	Student 109	Student 110	Student 111	Student 112	Student 113	Student 114	Student 115	Student 116	Student 117	Student 118	Student 119	Student 120	Student 121	Student 122	Student 123	Student 124	Student 125	Student 126	Student 127	Student 128	Student 129	Student 130	Student 131	Student 132	Student 133	Student 134	Student 135	Student 136	Student 137	Student 138	Student 139	Student 140	Student 141	Student 142	Student 143	Student 144	Student 145	Student 146	Student 147	Student 148	Student 149	Student 150	Student 151	Student 152	Student 153	Student 154	Student 155	Student 156	Student 157	Student 158	Student 159	Student 160	Student 161	Student 162	Student 163	Student 164	Student 165	Student 166	Student 167	Student 168	Student 169	Student 170	Student 171	Student 172	Student 173	Student 174	Student 175	Student 176	Student 177	Student 178	Student 179	Student 180	Student 181	Student 182	Student 183	Student 184	Student 185	Student 186	Student 187	Student 188	Student 189	Student 190	Student 191	Student 192	Student 193	Student 194	Student 195	Student 196	Student 197	Student 198	Student 199	Student 200	Student 201	Student 202	Student 203	Student 204	Student 205	Student 206	Student 207	Student 208	Student 209	Student 210	Student 211	Student 212	Student 213	Student 214	Student 215	Student 216	Student 217	Student 218	Student 219	Student 220	Student 221	Student 222	Student 223	Student 224	Student 225	Student 226	Student 227	Student 228	Student 229	Student 230	Student 231	Student 232	Student 233	Student 234	Student 235	Student 236	Student 237	Student 238	Student 239	Student 240	Student 241	Student 242	Student 243	Student 244	Student 245	Student 246	Student 247	Student 248	Student 249	Student 250	Student 251	Student 252	Student 253	Student 254	Student 255	Student 256	Student 257	Student 258	Student 259	Student 260	Student 261	Student 262	Student 263	Student 264	Student 265	Student 266	Student 267	Student 268	Student 269	Student 270	Student 271	Student 272	Student 273	Student 274	Student 275	Student 276	Student 277	Student 278	Student 279	Student 280	Student 281	Student 282	Student 283	Student 284	Student 285	Student 286	Student 287	Student 288	Student 289	Student 290	Student 291	Student 292	Student 293	Student 294	Student 295	Student 296	Student 297	Student 298	Student 299	Student 300	<p>Q1: What would be your satisfaction level with your application journey on a scale of 1 to 5?</p> <p>Q2: How did you find the language test?</p> <p>Q3: What can you say about the services you received from the admissions department throughout your application journey?</p> <p>Q4: What suggestions, if any, would you offer to improve the application process for future applicants?</p>	<p>Q1: What would be your satisfaction level with your application journey on a scale of 1 to 5?</p> <p>Q2: How did you find the language test?</p> <p>Q3: What can you say about the services you received from the admissions department throughout your application journey?</p> <p>Q4: What suggestions, if any, would you offer to improve the application process for future applicants?</p>	<p>Q1: What would be your satisfaction level with your application journey on a scale of 1 to 5?</p> <p>Q2: How did you find the language test?</p> <p>Q3: What can you say about the services you received from the admissions department throughout your application journey?</p> <p>Q4: What suggestions, if any, would you offer to improve the application process for future applicants?</p>	<p>Q1: What would be your satisfaction level with your application journey on a scale of 1 to 5?</p> <p>Q2: How did you find the language test?</p> <p>Q3: What can you say about the services you received from the admissions department throughout your application journey?</p> <p>Q4: What suggestions, if any, would you offer to improve the application process for future applicants?</p>
Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																	
Student 1	Student 2	Student 3	Student 4	Student 5	Student 6																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																	
Student 7	Student 8	Student 9	Student 10	Student 11	Student 12																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																	
Student 13	Student 14	Student 15	Student 16	Student 17	Student 18																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																	
Student 19	Student 20	Student 21	Student 22	Student 23	Student 24																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																	
Student 25	Student 26	Student 27	Student 28	Student 29	Student 30																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																	
Student 31	Student 32	Student 33	Student 34	Student 35	Student 36																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																	
Student 37	Student 38	Student 39	Student 40	Student 41	Student 42																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																	
Student 43	Student 44	Student 45	Student 46	Student 47	Student 48																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																	
Student 49	Student 50	Student 51	Student 52	Student 53	Student 54																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																	
Student 55	Student 56	Student 57	Student 58	Student 59	Student 60																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																	
Student 61	Student 62	Student 63	Student 64	Student 65	Student 66																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																	
Student 67	Student 68	Student 69	Student 70	Student 71	Student 72																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																	
Student 73	Student 74	Student 75	Student 76	Student 77	Student 78																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																	
Student 79	Student 80	Student 81	Student 82	Student 83	Student 84																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																	
Student 85	Student 86	Student 87	Student 88	Student 89	Student 90																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																	
Student 91	Student 92	Student 93	Student 94	Student 95	Student 96																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																	
Student 97	Student 98	Student 99	Student 100	Student 101	Student 102																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																	
Student 103	Student 104	Student 105	Student 106	Student 107	Student 108																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																	
Student 109	Student 110	Student 111	Student 112	Student 113	Student 114																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																	
Student 115	Student 116	Student 117	Student 118	Student 119	Student 120																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																	
Student 121	Student 122	Student 123	Student 124	Student 125	Student 126																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																	
Student 127	Student 128	Student 129	Student 130	Student 131	Student 132																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																	
Student 133	Student 134	Student 135	Student 136	Student 137	Student 138																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																	
Student 139	Student 140	Student 141	Student 142	Student 143	Student 144																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																	
Student 145	Student 146	Student 147	Student 148	Student 149	Student 150																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																	
Student 151	Student 152	Student 153	Student 154	Student 155	Student 156																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																	
Student 157	Student 158	Student 159	Student 160	Student 161	Student 162																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																	
Student 163	Student 164	Student 165	Student 166	Student 167	Student 168																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																	
Student 169	Student 170	Student 171	Student 172	Student 173	Student 174																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																	
Student 175	Student 176	Student 177	Student 178	Student 179	Student 180																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																	
Student 181	Student 182	Student 183	Student 184	Student 185	Student 186																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																	
Student 187	Student 188	Student 189	Student 190	Student 191	Student 192																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																	
Student 193	Student 194	Student 195	Student 196	Student 197	Student 198																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																	
Student 199	Student 200	Student 201	Student 202	Student 203	Student 204																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																	
Student 205	Student 206	Student 207	Student 208	Student 209	Student 210																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																	
Student 211	Student 212	Student 213	Student 214	Student 215	Student 216																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																	
Student 217	Student 218	Student 219	Student 220	Student 221	Student 222																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																	
Student 223	Student 224	Student 225	Student 226	Student 227	Student 228																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																	
Student 229	Student 230	Student 231	Student 232	Student 233	Student 234																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																	
Student 235	Student 236	Student 237	Student 238	Student 239	Student 240																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																	
Student 241	Student 242	Student 243	Student 244	Student 245	Student 246																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																	
Student 247	Student 248	Student 249	Student 250	Student 251	Student 252																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																	
Student 253	Student 254	Student 255	Student 256	Student 257	Student 258																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																	
Student 259	Student 260	Student 261	Student 262	Student 263	Student 264																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																	
Student 265	Student 266	Student 267	Student 268	Student 269	Student 270																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																	
Student 271	Student 272	Student 273	Student 274	Student 275	Student 276																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																	
Student 277	Student 278	Student 279	Student 280	Student 281	Student 282																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																	
Student 283	Student 284	Student 285	Student 286	Student 287	Student 288																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																	
Student 289	Student 290	Student 291	Student 292	Student 293	Student 294																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																	
Student 295	Student 296	Student 297	Student 298	Student 299	Student 300																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																	

Figure 16: Extract from data cleaning.

3.2.2 Findings and summary

Below are the findings that resulted from the thematic analysis:

Question 1. What sparked your interest in English Vocational (VET) in Business?

The chart below reveals that the primary motivation for applicants to apply to an English-medium vocational qualification is their desire to complete their studies in English, given their limited proficiency in the Finnish language. The applicant is also interested in getting experiences from internships that increase their chances of securing a job.

Other factors that attracted them to apply for vocational qualifications are:

- zero-cost study
- minimal Finnish language proficiency, which makes the program more inclusive.
- vocational studies emphasize hands-on training and practical skills relevant to the job market.

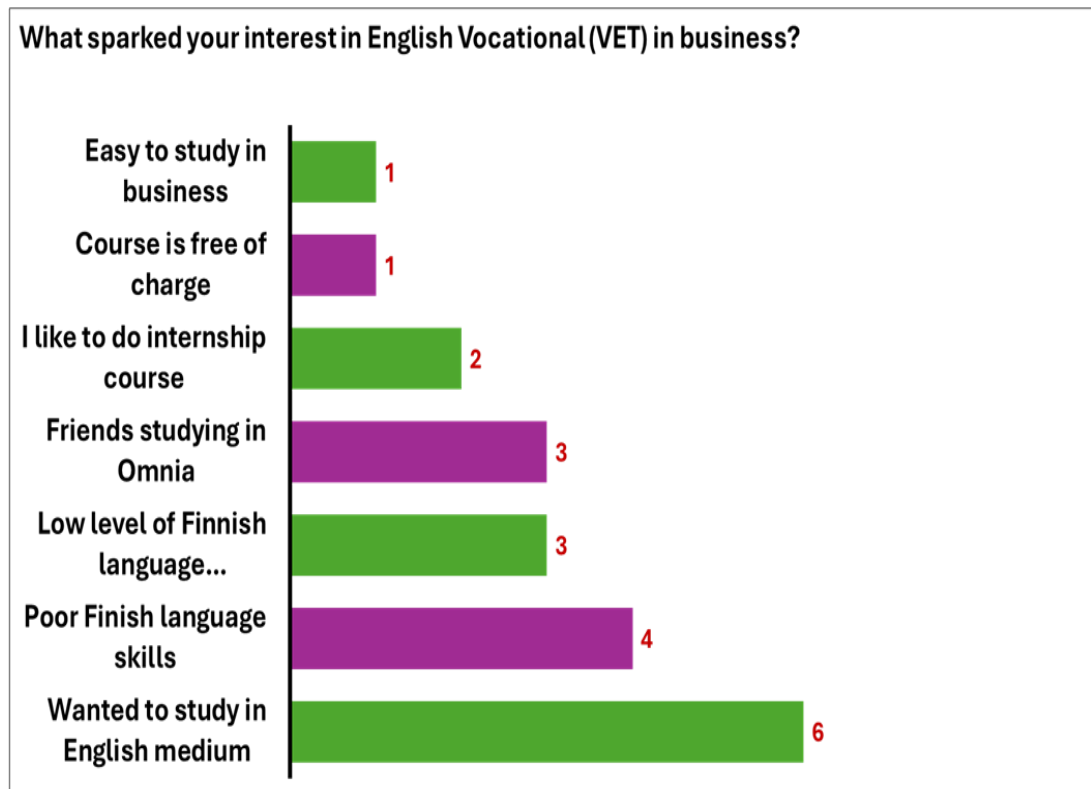


Figure 17: What sparked your interest in English Vocational (VET) in Business?

Question 2 a. Could you describe your application journey?

Based on the analyzed data, the graph below shows the results of participants’ experiences during their application journey.

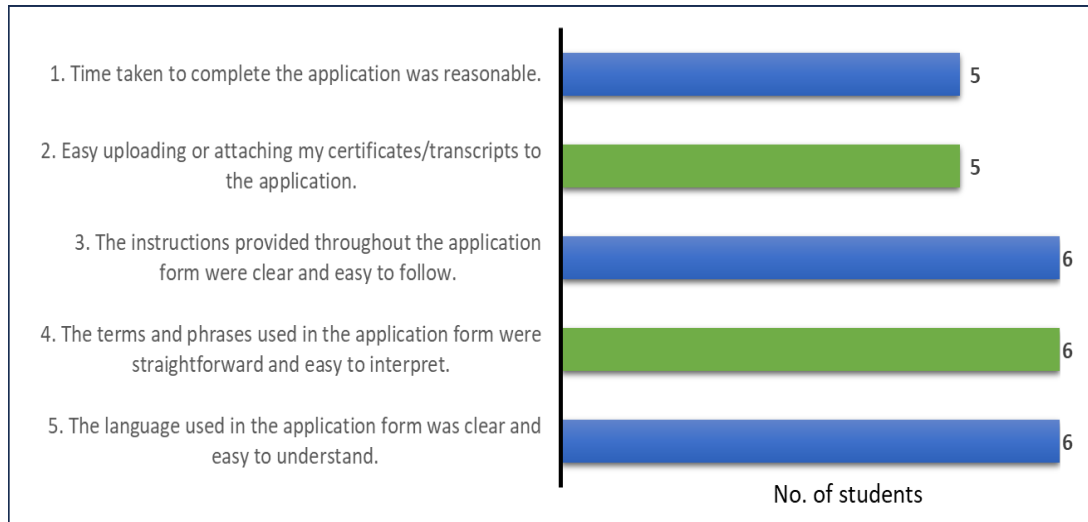


Figure 18: Applicants remark on their application journey

All six participants who participated in the interview sessions describe that they were very satisfied with their online application process while applying to their desired course. According to them, they did not face any difficulties while filling up or attaching their certificates (transcripts) to the online application. The main reason for this is because the questions are straightforward and easy to interpret and understand. The longest hour taken was 2 hours, and the shortest was 45 minutes.

Question 2 b. What would be your satisfaction level with your application journey on a scale of 1 to 5?

The table below shows the applicants’ satisfaction level using the online 1 to 5 Likert scale to capture their satisfaction level while applying to their desired course.

Table 4: Applicants’ satisfaction level

Questions	Scale	Count
What would be your satisfaction level with your application journey	1	0
What would be your satisfaction level with your application journey	2	0
What would be your satisfaction level with your application journey	3	0
What would be your satisfaction level with your application journey	4	6
What would be your satisfaction level with your application journey	5	0

Based on the excel chart above, it shows that all the participants selected scale number four, which indicates that they are satisfied with the application process. The overall result shows that all six participants agree that they are happy and satisfied with the whole application journey at Omnia. They relate the application journey with the services they received from the admissions department during filling out the online application form, during the language tests, and while waiting for the student selection results. They also added that the student selection decision was given within the time frame mentioned in the webpage.

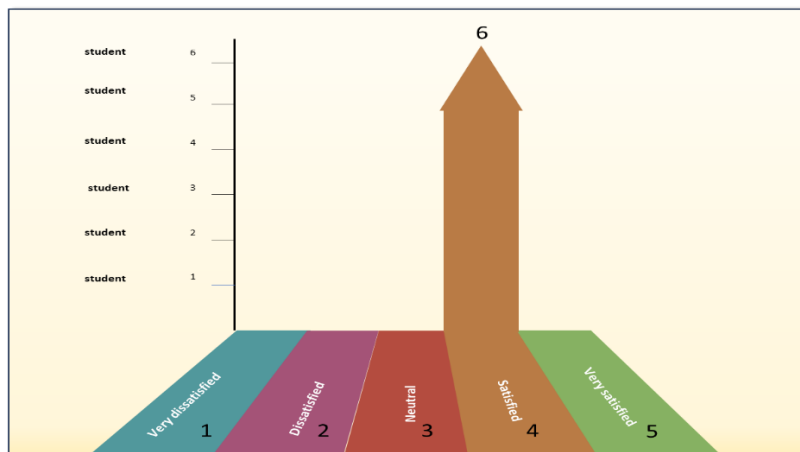


Figure 19: Participants’ remark on the satisfaction level using the 1 to 5 Likert scale

Question 3. How did you find the language proficiency test?

In order to be selected to study at Omnia, the applicants must meet the required language skills, which enable them to successfully excel in their studies. Therefore, language proficiency tests are conducted prior to the student selection decision being made. The figure below shows the proficiency level. Note: applicants who are native English and Finnish speakers are exempted from the language proficiency test. The finding indicates that English test questions were relatively fair, while the Finnish language test was challenging for the applicants.

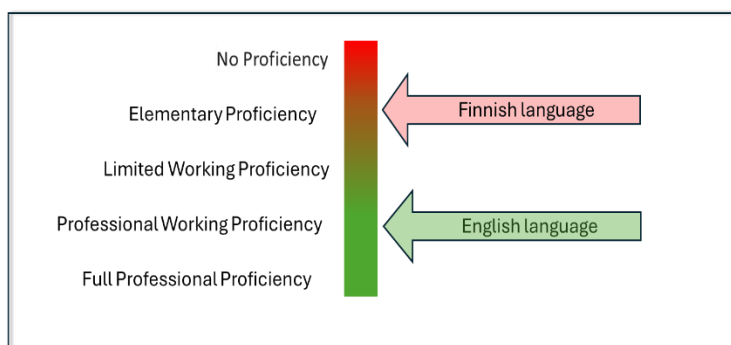


Figure 20: Illustration of language proficiency level.

Question 4. What can you say about the services you received from the admissions department throughout your application journey?

Analysis results show that the applicants are very happy with the services rendered to them during their interaction with the admission department. According to them, the admissions staff are very friendly and answer their inquiries with a clear and prompt reply. This shows that the admissions staff are very efficient in providing exceptional support to the applicants. This proves that the admissions staff is committed to providing excellent customer service to the applicants. Detailed results are indicated in the chart 5.

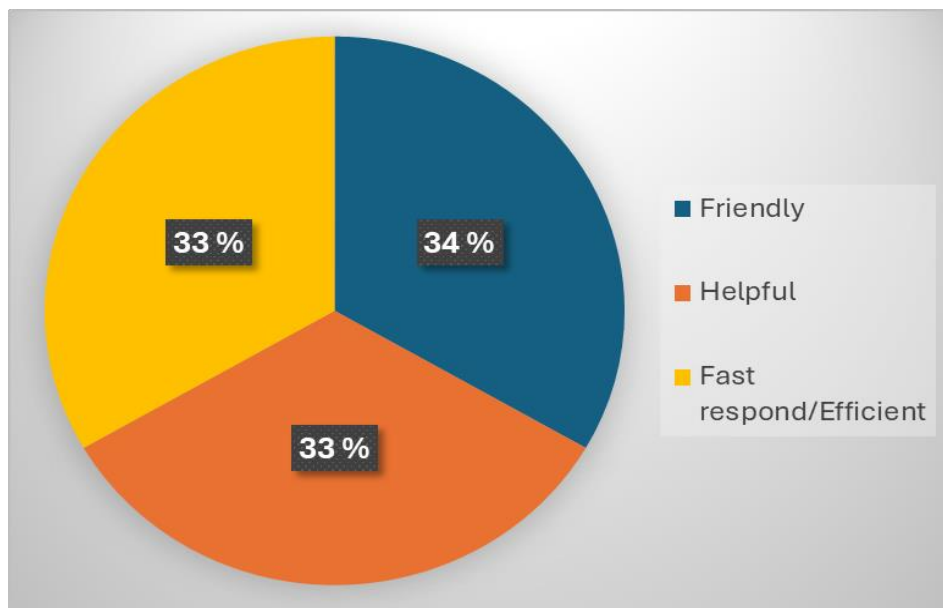


Figure 21: Services received throughout their application journey.

Question 5. What suggestions, if there are any, would you offer to improve the application process for future applicants?

For future improvement, the participants have suggested the below recommendations to be implemented in the future intakes for the English vocational qualification in Business.

1. To increase the study places for students with limited language skills to study in the vocational qualification in Business.
2. Offer study opportunities to applicants on the waiting list.
3. Reduce the language requirement for Finnish.
4. Organize an online language test that enables applicants to participate anytime and anywhere.

User journey map

In this study, the applicant journey map not only helps to identify gaps in the experience but also serves as a foundation for brainstorming to find ways for improvement. This approach helps the admissions department at Omnia to recognize the gaps involved in each step of the applicant interaction from start to finish using the application journey. The author followed a series of steps to develop a comprehensive applicant journey map.

Through a user journey map, organizations visualize the complete experience of a user engaging with its product or services. The journey map helps to show the entire process that the user had encountered during his or her journey by highlighting the key aspects like actions, emotions, pain points, and goals (Walter 2022, 5.)

Once the data had been compiled and interpreted to uncover the meanings based on the participants' perspectives, the author moved towards charting the journey mapping by following applicants' paths as they thought out their online application journey funnel. This helps to gain better insight into what applicants are looking for throughout their application journey and how to tailor the process by recognizing their need in each stage.

The journey map is created based on research insights gathered through in-depth interviews, observations, and task analyses. This journey map helps the author to visualize the problems and come up with solutions to improve the online application process.

This helps to clearly outline each action in sequence:

- highlights each step, making it easier to see the full journey and the pain points in each stage.
- visualize applicant experience over time to find feature opportunities for continuous improvements.
- acts as a communication tool to support customer service decisions in real applicant needs.

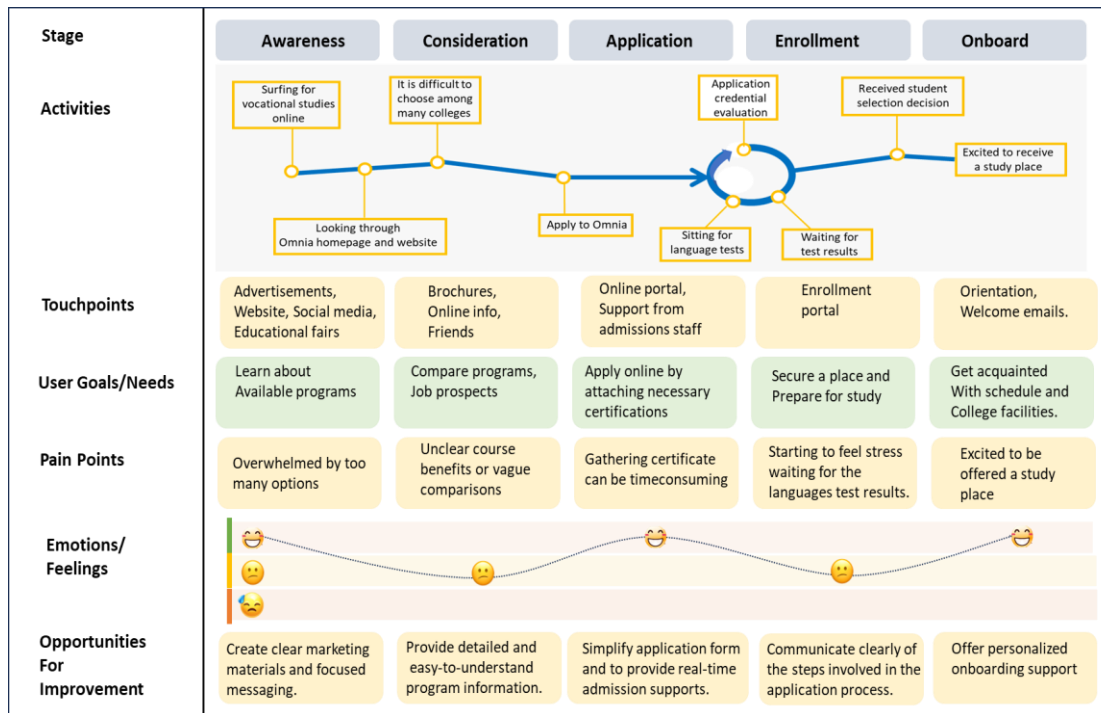
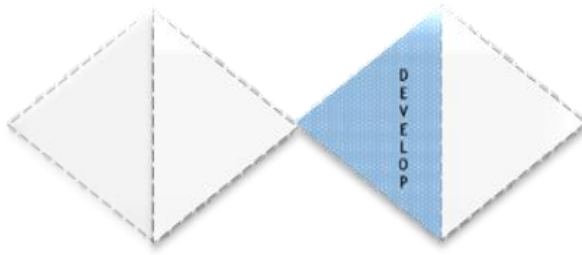


Figure 22: Illustration of applicant journey.

The author carried out this study to find out how effective the online application process is in Omnia. Are the applicants happy with their application journey, or do they face challenges and difficulties with the online application and throughout the application process?

The goal of this case study is to determine those areas that need improvement or further development regarding the online application process. Since no previous research has been conducted before, this study serves as a pioneer case study that investigates the applicants' experiences, particularly in the vocational qualification in Business studies. The overall results from the qualitative interview indicate that applicants are satisfied with their overall application journey in Omnia, as illustrated in table 3 and graphs 2 and 3.

In conclusion, the results based on the interview session indicate that 80% of the participants are generally pleased and satisfied with both the application and its related process, together with the support provided by the admissions department throughout their application journey in Omnia.



3.3 Develop - ideation

Results from the qualitative interview using the thematic analysis above indicate that applicants are satisfied with their overall application journey in Omnia, be it with the application itself and services rendered to them from the customer services aspects.

Enhancements in the applicant journey are crucial to creating a positive applicant experience in the coming years at Omnia. During the development phase, the author aims to elevate current services by recommending future improvements to the application process from both the applicants' and the admissions department's perspectives. To gain insight from the applicant's perspective, data was collected through interviews.

During the development phase, the author decided to collect data using the information gathered from the admissions staff to investigate their perspective on future improvements. To investigate this, the author uses the fishbone chart to analyze deeper areas for improvement to serve this purpose. Data gathered from the inductive thematic analysis was divided into four main categories pertaining to the online application form and customer services.

3.3.1 Insight gathering

The author plans to conduct an additional analysis using a fishbone diagram to explore the areas that could contribute to the overall success of the application. The idea is to investigate various areas that can contribute to ongoing and future improvements in the services offered to applicants.

Understanding that the online application serves as a key link between the admissions department and applicants, the author chooses to enhance the applicant experience by giving priority to the quality and effectiveness of the application. Therefore, the fishbone chart is used to help rectify those factors that affect the applicants' satisfaction with their application experiences from the start to the end of the application process.

In this study, the author uses both the brainstorming and fishbone diagrams to online the areas for enhancing applicant experience through continuous improvement.

The insights gained from interpreting the data from interview sessions showed that the key areas for enhancement are to improve the online application. Feedback from applicants was used to enrich the brainstorming process with practical, real-world insights.

The brainstorming sessions were done with four planners in the admissions department. The meeting was done online, where the possible areas and their underlying factors that contribute to enhancing the process were identified.

This brainstorming was focused on two aspects:

1. Applicant
2. Admissions department

Table 5: Issues raised during brainstorming session

Usability quality	Is about how easy and straightforward can the applicant interpret the information on the online application in order to complete it effectively.
Information quality	This concerns the clarity of information found in the online application in term of accuracy, completeness, and timeliness of the information.
User interface quality	This applies to the design and functionality of the online application interface such as intuitive usability and the visual appeal of the layout.
Service interaction quality	This section focuses on the support given to the applicant in term of responsiveness, fast and accurate information and clarity of support for applicants.

Usability quality

Application usability refers to whether a user can easily interact with the application to complete tasks effectively and efficiently. In this study, usability refers to how easily a candidate can interpret the information in the application to complete a task effectively and efficiently. Suleiman (2024), points out that this approach can create a user-friendly and intuitive interface that meets the applicant's needs and preferences, maximizing satisfaction with the application while minimizing user frustration (Suleiman 2024).

Information quality

Information quality is the quality of the content in the information that enables users (applicants) to make decisions confidently (Moon 2023). To do so, it is important to provide relevant and engaging information that is precise and up-to-date. Moreover, a clear, user-friendly format enables applicants to make decisions confidently.

User interface quality

User interface refers to shaping user engagement in a positive way. As Sardjono & Perdana (2024) comment, to design a successful user interface, one must concentrate on the factors that can increase the functionality, usability, and user-friendliness. The outcome is often influenced by factors like the ability to understand the layout, the visually appealing approach, and how well it can make the user engage with it - the facts that increase loyalty and truthfulness (Baskaran 2024).

Service interaction quality

Service integration not only serves all the customers with a customer-centric approach so that customers receive good support and quality customer service, but it is also about ensuring that the customer journey is smooth (Ghani 2014). In this study, the admissions department strives to serve applicants with unified and efficient experience throughout the applicants' application journey.

To focus on further improvement of applicant experiences, four categories that influence online application are: usability quality, information quality, service integration quality, and user interface quality.

Identify possible causes for continuous improvement using fishbone diagram

The first aspect is to concentrate on improving the online application, together with the second aspect to improve the services rented to applicants during their application process. The goal of the brainstorming session is to identify skills and knowledge that support improving the online application process.

The next step is to work with the experts, in this case the planners from the admissions department, to prioritize the causes. This is done by a multi-voting system to narrow down the causes that are likely to have the most impact on future improvement. Each planner votes on the causes that they believe have the most significance for future improvement by allocating the vote accordingly.

The session begins with analyzing the possible causes using the fishbone diagram, as seen in the figure 23.

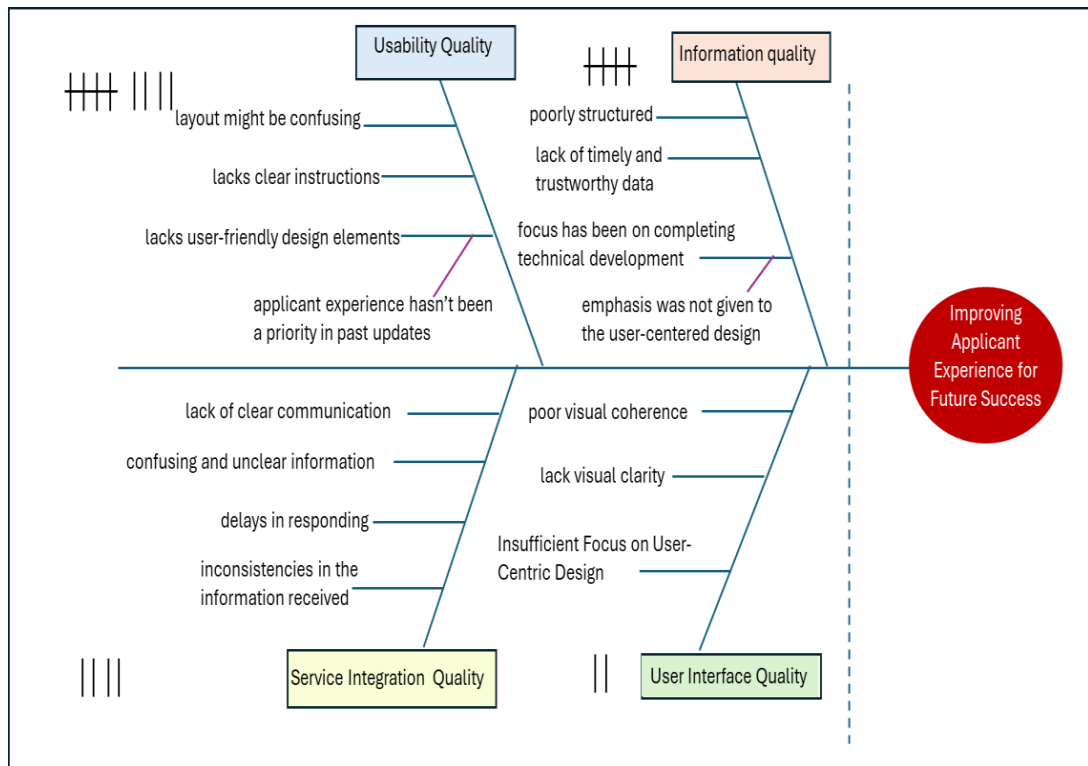


Figure 23: Brainstorming session to identify the root cause for future improvement.

After identifying the various causes and sub-causes, the author moved the information to a table to have a better look during the multi-voting session: All the four experts were asked to select top three areas which they believe would have the greatest impact and should be prioritized for improvement in the coming years.

Structure of voting: This was done by following the structure where 3 (three) is most impactful, 2 (two) is the next impactful, and 1 (one) will be the least impactful.

Table 6: Voting structure

choice	represent
3	most impactful
2	next impactful
1	less impactful

Table 7: Summary of the brainstorming

Areas with causes	Expert 1	Expert 2	Expert 3	Expert 4	total
★ Usability quality	3	2	2	2	9
★ Information quality	1	3		1	5
Service Integration quality		1	3	3	4
User Interface quality	2		1		2

Based on the total scores obtained from the voting, it indicates the findings below:

1. Usability quality

The experts have voted for the usability quality as the first priority that can help the applicant to interpret the information provided to complete tasks effectively and efficiently. Usability quality can improve the online application's functionality and usability, which makes the applicant use it without any confusion or difficulties.

Improving these aspects is essential for a positive and efficient process in the online application experience, which can build their confidence and satisfaction with the system.

2. Information quality

Information quality was the second priority, as the experts believe it is crucial to provide accurate and impactful information to applicants, ensuring they receive clear, accurate, and timely information. It is worthy to ensure that the information provided in the application is clear, accurate, and up-to-date, such as details about programs, requirements, deadlines, and other key aspects.

Focusing on improving the clarity and reliability of the information in the application, the experts believe that will not only help to provide an applicant-friendly approach to the applicants but also to build Omnia's reputation as a user-friendly provider.

They also believe that transformational changes are the key to improve the overall candidate experience and ensuring a more efficient, user-friendly and effective application process in future.

3.3.2 Using 5 Whys technique

Based on the results obtained from the voting session, the author uses the 5 Whys techniques to investigate the positive aspects of the application process. By asking why as many as five times focusing on the two top areas which were chosen by the admissions department's experts. The analysis of the online application process at Omnia, continues in the second process using the 5 Whys technique, a root cause analysis method.

By applying root cause analysis, this approach drives a proactive improvement strategy that looks to the future, focusing on building on positive aspects rather than just addressing deficiencies.

The application of root cause analysis facilitates a forward-looking improvement strategy that prioritizes enhancing positive aspects of the application process rather than merely addressing deficiencies. Figure 24, illustrates the application of the 5 Whys technique, which was initiated by the first question in the usability area, "Why do candidates find it very difficult to figure out how to utilize the application platform"?

Usability quality

First reason: Why do candidates find it very difficult to figure out how to utilize the application platform?

Answer: This could be due to the application's layout being confusing.

Second reason: Why is the layout confusing for applicants?

Answer: This could be due to the lack of clear instructions and the application not being user-friendly.

Third reason: Why do candidates find the instructions unclear and difficult to use?

Answer: Because of very limited testing and feedback from applicants.

Fourth reason: Why is testing and feedback from applicants limited?

Answer: Because usability evaluations are not performed regularly.

Fifth reason: Why are usability evaluations not performed regularly?

Answer: Because no studies have been conducted to date that focus on applicant experience.

Identifying the root causes: So far, no studies have been conducted that focus on applicant experience.

The process of answering the five phases of why the problem occurs is shown in figure 24.

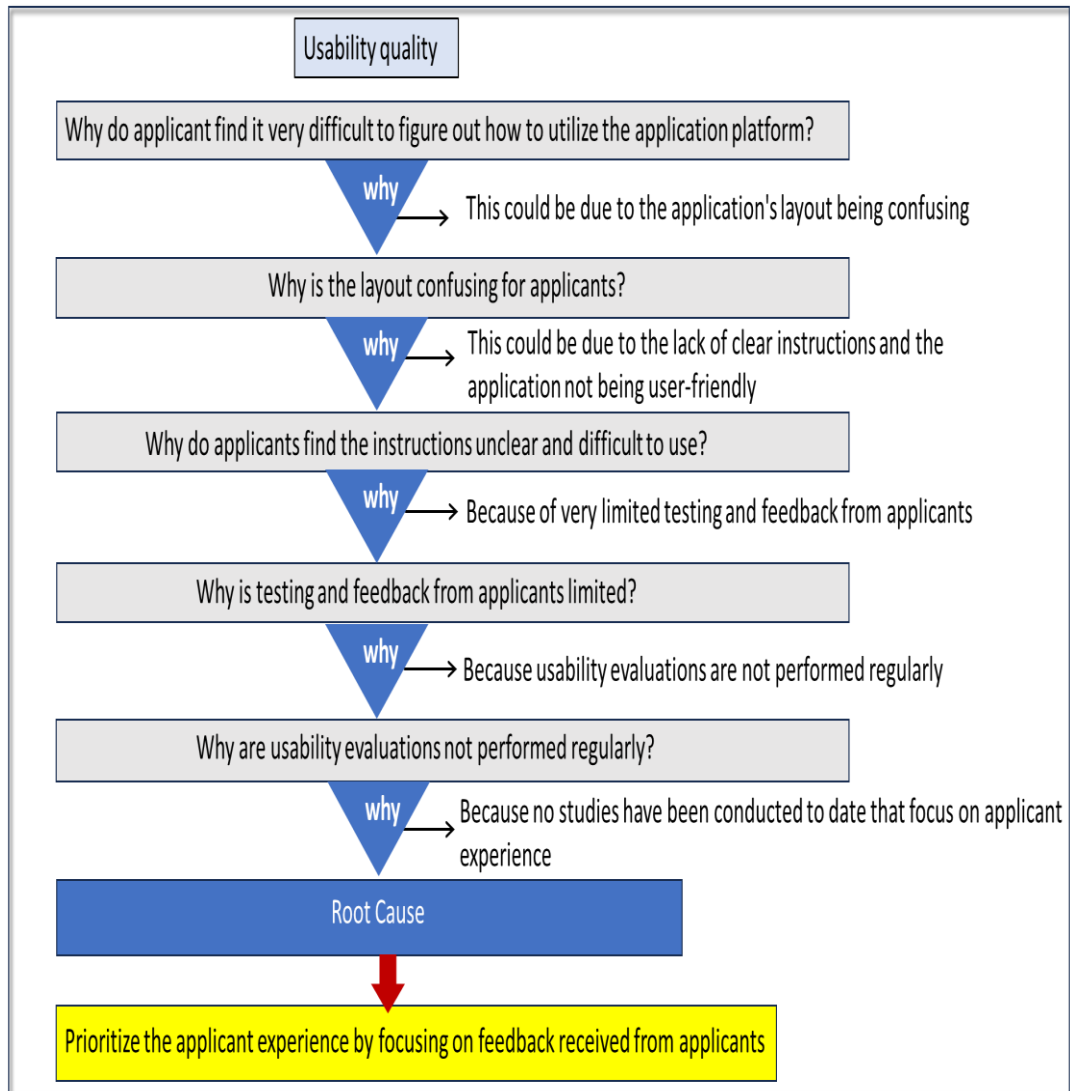


Figure 24: 5 Whys - Usability quality

Figure 25 illustrates the application of the 5 Whys technique, which was initiated by the first question in the information quality area, “Why is information from applicants missing during the application process?”.

Information quality

The 5 Whys question:

First reason: Why is information from applicants missing during the application process?

Answer: Because important information may be hidden in different parts of the application.

Second reason: Why is it difficult for applicants to find important information?

Answer: Because the information is sometimes poorly structured.

Third reason: Why is the information poorly structured?

Answer: This is because the content of the application does not always map based on applicant behavior and feedback.

Fourth reason: Why wasn't the content of the application based on applicant behavior?

Answer: Because a well-structured approach has not been implemented.

Fifth reason: Why has a structured approach to information layout not been implemented?

Answer: Because emphasis was placed on the technical development aspects rather than prioritizing user-centered design.

The process of answering the five phases of why the problem occurs is shown in figure 25.

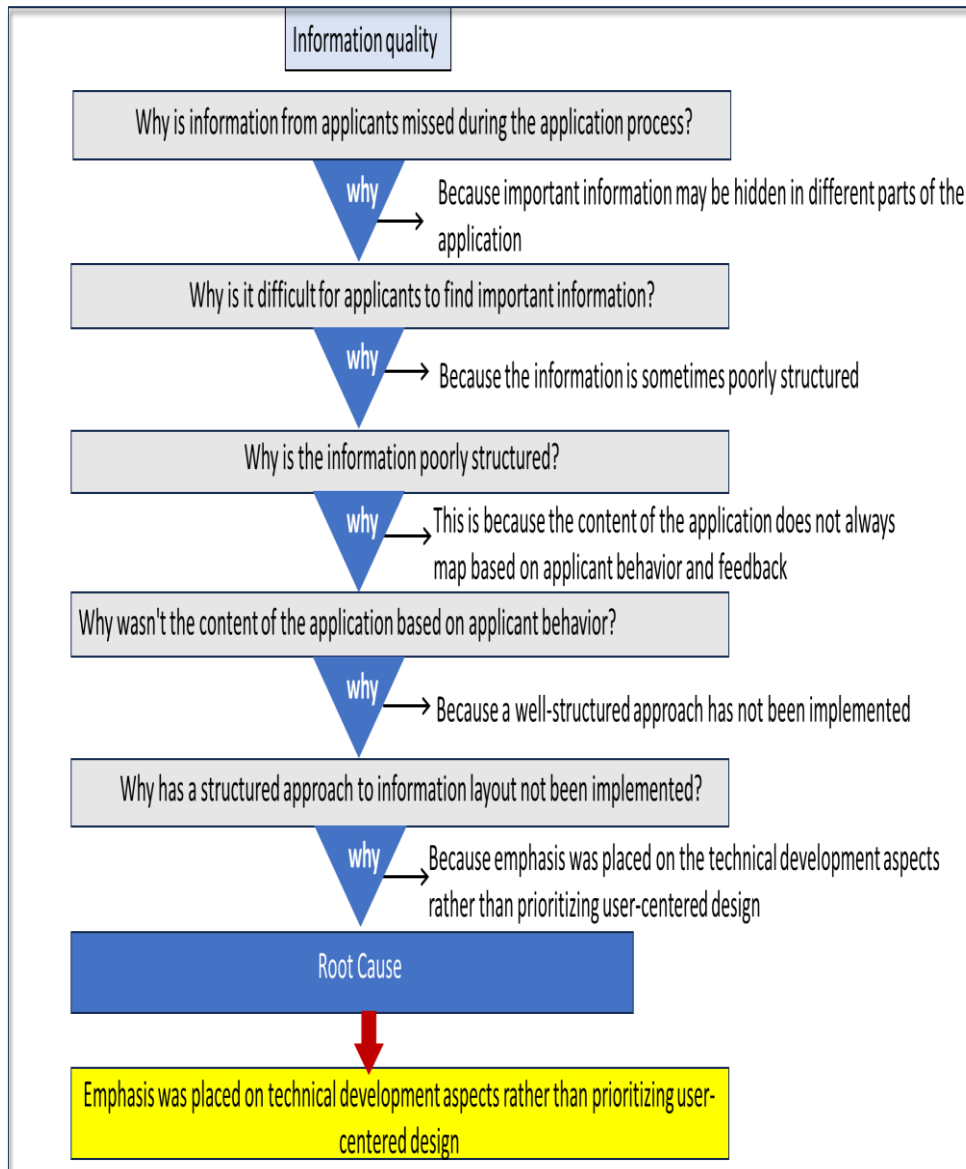


Figure 25: 5 Whys - Information quality

3.3.3 Conclusion

Root cause analysis using the 5 Whys technique's results shows that the challenges under the usability quality area; as of "Why applicants could struggle with utilizing the application platform?" it reveals that "it is difficult to understand the needs and preferences of the applicants due to not having a prior study addressing applicants' experience".

In the information quality, the fifth question, "Why has a structured approach to information layout not been implemented?" reveals that "emphasis was placed on technical development aspects rather than prioritizing user-centered design".

4 Development project

Students and their families often find the application to their desired learning institution is a stressful experience. The same scenario is also faced by prospects who apply to a vocational qualification. The process can be complex, involving multiple steps such as application submission, participating in language tests and status updates. Although RCA is widely used in healthcare, manufacturing, and quality control, the authors seek to identify the underlying reasons for the two main issues identified after performing the 5 Whys technique.

As the author already mentioned in the scope that due to the limitation in prototyping and carry out the implementation in this study, the author used the outcome of the 5 Whys to recommend the corrective actions that can be taken into the next phase of transformational change in the online application process. This is the foundation research which can contribute to the project carried out in future. The ideas and recommendations can be implemented using what this study suggested in order to increase application satisfaction through excellent customer services.

Therefore, the author transforms the top two areas which were identified in the 5 Whys technique, to creating action plans that can be used in the future implementation process.

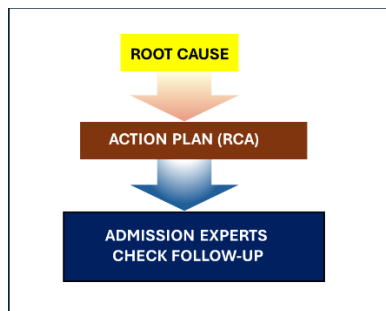


Figure 26: Root cause analysis structure plan

Based on identification of the two top areas in the 5 Whys techniques, the author then applied the RCA tool to focus on the methods that lead to the continuous improvement. It is essential to address the corrective actions which can increase efficiency, accuracy and applicant satisfaction.

Table 8: Identification of Root causes

Area	Root cause
Usability quality	Prioritize the applicant experience by focusing on feedback received from applicants
Information quality	Emphasis was placed on technical development aspects rather than prioritizing user-centered design

Table 9: Root cause analysis action plan

RCA Action Plan				
Area & purpose	Root Cause	Action Needed	Explanation	Owner
Usability quality	Prioritize the applicant experience by focusing on feedback received from applicants	Collect and analysis feedback from applicant on a regular basis.	By continuously gathering feedback from applicants, help to tap on their pain points and make informed decisions that meet their needs and preferences.	IT and Planning teams
		Automatically send easy-to-navigate FAQs to applicants as soon as application is received.	By sending automatically easy-to-navigate FAQs immediately once the applicants have submitted their application can help to make informed decisions that aligned with their needs and preferences based on their pain points.	IT and Planning teams
Information quality	Emphasis was placed on technical development aspects rather than prioritizing user-centered design	Conducting prototype testing with the applicant and implement their feedback in the design and development phase.	Involving applicants in the development process certainly ensures that the application will be designed with the end-user in mind rather than focusing solely on technical specifications.	Opintopolku team
		Improve visual layout and design of application portal.	By improving the visual layout and design of the application portal helps to make the interface more engaging and visually appealing, making it more applicant friendly.	Opintopolku team

4.1 Summary of Root cause analysis

Finding out the root cause in this study is to continuously look for corrective action to improve the online application process. Furthermore, a good quality service integration helps the admissions department to make the applicant feel valued and well-supported and at the same time ensures that the applicant is satisfied and confident with their application journey at Omnia.

The overall suggestions for future implementations in the usability quality are to:

1. Collect and analyze feedback from applicants on a regular basis to improve the process and usability.
2. Automatically send easy-to-navigate FAQs to applicants as soon as the application is received.

These recommendations certainly create a well informed decisions pertaining to applications related feelings and experiences. By automatically providing easy-to-navigate FAQs right after submitting their application, applicants will certainly feel supported and valued.

The overall suggestions for future implementations in the information quality are to:

1. Conducting prototype testing with the applicant and implementing their feedback in the design and development phases.
2. Improve the visual layout and design of the application portal to improve usability and aesthetics.

Involving applicants in the development process with the tailored application will surely help in terms of prioritizing user experience over technical specifications. At the same time the effort to improve the visual layout and design of the application portal will also create a more attractive and visually appealing user interface, making it easier to use and increasing applicant satisfaction in the future.

By implementing these suggestions, the admissions department can take the next steps towards creating positive user experience for prospective students, eventually leading to higher satisfaction and engagement throughout the application process.

Continuous Improvement is an ongoing cycle of improvement, utilizing feedback from applicants and stakeholders to continuously refine and enhance the application process at Omnia.

4.2 Validity and limitations

In qualitative research, trustworthiness and validity are added up in the concept of "trustworthiness ". In this study, trustworthiness is enhanced by ensuring participant anonymity, contributes to rigorous data processing and strengthens the trustworthiness of the study (Lincoln & Guba 1985, 290).

The study uses insights from the experiences of six students who applied for Omnia's Business qualification in August 2024 to assess reliability and validity. As the next intake date is not until March 2025, the results represent a preliminary assessment based on the most recent applicant data available, but although the sample size is limited, this approach provides fundamental insights into the online application process that can be used for future improvements.

According to Fusch & Ness (2018), data saturation is not determined by a fixed number of participants but by the point where no new information merges from further data collection (Fusch & Ness 2018).

The study therefore serves as a valuable pilot study, providing first insights that can inform a more comprehensive assessment in future intakes/application openings and may be applicable to other English language professional qualifications. These studies explored the authenticity of individual admission scenarios using participant interviews and feedback to capture applicants' authentic experiences with Omnia, so even if the studies were initially limited in scope, they may be useful for iterative improvement (Quintao, Andrade & lmeida 2021). This study serves as a primary study towards a more robust study with more comprehensive research in future.

5 Summary and conclusion

The objective of this study was to understand the applicants' experience during their application journey and determine whether they were satisfied throughout their journey or faced challenges and difficulties during the process. As there was no prior research on this topic, this study serves as a foundational investigation into applicant user experience with Omnia's online application system.

The study draws on concepts from understanding humans' behaviors and subjects in relation to their feelings and experiences that decide the satisfaction level they had with the services provided to them. By having this in the process, the concepts focus on establishing a good understanding of the online application and the related service interaction.

The study provided insight into enhancing applicant satisfaction through conducting qualitative interviews and identifying specific areas for improvement. Results showed that most applicants were generally satisfied with the application process. Applicants expressed satisfaction with the application platform itself and with the support they received from Omnia's admissions department. This supportive approach appears to help ensure a positive experience and boost applicant confidence in the admissions process. The results are summarized in Table 3 and visually depicted in Graphs 2 and 3, further illustrating applicant satisfaction.

This study utilizes the qualitative approach to conduct interviews and inductive thematic analysis that interprets the data gathered by interviewing applicants who had recently used the online application system. This approach allowed for in-depth exploration of the user experience, highlighting both possible and negative aspects. The findings were analyzed to identify recurring themes, trends, and opportunities to refine the application system. The empirical study consisted of the three phases of the double diamond process model; discover, define, and develop.

In the discovery phase the study aimed at identifying user expectations, gathering insights, and exploring their needs and aspirations. Qualitative interviews served as the primary method of data collected from six applicants who had recently completed the process by sharing their experiences, detailing which aspects of the system they found useful and which aspects they found challenging.

Emphases with applicants' experience in their online application journey, gives an opportunity to understand what it is like from the applicants' perspectives. Yet, this is a great way to capture invaluable opinions and true reflections of their experiences.

The interviews included five targeted questions:

Question 1: What sparked your interest in English-taught vocational training (VET in Business)?

This question explores the applicant's motivation and what led them to choose this program. Knowing their motivation for studying in this field will help you develop a communication strategy tailored to your prospective applicants.

Question 2: Can you describe your application process?

Question 2 b. On a scale of 1 to 5, how satisfied are you with your application process?

This question allows authors to address pain points such as issues or frustrations and address difficulties experienced by applicants during the online application process. This two-part question provides a detailed report on the application experience, captures satisfaction levels, and provides measurable feedback about the entire process.

Question 3: What did you think of the language test?

This question explores the accessibility and fairness of the language test to determine whether it was a barrier or an enabler for candidates.

Question 4: What would you say about the services you received from the admissions department during the application process?

This question focuses on the quality and effectiveness of the support services provided, highlighting how well the admissions team responded to the needs of applicants.

Question 5: Please let us know if you have any suggestions to improve the application process for future applicants. This open-ended question asks candidates to provide constructive feedback to ensure that processes evolve in line with user needs and expectations.

This phase continues formulating a hypothesis, conducting interviews, and using tools such as empathy maps and personas to deepen understanding and identify recurring themes.

The define phase involves using the inductive thematic analysis to interpret the raw data from the transcripts using the inductive thematic analysis, and also to visualize the journey mapping.

The results obtained from the thematic analysis revealed that most applicants were satisfied with their overall application journey. The focus was then moved to find ideas and suggestions for future improvement in the development phase. To achieve this, further analysis was done to tackle the problems using Fishbone and the 5 Whys solution methods. Root cause analysis was used to craft the action plan to be implemented in the deliver phase.

5.1 Shaping the Future Through Transformational Change

The result reveals positive feedback from applicants by indicating their overall satisfaction with the online application process and the support provided by the admissions team.

Nevertheless, this study has also suggested bigger achievements in the future by working on the usability and information quality for further enhancement of the online application process, ensuring a user-centric future-oriented process through transformational change. The proposed improvements obtained from the root cause analysis plan aims to enhance services through creating a user-centered experience at Omnia. Transformational change works for current and future transformation or reimagining to meet future demands and exceed user expectations.

The root cause analysis is focused on the future implementation of the two areas that were indicated in the root cause findings: usability and the information quality.

5.2 Proposals for future research

As mentioned before, due to the application period which will only be available until March 2025, prevents the author implementing and testing the proposed ideas on a small scale. Thus, while the results represent a preliminary evaluation based on the most recent applicant data available, with a limited sample size, this approach provides valuable insights to the online application process that can inform future improvements as more comprehensive data becomes available.

Therefore, this study suggests that continuously upgrading and improving Omnia's online applications process using applicants feedback and stakeholders can bring a great benefit in future. Additionally, focusing on empathy can improve both the external experience of applicants and the internal workflow of the admissions team.

Understanding the role of empathy in this context may shed light on how admissions departments can develop more responsive and effective services and follow the recommendations from this study, such as:

1. Collect and analyze feedback from applicants on a regular basis to improve the process and usability.
2. Automatically send easy-to-navigate FAQs to applicants as soon as the application is received.
3. Conducting prototype testing with the applicant and implementing their feedback in the design and development phases.
4. Improve the visual layout and design of the application portal to improve usability and aesthetics.

Incorporation the design thinking with strategic development can create a positive impact towards the application process and customer service with both immediate and long-term goals that improve the overall applicant experience, optimize internal processes, and build a sustainable innovative system for prospects.

5.3 Conclusion

In conclusion, this study has contributed to the improvement process in creating an applicant-friendly approach at Omnia.

The findings obtained through this study indicate valuable insights into measuring the effectiveness of Omnia's online application process indicates that many applicants are generally satisfied with the services provided throughout their application journey. Positive feedback gathered during interview sessions indicates that the overall applicant journey, especially in the vocational studies in business studies, is good and efficient.

Nevertheless, the study also highlights possible areas for ongoing and future improvement that are crucial for refining the process in order to meet the evolving needs of future applicants in the digital era.

The proposed actions, outlined in the root cause action plan, help to move towards improving consistently by taking into consideration the usage of both emphasize and user-friendly content in the process. This can be done by improving the user interface of the online platform and enhancing staff capabilities in providing consistent and clear guidance to the applicants.

Implementing these recommendations in future research could help the admissions department tackle problems related to online applications and customer service, reducing possible frustration among applicants.

Several suggestions which could help to boost the application process in order to meet the evolving expectations of future applicants have been proposed in this study for future research. Through proactive measures and user-centric solutions, the admissions department can serve former, current, and prospective students with more robust and responsive services.

References

Printed sources

Abbott Martin Lee & Jennifer McKinney, *Understanding and Applying Research Design*. Publisher: John Wiley & Sons, Incorporated.

Brad Jeavons, 2020. *Agile Sales: Delivering Customer Journeys of Value and Delight*. Edition:1. Productivity press.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. 2006. Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77-101.

Goodwin, K & Cooper, A. 2009. *Designing for the Digital Age: How to Create Human-Centered Products and Services*.

Handbook of Strategic Enrollment Management, Don Hossler and Bob Bontrager.

Leavy, P. (ed.) 2011. *The Oxford Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Oxford University Press, 2014.

Loannidou, F. & Konstantikaki, V. 2008. 4. Empathy and emotional intelligence: What is it really about? *International Journal of Caring Sciences*, 1(3), pp. 118-123

Pruitt J. & Adlin T, 2006. *The Persona Lifecycle: Keeping People in Mind Throughout Product Design*.

Ojasalo, K., Ojasalo, J. 2015. Adopting a service logic for marketing: An empirical study on developing a service design tool. *The Nordic School, Service Marketing and Management for the Future*, 309 - 334.

Saldaña, J. 2011. *Fundamentals of qualitative research*. Oxford University Press.

Stickdorn, M. & Hormess, M. & Lawrence, A. and Schneider, J. 2028-02-06. *This is Service Design Doing*. O'Reilly Media, Incorporated.

Walter, S. 2022. *User Journey Mapping*. SitePoint

Electronic Publication

Abdul Suleiman, Sep 23, 2024. What Is Usability And Why Does It Matter In App Development? <https://ux4sight.com/blog/what-is-usability-and-why-does-it-matter-in-app-development>

Belinga, A. 2024. What is Pain Point Analysis? <https://www.breakcold.com/explain/pain-points-analysis>.

Bhaskaran V. February 2024. Designing for Trust: The Crucial Role in Digital User Experiences. <https://uxpajournal.org/designing-for-trust-the-crucial-role-in-digital-user-experiences/>

Bhandari, P. ,June 19, 2020. What Is Qualitative Research? | Methods & Examples. <https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/qualitative-research/>

Bhandari, P. October 18, 2021. Ethical Considerations in Research | Types & Examples
Revised on October 1, 2024.

<https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/research-ethics/>

Bhat, A. 2024. QuestionPro. Qualitative Research Methods: Types, Analysis + Examples.

<https://www.questionpro.com/blog/qualitative-research-methods/>

Boyatzis, R. 1998. Thematic Analysis.

<https://www.moodle.is.ed.ac.uk/mod/resource/view.php?id=31269>

Braun, V & Clarke V 2022. Thematic Analysis: A Practical Guide. SAGE, 2021.

https://books.google.fi/books/about/Thematic_Analysis.html?id=mToqEAAAQBAJ&redir_esc=y

Brown, J-L. June 27th. 2018. Empathy Mapping: A Guide to Getting Inside a User's Head.

<https://uxbooth.com/articles/empathy-mapping-a-guide-to-getting-inside-a-users-head/>

Cedefop, 14 Oct 2019. VET in Finland: making a good system better.

[https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/press-releases/vet-finland-making-good-system-better#:~:text=Vocational%20education%20and%20training%20\(VET,studies%20immediately%20](https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/press-releases/vet-finland-making-good-system-better#:~:text=Vocational%20education%20and%20training%20(VET,studies%20immediately%20)

<https://www.justinmind.com/blog/double-diamond-model-what-is-should-you-use/20after%20basic%20education>

Chandraprabhudev, K. December 12, 2023. All You Need To Know About Fishbone Diagram in

2024. <https://www.henryharvin.com/blog/all-you-need-to-know-about-fishbone-diagram-in-2020/>

Cook, S. 2010. Customer Care Excellence: How to Create an Effective Customer Focus. 6th edition.

<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/laurea/reader.action?docID=620716&query=The+Customer+Service+Survival+Kit>

Costa, R. 2018. The Double Diamond model: what is it and should you use it?

<https://www.justinmind.com/blog/double-diamond-model-what-is-should-you-use/>

Creighton, S. 10th October 2022. Kaoru Ishikawa: The man who invented the fishbone

diagram. <https://blog.lifeqisystem.com/kaoru-ishikawa>

Shaffer, D. 2009-2011. The Applicant Experience

<https://www.ucas.com/file/237851/download?token=wl6lrXw0>

Denison, G. October 2, 2024. Ethical considerations in research: Best practices and examples.

<https://www.prolific.com/resources/ethical-considerations-in-research-best-practices-and-examples>

Kim Goodwin, K. & Cooper, A. 2009. Designing for the Digital Age: How to Create Human Centered Products and Services

<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/laurea/detail.action?docID=706506&query=research20plan%20using%20service%20design>

UXPin on 29th May, 2024. Double Diamond Design Process - The Best Framework for a

Successful Product Design. <https://www.uxpin.com/studio/blog/double-diamond-design-process/#:~:text=The%20Double%20Diamond%20model%20is,diamond%20that%20represents%20the%20problem.>

<https://www.uxpin.com/studio/blog/double-diamond-design-process/#:~:text=The%20Double%20Diamond%20model%20is,diamond%20that%20represents%20the%20problem.>

Education in Espoo, March 2024. <https://www.infofinland.fi/en/espoo/education-in-espoo#heading-c0aa8fa1-35c8-4e67-81fe-0e90c90f1507>

<https://www.infofinland.fi/en/espoo/education-in-espoo#heading-c0aa8fa1-35c8-4e67-81fe-0e90c90f1507>

- Emotional Design: Why We Love (or Hate) Everyday Things by Donald A. Norman (New York: Basic Books, 2004).
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/224927652_Emotional_Design_Why_We_Love_or_Hate_Everyday_Things
- Finnish National Agency for Education (EDUFI), Opintopolku.
<https://opintopolku.fi/konfo/en/sivu/what-is-studyinfo>
- Finnish vocational education and training experts' reflections on multiculturalism in the aftermath of a major reform.
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13636820.2022.2066559>
- GATA, W & GILANG O, 2, 2017. Journal of Theoretical and Applied Information Technology.
<https://www.jatit.org/volumes/Vol95No2/1Vol95No2.pdf>
- Gearon, M. November 17, 2022. 4 phases of the Double Diamond Model.
<https://mgearon.com/ux/double-diamond-model/>
- Gibbons, S. January 14, 2018. Empathy Mapping: The First Step in Design Thinking.
<https://www.nngroup.com/articles/empathy-mapping/>
- Glaser, B. & Strauss, A. 1967. The Discovery of Grounded Theory Strategies for Qualitative Research. http://www.sxf.uevora.pt/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/Glaser_1967.pdf
- Gothenburg. Accessed 21 September 2022.
https://gupea.ub.gu.se/bitstream/2077/35362/5/gupea_2077_35362_5.pdf
- Goulding, C. 2002. Grounded theory a Practical Guide for Management Business and Market Researchers.
<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/laurea/reader.action?docID=254745&query=Christina+Goulding>
- Guevara, P. 16 Sept 2024. A Foolproof Guide to Root Cause Analysis
<https://safetyculture.com/topics/root-cause-analysis>
- Hampshire College. <https://www.hampshire.edu/what-research>
- Heijden, H. 2009. Designing Management Information Systems. Published by OUP Oxford.
<http://ndl.ethernet.edu.et/bitstream/123456789/35614/1/88.Hans%20van%20der%20Heijden.pdf>
- Ilola, H., Lahtinen, J. & Saarinen, K. 2023. Vocational education meets the needs of the working life. Tampereen ammattikorkeakoulu 2023. <https://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-7266-93-9>
- Finnish VET in a Nutshell
https://www.oph.fi/sites/default/files/documents/finnish_vet_in_a_nutshell.pdf
- Fusch, P. I., & Ness, L. R. 2015. Are We There Yet? Data Saturation in Qualitative Research.
<https://www.studocu.com/en-us/document/shorter-university/madness-and-modernism/are-we-there-yet-data-saturation-in-qualitative-research/13538407>
- Jeff Duntemann. (n.d.). AZQuotes.com. Retrieved July 28, 2024.
https://www.azquotes.com/author/39265-Jeff_Duntemann
- Jehanne, M. October 12, 2023. Improve user experience: 10 strategic techniques to elevate UX. <https://contentsquare.com/blog/improve-user-experience/#:-:text=Understand%20their%20needs%2C%20preferences%2C%20and,content%20in%20a%20hierarchical%20manner.>

- Fitzsimmons, J. & Fitzsimmons, M. 1999. *New Service Development: Creating Memorable Experiences*.
<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/laurea/detail.action?docID=996305&query=Integrating%20Service%20Innovation%20and%20Service%20Design>
- Junginger, S. Taylor & Francis Group 2016. *Transforming Public Services by Design: Re-Orienting Policies, Organizations and Services Around People*.
<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/laurea/detail.action?docID=4756198&query=Human-Centered%20Design>
- Kitch, B. June 30, 2023. *Human centered design vs. Design thinking: an overview*.
<https://www.mural.co/blog/design-thinking-vs-human-centered-design>
- Klenke, K., Stigler Martin, S. & Wallace J, R. 2023. *Qualitative research in the study of Leadership*, edition 2).
<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/laurea/detail.action?docID=4500561&query=Basics%20of%20Qualitative%20Research,%20Straus%20>
- Knott, E., Rao, A.H., Summers, K. et al. 2022. *Interviews in the social sciences*.
<https://doi.org/10.1038/s43586-022-00150-6>
- Konopka K, October 20th 2023. *Directional and non-directional hypothesis: A Comprehensive Guide*.
<https://www.responsly.com/blog/directional-and-non-directional-hypothesis-a-comprehensive-guide/>
- Landry, L. 15, Dec 2020. *WHAT IS HUMAN-CENTERED DESIGN?* Harvard Business School
<https://online.hbs.edu/blog/post/what-is-human-centered-design#:~:text=Human%2Dcentered%20design%20is%20a,tailored%20to%20your%20audience's%20needs>
- Lee, C. 2023. *Art of Crafting User Stories: Unleash Creativity and Collaboration to Deliver High-Value Products with a Delightful User Experience*.
<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/laurea/detail.action?docID=30667485&query=empathy%20maps%20and%20the%20benefits>
- Lincoln YS, Yvonna S. & Egon G. - Known for "Naturalistic Inquiry," which is foundational in discussing trustworthiness (reliability and validity) in qualitative research.
<https://ethnographyworkshop.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/lincoln-guba-1985-establishing-trustworthiness-naturalistic-inquiry.pdf>
- Love, K & Pole, C. 2012. *Ethics in Social Research*, Studies in Qualitative Methodology Series, volume 12.
<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/laurea/reader.action?docID=1019347&query=research+ethics+in+interview>
- Malhotra, R. May 17, 2024. *User Interface/ Interaction Design Simplified (Zero → Hero)*.
<https://medium.com/@ronitmalhotraofficial/user-interface-interaction-design-simplified-3-n-4c8414abf584>
- Miller, K. 2020. *5 Examples of College Student Personas for Enrollment Marketing*.
<https://www.pepperlandmarketing.com/blog/5-examples-of-college-student-personas>
- MoldStud, 2 February 2024. *The ROI of UX Research in University Admissions*.
<https://moldstud.com/articles/p-the-roi-of-ux-research-in-university-admissions>

- Moon James, Feb 22, 2023. The Power of Information: What Really Leads to Success
<https://medium.com/@moonchangin/the-power-of-information-what-really-leads-to-success-2816069bd4dc#:~:text=Information%20is%20crucial%20when%20it,any%20information%20that%20is%20useful.>
- Nielsen, J. 1994, 23. Usability engineering.
https://books.google.fi/books?hl=en&lr=&id=95As2OF67f0C&oi=fnd&pg=PR9&dq=Nielsen+usability+method&ots=3dAABscuZs&sig=NGk4BpCJCHkyzhzrKaKfGWSYjo4&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q=Nielsen%20usability%20method&f=false
- Norman, D & Nielsen, J. August 8, 1998. The Definition of User Experience (UX).
<https://www.nngroup.com/articles/definition-user-experience/>
- Omnia. Solutions Together For All. <https://www.omnia.fi/en>
- Patel, S. 2016. 6 Good Things Crowdfunding Is Doing For Startups [online] www.entrepreneur.com Available at: <https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/278181> [Accessed 31 Jul. 2018]
- Practical Human-Centered Design: The Evolution of the Designer's Role. TVS Next, Sep 5, 2023. https://medium.com/@tvs_next/practical-human-centered-design-the-evolution-of-the-designers-role-ea531c62491d
- Polaine, A., Løvlie, L., & Reason, B. 2013. Service Design : From Insight to Implementation. <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/laurea/detail.action?docID=1131102&query=Andy%20Polaine>
- Qualitative coding and thematic analysis in Microsoft Word. Directed by Dr Jarek Kriukow. Accessed 31 July 2020. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vCE6zhdTHAI>
- Quintão, C., Andrade P & Almeida, F. 2022. How to Improve the Validity and Reliability of a Case Study Approach?. (2021). *Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies in Education*, 9(2), 264-275. <https://doi.org/10.32674/jise.v9i2.2026>
- Rain, J-P. 2017. Defining student journey mapping in higher education. JOURNAL OF EDUCATION ADVANCEMENT & MARKETING VOL. 2, NO. 2, 106-119 AUTUMN/FALL 2017. https://www.henrystewartpublications.com/sites/default/files/EAM2.2_DefiningstudentjourneymappinginhighereducationThehowtoguideforimplementationoncampus.pdf.
- Riger, S., & Sigurvinsdottir, R. 2016. Thematic analysis. In L. A. Jason & D. S. Glenwick (Eds.), *Handbook of methodological approaches to community-based research: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods* (pp. 33-41). Oxford University Press.
- Rosala, M. August 17, 2022. How to Analyze Qualitative Data from UX Research: Thematic Analysis. <https://www.nngroup.com/articles/thematic-analysis/>
- Rosala, M. & Pernice, K. 2023. Understanding the connection between Persuasion and User Experience in education: A study on the Learning Management System Moodle. <https://lnu.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1874245/FULLTEXT01.pdf>
- SARDJONO, W. & PERDANA, W. January 2024. INTERACTIVE USER INTERFACES IN THE DIGITAL WORLD MAKE THE APPLICATION ATTRACTIVE AND EASIER FOR USER ACCESS <https://www.jatit.org/volumes/Vol102No1/4Vol102No1.pdf>
- Seitama, A. & Hakoköngäs, E. Finnish vocational education and training experts' reflections on multiculturalism in the aftermath of a major reform. *Journal of Vocational Education & Training*. Volume 76, 2024 - Issue 3. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13636820.2022.2066559>

Service Design Trend Predictions 2024: What to Expect? (Feb. 8 2024). Published by Spotless. <https://medium.com/spotless-says/service-design-trend-predictions-2024-what-to-expect-21fea7fd3a79>

Shikht, I. What is Human-Centered Design and Why it Matters. <https://exoft.net/what-is-human-centered-design/>

Cedefop 2016. Spotlight on VET Finland. Retrieved from www.cedefop.europa.eu. Read 20.2.2017

Survey: Espoo has increased its appeal the most among large Finnish cities <https://www.helsinkitimes.fi/finland/finland-news/domestic/25015-survey-espoo-has-increased-its-appeal-the-most-among-large-finnish-cities.html>

Stenström, M. & Virolainen, M. 2014. The current state and challenges of Vocational Education and Training in Finland. Research report published 2014 by Nord-VET. University of Jyväskylä. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/275800605_The_current_state_and_challenges_of_vocational_education_and_training_in_Finland

Taiichi Ohno, Wikipedia contributors 2024 March 28. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taiichi_Ohno

Tamunotonye, R., April 14, 2018. Information Overload Kills. <https://blog.prototypr.io/information-overload-kills-b633a99be7c9>

The Double Diamond, British Design Council in 2005. <https://www.designcouncil.org.uk/our-resources/the-double-diamond/>

Traeger, S. April 23, 2024. Root Cause Analysis with 5 Whys Technique. <https://reliability.com/resources/articles/5-whys-root-cause-analysis/#:~:text=By%20repeatedly%20asking%20%E2%80%9Cwhy%E2%80%9D%20at,just%20addressing%20surface%2Dlevel%20symptoms>

Usman Ghani, May 6, 2014. 5 CUSTOMER SERVICE TIPS FOR UNIVERSITIES HANDLING STUDENT ADMISSIONS. <https://www.customerservice.ae/resources/featured/5-customer-service-tips-for-universities-handling-student-admissions/>

Vocational Education With A Finnish Touch. https://www.theseus.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/227727/hh_vocationaleducation_verkko.pdf?sequence=2&isAllowed=y

Vogelsang H, February 23, 2024. Enabling Agile Development With The Double Diamond Approach. <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/enabling-agile-development-double-diamond-approach-von-vogelsang-sez1f/>

Walker, J. Feb 18, 2021. Keeping the human touch for customer experience in the digital age. <https://www.orange-business.com/en/blogs/keeping-human-touch-customer-experience-digital-age>

Wetter-Edman, K. 2014. Design for Service: A framework for articulating designers' contribution as interpreters of users' experience. <https://gupea.ub.gu.se/bitstream/handle/2077/35362/?sequence=5>
User Interviews 101. Rosala, M. & Pernice, K. September 17, 2023. NN/g. <https://www.nngroup.com/articles/user-interviews/>

Why choose vocational education and training? <https://www.hel.fi/en/childhood-and-education/vocational-education-and-training/why-choose-vocational-education-and-training>

Figures

Figure 1: Application process flow chart	9
Figure 2: Student selection work flow	9
Figure 3: Key concepts (Stickdorn).....	13
Figure 4: Fishbone diagram (modified)	19
Figure 5: Steps in Root cause analysis process	20
Figure 6: Illustration of the 5 Whys technique.	21
Figure 7: Double Diamond model, by British Design Council (modified).	23
Figure 8: Service Design processing flow (Double diamond model, modified)	24
Figure 9: Questions raised in the interview sessions	27
Figure 10: Empathy map.....	29
Figure 11: Persona represents male students.	31
Figure 12: Persona represents female students.	31
Figure 13: Steps in inductive analysis (source: Braun and Clarke,2006) modified.	34
Figure 14: Extract from interview transcriptions 1 - 3.	35
Figure 15: Extract from interview transcriptions 4 - 6.	36
Figure 16: Extract from data cleaning.....	36
Figure 17: What sparked your interest in English Vocational (VET) in Business?	37
Figure 18: Applicants remark on their application journey.....	38
Figure 19: Participants' remark on the satisfaction level using the 1 to 5 Likert scale	39
Figure 20: Illustration of language proficiency level.	39
Figure 21: Services received throughout their application journey.	40
Figure 22: Illustration of applicant journey.....	42
Figure 23: Brainstorming session to identify the root cause for future improvement.	46
Figure 24: 5 Whys - Usability quality.....	49
Figure 25: 5 Whys - Information quality	51
Figure 26: Root cause analysis structure plan	52

Tables

Table 1: Types of qualitative research methods, illustrated by Bhat	18
Table 2: Details of participants who attended the interviews	27
Table 3: Principles involved in this study	32
Table 4: Applicants' satisfaction level	38
Table 5: Issues raised during brainstorming session	44
Table 6: Voting structure	46
Table 7: Summary of the brainstorming	47
Table 8: Identification of Root causes	52
Table 9: Root cause analysis action plan	53

Appendices

Appendix 1: Interview questions 69

Appendix 2: Brainstroming session Appendix 2: Brainstroming session 70

Appendix 3: Interview transcriptsAppendix 3: Interview transcripts 71

Appendix 4: Interview transcripts (continue)..... 72

Appendix 5: Data cleaning using thematic analysis..... 73

Appendix 1: Interview questions

Question 1. What sparked your interest in English Vocational (VET) in business?

Question 2a. Could you describe your application journey?

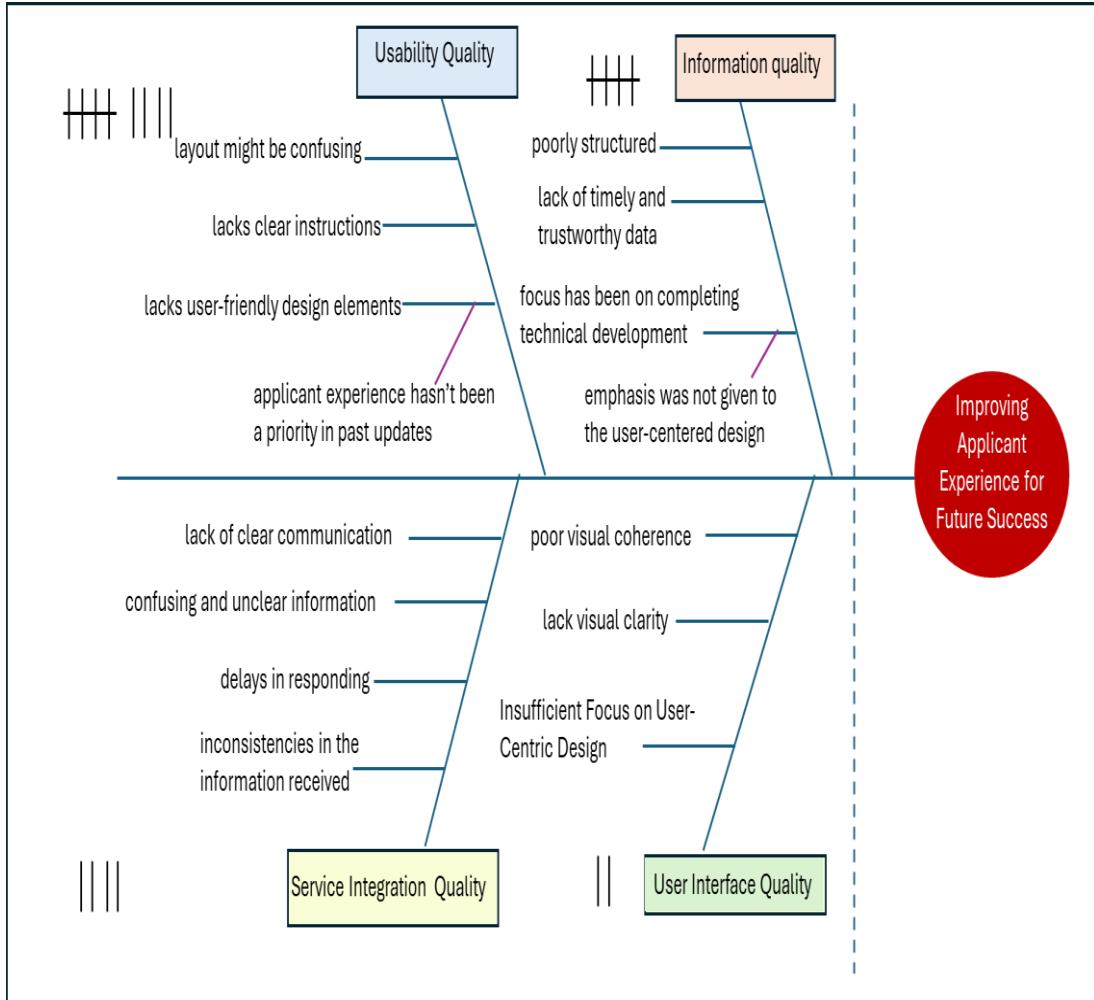
Question 2b. What would be your satisfaction level with your application journey on a scale of 1 to 5 ?

Question 3. How did you find the language test?

Question 4. What can you say about the services you received from the admissions department throughout your application journey?

Question 5. What suggestions, if any, would you offer to improve the application process for future applicants?

Appendix 2: Brainstroming session



Appendix 3: Interview transcripts

Question 1: What sparked your interest in English Vocational (VET) in business?	
<p>Student 1 I'm coming from Myanmar and 17 years old. I came to Finland to study vocational studies because I am interested in hands-on learning. I was interested in this course because it is in English medium and did not require higher level in Finnish language skills like other studies. You know, for me, as I as I have so like I started with a finished high school but my Finnish is not that good so I just tried to search the English Bay studies dependent and I found omnia. So I applied it and I got checked in in business but I got rejected in the icb. Interest in hands-on learning, wanting to shift to a new profession or enhance current qualifications for career advancement.</p> <p>Student 2 I am coming from Sri Lanka and 17 years old. I apply to business studies because I wanted to do business in future. I was on the I'm glad you're finishing but I came here and so I was like, uh, let me do something that's gonna find me a skill that is gonna help me to be vulnerable in the market. Twist and I've always had interest in business and I yeah, this is it at first I got rejected. But they told me if they get an opinion, they will contact me and they did when I was just feeling like. This is good course for me to learn all about business. I also heard about omnia through my friends so I wanted to study here also. I have many friends from air langka who have studied in practical nurse and cooking studies. I also have 2 friends now studying in restaurant cook. Knowing that VET qualifications offer practical skills and increase employment opportunities.</p> <p>Student 3 I am from Kenya and 17 years old. I saw like my Finnish is a little bit better. Actually, in my home country, I had not finished my high school. I also have a few friends studying with me in business study. Like Finland and this is a good study for me because it is free for all and I also have friends and stay with them in apartment. It is easy for me. I also can work in internship and get experience so I like this course.</p>	<p>17 years old English medium Poor Finnish language skills Easy to study in business Course is free Friends studying in Omnia</p> <p>17 years old Wanted to start own business Wanted to study in English medium Easy to study in business Poor Finnish language skills Friends recommend Also have friends studying in Omnia</p> <p>17 years old I like Finland and the study is free I have friends studying in Omnia. Wanted to study in English medium</p>

Question 2: Could you describe your application journey?	
<p>Student 4 I am from Libya and 17 years old, I mean, well once I saw that the necessary language requirement is English and the teaching is in English I quickly apply because it is easy for me to study in English so that's why I applied.</p> <p>Student 5 I am from USA and also 17 years old. I find studying in English is much more convenient and my Finnish language is not that good even I have studied 6 months in tukio. I studied Finnish as my second language and I find it very difficult for me. My mother tongue is English and I wanted to study in English so I applied. I applied many other institutions but I got a place in Omnia. Vocational colleges are like a diving a chance to study and work experience through innovative internship causes and this is like a stepping stone.</p> <p>Student 6 I am from Filipine and I am 17 years old. I have studied on year in tukio but I don't like it anymore and I find it difficult to study in Finnish. When I saw there is an English language so I applied to Omnia. I wanted to learn in English so I applied. I applied many other institutions also but I got a place in Omnia.</p>	<p>English medium Poor Finnish language skills 17 years old Language requirement is English and the course is in English. I like to do internship course because I can learn and do the studies. Wanted to study in English medium 17 years old Want to study in English medium. I want to learn and work in internship. Good to get a job after the course. Poor Finnish language skills. 17 years old Wanted to study a course in English Clear and precise No issues it was pretty easy</p>

<p>Student 2 It required effort to gather all the necessary documents, but it felt worth it in the end. Let me know on spot, is able to fill in everything or you take a couple of hours or a day. It's yeah, so like I've a lot of experience of feeling forms and applications. Things like I can I apply a dessert for Finland myself and apply to school, so it was like so easy, so it was easy for me. The instructions was clear and easy to follow. For me it takes a few hours to complete the form but it was ok for me.</p> <p>Student 3 It was cold, okay, yeah, okay. Which way is coming here into Asia? OK, so I think that you can jump to the second question now, how would you describe your biggest inquiry, what do you think steps with you when you first sit on your computer and you know fill in the online application? I received great assistance from the admissions team, which made the journey much easier. For me, also that it feels so clear the process. Put the files on, but it was okay, okay so the questions are not so like, very tricky type of questions, really easily straightforward question. Yeah, it was easy to understand.</p> <p>Student 4 The process was clear, and I had no issues submitting my application.</p> <p>Student 5 Collecting transcripts, references, or other necessary paperwork was time-consuming. It required effort to gather all the necessary documents, but it felt worth it in the end.</p> <p>Student 6 It was cold, okay, yeah, okay. Which way is coming here into Asia? OK, so I think that you can jump to the second question now, how would you describe your biggest inquiry, what do you think steps with you when you first sit on your computer and you know fill in the online application? I received great assistance from the admissions team, which made the journey much easier. Just needs to collect the document first, then just straight.</p>	<p>Gathered all the documents. Clear, precise and easy to understand No issues it was pretty easy Clear, precise and easy to understand Great support from the admission team Clear instructions And easy to follow Took time to gather certificates but it was not that difficult. It was cool, no issues, good instructions and easy to understand.</p>
--	---

Question 2: What would be your satisfaction level with your application journey on a scale of 1 to 5?	
<p>Student 1 4</p> <p>Student 2 4</p> <p>Student 3 4</p> <p>Student 4 4</p> <p>Student 5 4</p> <p>Student 6 4</p> <p>Question 3: How did you find the language test?</p> <p>Student 1 The questions was abit difficult in Finnish but the English was ok. At first also panicking but after read the instruction properly I was able to write with calm. The time table given was suitable and the test day was also ok. It's very convenient. It was okay. Some parts were challenging, but I think I did my best.</p> <p>Student 2 The questions was abit difficult in Finnish but the English was ok. The time table given was suitable and the test day was also ok. Some parts were challenging in Finnish test.</p> <p>Student 3 English it was like learning in fifth grade or something. It was super easy but the Finnish was abit taught for me. I would say I had studied it before in school and when I came and I did the test I was like, wow, please consent. Honestly, it was tougher than I expected. I'm a bit worried about my performance.</p> <p>Student 4 The test was easy I find the English was easy and the Finnish a little bit difficult. I received fast and friendly support during the test like I have to</p>	<p>good good good good good good good The English test went well, Finnish test was quiet difficult The English test went well, Finnish test was quiet difficult I find the English test was easy. The English test went well, Finnish test was quiet difficult The English test went well, Finnish test was quiet difficult</p>

Appendix 4: Interview transcripts (continue)

change my test time and they just change the time for me. I struggled with some of the questions,	Finish language was very difficult
Student 5 The test was easy I find the english was easy and the Finnish a little bit difficult. I was very nervous during the Finnish test because for me it was so difficult and I think level B1.1. is really very difficult.	The English test went well, Finnish test was quiet difficult
Student 6 The test was easy I find the english was easy and the Finnish a little bit difficult. I was spending a lot of time learning in general, like reading and gathering vocabulary and that helps me a lot. It was a good experience overall, even if I found some parts difficult. I did practiced a lot.	Good service: friendly, helpful and efficient
Question 4. What can you say about the services you received from the admissions department throughout your application journey?	
Student 1 I was having some problem with the language test timetable, and when I approache the admissions department, they help me to change it from afternoon to morning. It was really helpful for me because I have planned to go to a movie with my friends in the evening. Thank god. Otherwise I might Miss A movie. The admission department was so cooperative and friendly. To me it was not that long. I took advantage of the waiting time to continue learning and enhancing my skills, ensuring that I would be well-prepared regardless of the outcome.	Good service: friendly, helpful and efficient Good service: friendly, helpful and efficient
Student 2 For me it was ok. After the test I was a bit nervous waiting for the results and I really want to get to be selected. So I write email asking the admissions departmenta about my result, they told me my application is still under process and they will inform once the decision is made. They answer me quickly and I feel ok and less scared. They are very friendly.	Good service: friendly, helpful and efficient Good service: friendly, helpful and efficient
Student 3 Once when I send them questions about the language certificate, they answered very fast and it was helpful. To me it was not that long. It gave	Good service: friendly, helpful and efficient

me just enough time to stay focused and excited about the outcome without feeling anxious.	
Student 4 Ok for me also. It felt reasonable, and I appreciated the efficient process.	Good service: friendly, helpful and efficient
Student 5 For me it was ok. After the test I was a bit nervous waiting for the results and I really want to get to be selected. So I write email asking the admissions departmenta about my result, they told me my application is still under process and they will inform once the decision is made. They answer me quickly and I feel ok and less scared. They are very friendly	Online test
Student 6 To me it was not that long. It gave me just enough time to stay focused and excited about the outcome without feeling anxious.	Online test and except IELTS
Question 5. What suggestions, if any, would you offer to improve the application process for future applicants?	
Student 1 Online test can be helpful because I an coming from joensuu very far.	Give opportunity for students in the waiting list.
Student 2 On line test will be much more convinient for foreing students who are interested to apply to Omnia. I am coming from north so it might be good if I can do online test. Maybe it might give light some opportunity for the international students from other countries as well. Exempting IELTS also can be helpful.	Online test More study places in future.
Student 3 Maybe the next time give chances quickly for the students in the waiting list. Because some other students who already accept but didn't come to school so the place just to waisted.Two of my friends who were on the waiting list didn't get a call but in my class there were students who did not come to study.	Reducing the Finnish language requirement More study places in future.
Student 4 On line test will be much more convinient for foreing students who are interested to apply to Omnia.	
Student 5	

Appendix 5: Data cleaning using thematic analysis

17 years old	17 years old	17 years old	17 years old	17 years old	17 years old
Wanted to study in English medium	Wanted to start own business	I like Finland and the study is free	Language requirements in English and the course is in English.	Wanted to study in English medium.	Wanted to study a course in English
Poor Finnish language skills	Wanted to study in English medium	I have friends studying in Omnia	Low level of Finnish language requirement	Low level of Finnish language requirement	Low level of Finnish language requirement
Easy to study in business	Easy to study in business	Wanted to study in English medium	I want to learn and work in internship. Good to get a job after the course.	Clear, precise and easy to understand	Clear, precise and easy to understand
Course is free of charge	Poor Finnish language skills	Poor Finnish language skills	Clear, precise and easy to understand	Clear, precise and easy to understand	Clear, precise and easy to understand
Friends studying in Omnia	Friends recommendation	Clear, precise and easy to understand	Clear, precise and easy to understand	Clear, precise and easy to understand	Clear, precise and easy to understand
Low level of Finnish language requirement	Also have friends studying in Omnia	No issues it was pretty easy	No issues it was pretty easy	No issues it was pretty easy	No issues it was pretty easy
Clear, precise and easy to understand	Gathered all the documents.	Great support from the admission team	good	The English test went well, Finnish test was quiet difficult	The questions in Finnish test was challenging
No issues it was pretty easy	Good	I find the English test was easy.	Friendly	Friendly	Friendly
Good	Clear, precise and easy to understand	The English test went well, Finnish test was quiet difficult	Fast respond/Efficient	Fast respond/Efficient	Fast respond/Efficient
The English test went well, Finnish test was quiet difficult	No issues it was pretty easy	The questions in Finnish test was challenging	Good	The English test went well, Finnish test was quiet difficult	Fast respond/Efficient
The questions in Finnish test was challenging	Good	The English test went well, Finnish test was quiet difficult	Fast respond/Efficient	Fast respond/Efficient	Fast respond/Efficient
Friendly	The English test went well, Finnish test was quiet difficult	Fast respond/Efficient	Fast respond/Efficient	Fast respond/Efficient	Fast respond/Efficient
Helpful	Fast respond/Efficient	Fast respond/Efficient	Fast respond/Efficient	Fast respond/Efficient	Fast respond/Efficient
Fast respond/Efficient	Fast respond/Efficient	Fast respond/Efficient	Fast respond/Efficient	Fast respond/Efficient	Fast respond/Efficient
Online test	Helpful	Helpful	Helpful	Helpful	Helpful

Online test and except other language certificates such as IELTS and TOEFL	Give opportunity for students in the waiting list.	as IELTS and TOEFL
--	--	--------------------

I want to learn and work in internship.

Poor Finnish language skills

Poor Finnish language skills

Poor Finnish language skills

Poor Finnish language skills

What sparked your interest in English Vocational (VET) in business?

Age group

17 years old

17 years old

17 years old

17 years old

17 years old

17 years old

Reason to choose to Business studies

Wanted to study in English medium

Wanted to study in English medium

Wanted to study in English medium

Wanted to study in English medium

Wanted to study in English medium

Low level of Finnish language requirement

Low level of Finnish language requirement

Low level of Finnish language requirement

Friends studying in Omnia

Friends studying in Omnia

Friends studying in Omnia

Easy to study in business

Course is free of charge

I like to do internship course

Question 2 a). Could you describe your application journey?

Application journey

Clear, precise and easy to understand

Clear, precise and easy to understand

Clear, precise and easy to understand

Clear, precise and easy to understand

Clear, precise and easy to understand

No issues it was pretty easy

No issues it was pretty easy

No issues it was pretty easy

No issues it was pretty easy

Question 2 b). What would be your satisfaction level with your application journey on a scale of 1 to 5?

4 = good

4 = good

4 = good

4 = good

4 = good

4 = good

Question 3: How did you find the language test?

The English test went well, Finnish test was quiet difficult

The English test went well, Finnish test was quiet difficult

The English test went well, Finnish test was quiet difficult

The English test went well, Finnish test was quiet difficult

The English test went well, Finnish test was quiet difficult

The English test went well, Finnish test was quiet difficult

The questions in Finnish test was challenging.
The questions in Finnish test was challenging.
The questions in Finnish test was challenging.
The questions in Finnish test was challenging.
Question 4. What can you say about the services you received from the admissions department throughout your application journey?

Friendly
Friendly
Friendly
Friendly
Friendly
Friendly

Helpful
Helpful
Helpful
Helpful
Helpful
Helpful

Fast respond/Efficient
Fast respond/Efficient
Fast respond/Efficient
Fast respond/Efficient
Fast respond/Efficient

Question 5. What suggestions, if any, would you offer to improve the application process for future applicants?

Online Language Assessment
Online Language Assessment
Online Language Assessment

Exclude other language certificates such as IELTS and TOEFL
Exclude other language certificates such as IELTS and TOEFL

Provide opportunities for students on the waiting list.

Provide more study places
Provide more study places
Provide more study places
Provide more study places

Others

Gathered all the documents.

Age group /17)	6
What sparked your interest in vocational English training (VET) in business?	
Wanted to study in English medium	6
Low level of Finnish language requirement	3
Friends studying in Omnia	3
Easy to study in business	3
Course is free of charge	3
I like to do internship course	1
I want to learn and work in internship.	1
Poor Finnish language skills	4
Application journey	
Clear, precise and easy to understand	5
No issues it was pretty easy	5
Question 2 b). What would be your satisfaction level with your application journey on a scale of 1 to 5?	
good =level 4	6
Question 3 : How did you find the language test?	
The English test questions were fair	5
The questions in Finnish test was challenging	5
Question 4. What can you say about the services you received from the admissions department throughout your application journey?	
Friendly	6
Helpful	6
Fast respond/Efficient	5
What suggestions, if any, would you offer to improve the application process for future applicants?	
Online Language Assessment	3
Exclude other language certificates such as IELTS and TOEFL	2
Provide opportunities for students on the waiting list.	1
Provide more study places	4