



GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING IN THE DEGREE PROGRAMME OF FACILITY MANAGEMENT

Riitta Flink
Development project
October 2008



**JYVÄSKYLÄN
AMMATTIKORKEAKOULU**

Ammatillinen opettajakorkeakoulu

Tekijä(t) Flink Riitta	Julkaisun laji Kehittämishankeraportti	
	Sivumäärä 35	Julkaisun kieli Englanti
	Luottamuksellisuus <input type="checkbox"/> Salainen _____ saakka	
Työn nimi Guidance and counselling in the Degree Programme of Facility Management		
Koulutusohjelma Ammatillinen opettajakorkeakoulu,		
Työn ohjaaja(t) Maunonen-Eskelinen Irmeli		
Toimeksiantaja(t) Partanen Irmeli		
Tiivistelmä <p>The Degree Programme of Facility Management- koulutusohjelmasta tehtiin arviointiraportti joulukuussa 2007, jonka mukaan koulutusohjelman ohjauksessa on ilmennyt ongelmia. Koulutusohjelmaan osallistuneet opiskelijat kokivat, ettei heille ollut tarjolla riittävää määrää informaatiota ja ohjausta. Tämä tutkimus pyrkii tunnistamaan ohjauksessa esiintyvät ongelmakohdat opettajan näkökulmasta ja esittämään parannusehdotuksia.</p> <p>Tutkimuksen teoreettisena osana on käsitelty ohjauksen tarvetta yleisesti, ohjauksen tarvetta monikulttuurillisille ryhmille, koulutusohjelmassa käytettäviä ohjausmenetelmiä ja ohjaajien roolia ohjausprosessissa.</p> <p>Tämä tutkimus oli laadullinen tutkimus, joka tehtiin haastattelemalla seitsemää koulutusohjelmassa ohjaajana toimivaa opettajaa. Osa haastateltavista toimii myös aineopettajina MFA -opiskelijoille. Haastattelu tehtiin kyselylomakkeen avulla, jonka kaikki haastatteluun osallistuvat saivat etukäteen luettavaksi.</p> <p>Haastattelun yhteydessä ilmenneet ongelmakohdat käsitellään tutkimuksen loppuosassa. Näitä ovat mm. ohjaajien välinen kommunikaatio-ongelma ja vähäinen kulttuurien tuntemus ja koulutuksen tarve. Viimeisen kappaleen ja loppusanojen yhteydessä pohditaan mahdollisia ehdotelmia ongelmien poistamiseksi.</p>		
Avainsanat (asiasanat) Ohjaaminen, ohjaamisen ongelmat		
Muut tiedot Haastattelulomake		

Author(s) Flink Riitta	Type of Publication Development project report	
	Pages 35	Language English
	Confidential <input type="checkbox"/> Until _____	
Title Guidance and counselling in the Degree Programme of Facility Management		
Degree Programme (Vocational Teacher Education/Student Counsellor Education/Special Needs Teacher Education) Vocational Teacher Education		
Tutor(s) Maunonen-Eskelinen Irmeli		
Assigned by Partanen Hilikka		
Abstract <p>There was an evaluation report done in December 2007 about the Degree Programme of Facility Management. According to the report there are some gaps in guidance and counselling process of the programme. Students participating on the research claimed that there was not enough guidance and counselling offered for them. The aim of this study is to identify the problems that occur in counselling from the teacher's point of view and find propositions to solve the gaps.</p> <p>The theoretical frame for this research was to define the general need of guidance and counselling and need for multicultural counselling as well as counselling methods used in the Degree Programme and the roles of the counsellors.</p> <p>This research was a qualitative study. The method used in the research was an interview, which was done by seven teachers, who all are involved in some level of the counselling process of the Degree Programme. Before the interviews were held, a questionnaire form was sent to all the respondents beforehand.</p> <p>In conclusion of this report, the problems that were found based on the interviews, were listed and propositions of solutions were given. These problems included e.g. the lack of communication between the parties, lack of cultural knowledge and need for training in several issues.</p>		
Keywords Guidance and counselling		
Miscellaneous The questionnaire form		

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1) INTRODUCTION	5
2) GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING IN THE UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES	7
3) NEED OF GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING	8
3.1 Need of multicultural counselling	10
4) GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING IN MARATA	12
4.1 Multicultural counselling in MFA	16
4.2 Counselling methods used in the Degree Programme of Facility Management	19
4.3 Roles of the counsellors	25
5) GAPS IN GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING OF THE DEGREE PROGRAMME AND PROPOSALS FOR DEVELOPMENT	26
6) CONCLUSION	32
7) REFERENCES	34
8) APPENDIX	35

1. Introduction

According to the Ministry of Education, The Universities of Applied Sciences are responsible for evaluating their level of education and the standards intermittently both by themselves as well as with the need of outside evaluators. In Jyväskylä a cross evaluation system is used between the schools as part of their evaluation processes. In the School of Tourism, the evaluation of the Degree Programme of Facility Management took place in December 2007.

The report of the cross evaluation was done by a group of people, who all have the knowledge of the school systems and evaluation processes and were both from different positions and from different units. Beside the cross-evaluation, the school had to evaluate the Degree Programme by themselves. This was done by a group of people, whose task was to find out about the Degree Programme by questionnaire. The questionnaire was given both to 16 members of the staff as well as for 7 students from the fourth year. As a result, some gaps occurred in the evaluation report. One of the problem areas was found in the guidance and counselling of the students. This thesis is researching more about the guidance and counselling of the Degree Programme of Facility Management and trying to give some possible views of developing the process.

This thesis was done on the basis of the interview with seven teachers, who all are involved in the guidance and counselling of the Degree Programme. Some of the teachers are also involved in teaching of the MFA students. All the teachers involved in counselling have different specialities according to guidance process at the school and are involved in different phases of the process. Some of the teachers are more involved in the process on the first two years, where the biggest part is concentrating more on general information about the school, study process and techniques as well as building up the personal study plan.

Formally only 28% of the respondents were dealing with the third year students and the graduating students. However, informally the actual percentage was 58% of the teachers to whom the students turned to when facing problems. Although every one of

them had certain position with given responsibilities, most of them shared the same views about the problems that occur in the process of the guidance and counselling with the MFA students.

The interview questions were sent beforehand and the actual interview lasted approximately one hour per person. As this thesis is dealing with the subject that is problematic for the school, no names are mentioned when the answers are summarized.

2. Guidance and counselling in the University of Applied Sciences

The goal of the University of Applied Sciences is to introduce the necessary demands by both skills and theories in order to respond for the needs of the working life (Ministry of Education 1999,26). One of the aims is to emphasise the individuality of the person, whereas the other aims are to develop flexible, multiple and yet individualised Degree Programmes and to train and teach students to become experts in their own field of studies. (Turkulainen, 1999,18-19)

These aims are linked to the goals of the student guidance. The guidance and the services included are expected to develop according to the needs of the development of the Degree Programmes and the changes on them. At the same time than the Degree Programmes have expanded their possibilities, a bigger need occurs for more precise guidance both in general studies and career guidance has occur. (Moitus, Huttu, Isohanhi, Lerkkanen, Mielityinen, Talvi, Uusi-Rauva & Vuorinen 2001, 23-55) The importance of counselling is to give directed goals not only for the studies but also for the future career. Along the way the student learns to find out the necessary subjects to take as well as possible tools for them. (Maikkola Merja, 2004, 6-8)

According to Onnismaa and Pasanen the philosophy behind the guidance and counselling is to offer help. It is seen as a process of offering the help by giving time, respect and attention to a person who is in need of it. It is not seen as teaching where information is transferred from one person to another but guidance in order to give different choices and possibilities to another person. The main goal of the counselling is to offer support and help for the students in their chosen path. It is not helping out only in the study processes but also on the professional development level and in personal life. According to the authors counselling is also one way to give criticism for the students in order to find out whether they have achieved their goals and aims and if they have changed their ideas or ideology behind it. (Onnismaa, Pasanen, 2000, 123-125)

3. Need of guidance and counselling

Lerikkanen explains in his book how the need of the guidance and counselling varies in different phases of the study process. First phase starts before the actual studying. It is the need of getting the information about the school and contents of the Degree Programmes. This phase is followed by the phase of starting the studies and questions around the learning environment and possibilities on it. During the study process the needs are more individual as every student have their own desires for practical training places, exchange programmes offered, making final thesis according to their own interests as well as for the future career possibilities. The final phase relies not only in the end of the studies but also after the students are in working life. There might be a need for further training and guidance on the possibilities of it.(Lerikkanen, 2002, 50-51)

The School of Tourism is using a four phase strategy in their counselling plan. When reviewing the phases of the counselling and the need of guidance and counselling, all the phases are subdivided into smaller phases in order to get more precise plan for guidance and counselling. In general the first phase occurs by introducing the school for the applicants on the time of the application period and time before that. People, who are responsible of delivering the information needed are named. There are magazines, brochures, Internet pages and private as well as group counselling offered about the school and the Degree Programmes. The aims of these ways of delivering the information are to give clear ideas about the possibilities of the studies and career as well as to pre-inform students to choose necessary subjects e.g. in the upper secondary schools and vocational schools. The school also promotes itself by taking part in different fairs for the future students. (Jamk, Plan for guidance and counselling 2007-2008, 2-3)

The second phase happens in the beginning of the studies by introducing the learning environment and the systems used at the school. In this phase the important part is also making the personal study plan for each student individually. According to the plan for guidance and counselling 2007-2008 the third phase is more cut in pieces including the

beginning and ending of each year, periods of practical trainings and exchange programmes until graduation. All through the studies the personal study plan works as a tool for future improvements and developments hand in hand with a regular tutor meetings. The last phase occur in the graduation, where all the students are interviewed by a group of teachers. The aim is to find out what are the possible continuing studies needed. (Jamk, Plan for guidance and counselling 2007-2008, 2-3)

In the interview the teachers agreed that the part of the general information is well organized in their school as it gives the students a clear picture of general matters and their studies. It also gives the students information about the staff of the school and to whom to turn in different matters. However, some comments were given about the amount of time used for the general information during the first two years. Approximately 57% of the respondents believed that more focus should be given in the beginning of the studies already to career counselling and its meaning as the definition of career counselling was seen unclear. Beneath are straight quotes from the teachers:¹

“General guidance of the students include information about the general matters and introduction of the people to whom to turn on difficult matters.”

“What is meant by career counselling could be one of the points on the first year as well.”

”In the beginning the part of the general information is taking too big part, I think we should concentrate more to begin the career counselling and explain that, it is simply unclear.”

“Students are very interested in replacement of studies what they have done before as well as different possibilities to go abroad. These facts should be told on the first year to give them a better clue.”

¹ In this research the grammar mistakes of straight quotes are not corrected by the author.

“It is important that the guidance and counselling for the Universities of Applied Sciences is started already in vocational schools and upper secondary schools so that they actually get better view about the schools and the subjects.”

As it is written in the plan for the guidance and counselling 2007-2008, there are magazines, brochures, Internet pages and private as well as group counselling offered about the school and the Degree Programmes. This part of counselling becomes essential if it is done properly. When the students get enough information about the subjects and schools, they have a chance to find out already the subjects of their own interests both in vocational schools as well as in upper secondary schools. However it has to be taken into consideration that not very many students are aware what they want at that point of their lives. It is important to explain the meaning of career counselling and not to forget that many students are unaware of career aspects and how all the studies are linked to each other. Both of these matters above become even more essential, when teaching multicultural groups, where the demands vary even more than inside domestic groups. It is often forgotten and ignored that multicultural groups have even less information about general matters, not only in school environment but also in new cultural environment. They have to adapt much more information concerning the rules and regulations when becoming a part of a culturally different society.

3.1 Need of multicultural counselling

”The continuously growing mobility of people with increased contacts among different cultures in the world and the emergence of multicultural education and labour market in all European countries require that we develop our communication skills and competences so that they are appropriate for living, studying and working in culturally diverse societies” (Launikari, 2005,151). According to Launikari, cultural challenges can also be seen as a big part of student counselling. It has become a more current issue lately when the borders have opened up and giving chances for people to move freely to another country. (Launikari, 2005, 151)

”When counselling the multicultural group, it is clear that the distinction between the counsellor and the client is that they differ from each other in a way that differences are generated by a certain culture via the effects of socialization or childrearing in a certain ethnic community” (Puukari Sauli, www.profesijupasauli.it/konferencija/06/13.ppt).

The difference in multinational counselling is often that both the counsellor and the client have either different ethnic or cultural backgrounds or they speak different languages. As well as in other types of guidance and counselling the multinational counselling requires warm and open relationship between the counsellor and the client. It is important to let the clients reveal their feelings and their problems that are common in their own cultural behaviour. The relationship has to be built in a way, that the clients feel safe and secure as they are already facing the pressure of other culture in every day life. It is extremely important to have some knowledge of other cultures, when working as a counsellor. A lot of misunderstandings can be avoided with open discussions. It is essential to find out more about cultural differences and the ways people behave. (Lairio, Puukari 2001)

There are several studies made out of cultural differences. One of the most well-known studies is made by Geert Hofstede, a Dutch researcher, who has conducted a wide research about cultures and inter-cultural communication. Hofstede created a model to find out the differences between several cultures and their effects on people's behaviour in different situations. Originally there were four dimensions mentioned. They were power-distance, individualism, masculinity and uncertainty avoidance. All these dimensions create boundaries between nations that can be seen e.g. in business negotiations and inter-cultural communication. Later on more dimensions were created and more precise research was done by several other researchers. (Geert Hofstede, <http://www.geert-hofstede.com/>)

Hofstede's power-distance defines how the members of a community or an organization accept the hierarchy of power and authority. Countries that belong to a high power

distance automatically think that there is a clear distinction between people who are more powerful than others. In these countries also the educational systems are seen in a way that the educators are more powerful and therefore the respect for teachers is higher than in low power distance countries. Individualism against collectivism on the other hand is comparing the relationships of the cultures to one another. In collectivism cultures the family and people around are more important and it is common that all the decisions that are made are shared by the nearest family and relationships are have a priority in front of other things. In individualism on the other hand people are more mission and goal oriented and decisions are made by themselves. In collectivism communication is seen indirect and it can often lead to misunderstanding with the individualists. (Geert Hofstede, <http://www.geert-hofstede.com/>)

Other two dimensions mentioned by Hofstede are masculinity against femininity and avoiding uncertainty. In masculine countries people are more driven with accomplishments and success whereas in feminine countries they are more keen on quality of life and caring for others. In masculine countries the culture in education can be seen in very competitive students and in the eagerness of getting high grades and goals and aims with high ambition. Often cultures that are more masculine are also seen avoiding the uncertainty, where the person is trying to avoid all possible situation where uncertainty can be noticed by others. (Geert Hofstede, <http://www.geert-hofstede.com/>)

4. Guidance and counselling in Marata

According to Lerkkanen, it is important that after the need for guidance and counselling is identified, the actual counselling process is divided into a number of parts to get a clear view of the process. Lerkkanen uses three parts in his division: guidance and counselling of learning and studying, career counselling and supporting personal growth and development. All these parts are found in the study process, some even occur at the same time. Lerkkanen believes that guidance and counselling plays an important role in the learning process. In his opinion the biggest aim of the guidance is to offer care,

support and hope. He believes that it is extremely important for counsellors to create possibilities instead of just giving advice. As for development of guidance and counselling, Lerkkanen aims for the changing of the behavioural progress of the student and for developing both the social and communicational skills. In addition, Lerkkanen points out that it is important to give the students a clear idea of their life situations and help the students to set up reasonable goals and aims for the studies and in pursuing them. On the bigger picture guidance is not only meant for the studies and graduating but also for future plans. With proper counselling the students are given objective information when needed. Furthermore, students are also advised of their abilities and amenities as well as to help them to recognize their own limits and possibilities. (Lerkkanen, 2002, 46-49)

The Degree Programmes of Marata are built in the way that the students have a possibility to choose their own paths along the way of the studies. Similarly than with Lerkkanen the guidance for the students is divided into four parts: general guidance of the school and studying in the University of Applied Sciences, study counselling, supporting guidance and counselling and career guidance. Each part has a certain structure planned. The structure of the counselling includes the areas of responsibilities for each named person, their job description and the resources that can be used for them. (Jamk, Plan for guidance and counselling 2007-2008, 2)

General guidance: General guidance includes the information on schools and their systems. This guidance is mainly given in the beginning of the studies, where the responsibility relies both with the tutor teachers and students as well as with the office staff. The students are informed of the methods of studying as well as the electronic services of the school. (Jamk, Plan for guidance and counselling 2007-2008, 2)

Study counselling: The aim of the counselling is to guide the students in the whole study process. The responsibility is with every teacher. Teachers should discuss with the students in the beginning of the studies about the effects of their choices and importance

of subjects. Another important role as a learning environment is with Mara-business clinic, where the students can get practical skills of the subjects by doing different projects e.g. surveys, analyses and product development for companies. (Jamk, Plan for guidance and counselling 2007-2008, 2)

Supporting guidance and counselling: The aim of this type of guidance and counselling is to develop the acknowledgement and improve one's own skills and abilities. The student has a possibility to have discussions at any point of the studies, especially if any gaps occur. The responsibility of this area is with the supporting counsellor, who also meets the students when there is a need for personal matters. (Jamk, Plan for guidance and counselling 2007-2008, 2)

Career counselling: The goal in this form of guidance is to acknowledge the professional skills and abilities of the students, planning the career possibilities and to help in making choices related to those plans. The responsibility of this guidance is mainly with the tutoring teachers, who are helping the students for the first two years of the studies. For the third and final year the responsibility is transferred to a named person , who is responsible for not only counselling and guidance process but also to see the end of the studies. Other important guides in career counselling are training co-ordinators, co-ordinator of international affairs and the teacher responsible of research studies. (Jamk, Plan for guidance and counselling 2007-2008, 2)

When reading the evaluation report, the problem area of guidance and counselling can be found in the beginning of the third year studies. According to the evaluation report all the people interviewed agreed that the students are getting enough general information about the school and the studies, as there are separate studies provided in the first year that are supporting the students to make their own personal plans for their studies. After the first year the students are going to their exchange year and to their practical training places. It seems that the biggest problems occur after their return to the school. Most of the students felt they did not get enough help in order to

find the right placement and after getting back to the school, they felt lost. The problematic area seems to be the career counselling and guidance. The relevant question that should be asked is whether the students understand the meaning of the career counselling at all. Other questions, that need to be answered are whether the students realize the importance of the necessary subjects to be chosen and whether the teachers are capable of counselling these matters. Career counselling can be a tricky form of guidance as many of the students do not have a clear plan in the beginning of their studies. Some of them are not even completely sure what they are studying. It appears however that according to the cross evaluation report the people interviewed answered that the guidance and counselling in their opinion is first class during the first year. As the problem appears to be in the beginning of the third year after the practical training, one might wonder whether the students had too big expectations about the practical training and workplaces or maybe even about the industry they are studying.

Even though in the evaluation report the thesis writing and getting the guidance for it seemed to be very clear and well organized, interestingly most of the respondents of the interview agreed that problems occur when dealing with the thesis process. One of the respondent clearly admitted that there is not enough guidance about the process and possible counselling methods to use for it since the beginning, as it would be essential to give the clear picture of the process already starting from the first year. That way the students could use the knowledge of it when applying for the practical training places and get the benefits out of their trainings when the time of writing arrives.

General guidance and counselling process can be seen differently among the foreign students. When looking at the differences in cultures and educational systems Hofstede dimensions can be used as a tool. A lot of misunderstandings can be avoided when identifying which countries belong to a certain division. For example, in decision making the Northern countries are seen as individualistic countries, where the students are making the decisions mostly by themselves. In Asian countries, which are a part of

the collectivism, things are done differently. Bigger decisions are done with a lot of thinking and consultations with the family.

The other example of culture affecting schools and school work is the perception of time. Different ideas of time can affect others in a negative way as punctuality, keeping the timetables and attitude for cancellations or reorganizing things vary hugely in different cultures. In South European countries it is seen on daily basis that many meetings start late and timetable of school work is not as strict as for example in Finnish culture. This is why people coming from these countries might not have a serious attitude towards the timetables and can be surprised about the fact the the deadlines are meant to be kept. It is important for the counsellors to realise all these factors influencing the foreign students and to make sure that they also understand what is expected of them inside this educational culture they are coming into. At the same time than the European countries have opened their borders for people to move freely between the countries, the rest of the world is supporting students to experience other cultures and educational systems by offering a lot of exchange programmes around the world.

4.1 Multicultural counselling in MFA

The number of foreign students is rising clearly in Finland where several different Degree Programmes are available in English in the Universities of Applied Sciences. This is why it is fair to say that it is essential for the schools to be ready not only to teach, but also to give guidance and counselling for foreign students. It is not only because their educational systems vary, but also because of their cultural backgrounds, values and attitudes are often different what Finnish students have or are used to.

When looking at some answers received from the interview, it can be said that even though the School of Tourism is aiming more and more to become internationally acknowledged, there is still some insecurity among the teachers as well as with the fellow students when talking about multicultural groups. Comments by the respondents on the subject were similar to each other.

“There is a big need for us to be trained more properly to understand the cultural groups in our school as they all are different.”

“The roles are different when comparing different cultures, as well as their study techniques. In some cultures the guidance is seen more important than on the other ones. In Finland the counselling is more self directed where the students are supported to take the responsibility on their own decisions. This however is not the way of dealing things in many other cultures.”

“It is clear that there are a lot of problems for the foreign students to find out practical training places because of the language needed.”

“There is a big need for the training and understanding the cultural differences as the relationship with the foreign students seem to be more distant, maybe more official. Somehow some of them are more careful when giving their opinions.”

“Teaching multicultural groups can be hard, when there is not enough information about the cultural ways. Also counselling them in personal matters is different than with the Finnish students as they are not that eager to talk.”

“ Course of international skills could be included as compulsory studies for the first year students, as well as studying in multicultural groups.”

“I think the biggest gap for me personally is the lack of cultural knowledge and in some views the language skills.”

“I believe, that the multicultural counselling is organized well in our school. It is very clear and helps the foreign students, I see no problems.”

It is clear that most of the respondents seem to be uncertain about counselling the multicultural groups. They are aware of the fact that they have insufficient knowledge of other cultures and they need more training for it as it can be seen, that counselling people from different cultures varies according to the culture. In other cultures people are more keen on showing their feelings and are more direct than in other ones, where for example it is regarded as a shame to show the uncertainty of one's own situation and goals and aims of studies. One aspect coming out of the interview was the fact, that the teachers believe for the usefulness of having a compulsory course on international skills for the first year students. This would probably not be helpful only for the students to have a better general understanding of other cultures, but also for having an effect on helping the students to understand cultural differences e.g. in group assignments or other school work. All the respondents agreed that the cultural differences can not only be seen in behaviour, but also in study techniques as well as in making decisions about the studies.

“The virtual study surrounding seems to be kind of weird for some foreign students, I think more work should be done in order to make it clear for everybody.”

“I do not think that we have really thought that the cultural differences can be seen also in study techniques, things related for studying are very different in different countries.”

“The amount of the foreign students is rising continuously. In Finland, the responsibility lies on own decisions, not many cultures have so flexible systems than we have as we have a lot of possibilities.”

Many foreign students consider the Finnish educational systems and equipment of schools with high standards. It should be remembered by the teachers as well as the counsellors that it cannot be taken for granted that all the school systems and possibilities of training places or even computer systems are clear enough for the foreign students. It is essential that there is enough time used for the multicultural counselling, not only in personal matters but also in general matters. After the need of

the counselling is identified for all possible groups, clear plan of the guidance and counselling should be written separately for all parties, including multicultural groups.

4.2 Counselling methods used in the Degree Programme of Facility Management

As the scale in general guidance and counselling is wide, in this research it is narrowed for the guidance methods used in the Degree Programme of Facility Management at the University of Applied Sciences in Jyväskylä. The methods mentioned in their plan for guidance and counselling include personal study plan, building up the portfolio and tutoring either by tutor students or the teacher.

A Personal study plan

A personal study plan indicates a plan that the students make written plan for themselves about the content of their studies and the duration and extent of it. This plan can be used as a tool, as it gives the students an overall timetable for their studies. This plan can change according to situation and eventually can be extended as a portfolio. (Maikkola, Olkkonen, 2004, 198-200)

One of the starting points in the guidance and counselling process for the tutors is to find out an approximate plan for the student about the desire of the studies. Making the study plan gives the student an individual instruction for what is needed to finish the goals of the study process. The personal study plan can be started during the first year and be expanded during the studies. As a base of the personal study plan the tutors are interviewing and questioning the students about their goals, desires and aims for their studies and possible future career. As it is easier said than done, it is essential that the importance of the study plan is clearly explained to the students who might see it as an unnecessary item because of the lack of understanding. Therefore, it should be treated as a compulsory part of the studies. Also, the help from the tutor students should be used as they already have first hand information on how it should be done. It is essential for the tutors to realize that they should return frequently to the study plan and question the students of their achievements (Maikkola, Olkkonen, 2004, 198-200)

The personal study plan have a significant role in tutoring in the Degree Programme of Facility Management as it is started to be built up already since the beginning of the first year of studies. It involves not only a lot of support but also monitoring and constant developing from the teachers side. Although the personal study plan is clearly having an important role, it also divided opinions among the respondents as follows:

”Personal study plan is used but it is not that useful in MFA as there is not that much possibilities to choose as the program is so limited.”

”Yes, the personal study plan is used since the beginning of the studies and developed all the time, but somehow the goals and aims are not that clear to everybody.”

”Personal study plan is clear and useful to everybody. I think we have succeeded well on it.”

”The biggest problem in this organization is transferring the information. I do not get enough information what has been said to the students before and there is a clear problem keeping in touch with the students when they are studying abroad. I also find out that I can not see the personal study plans of the students, which might help me. Unfortunately there are limited rights, only some people can get that information”

”Well, it is working for the first two years, looks like there is not enough tools to keep it going well in the end of the studies.”

When approaching the plan from the professional studies view, it is necessary that all members of the process are included and the information is transferred to all the parties sufficiently. These members are the student, tutor and the educational centre as well as the organizations and companies where work placements are done. The companies should be well informed about the aims and the goals of the studies and the Degree

Programme to get their full commitment for the training part. Therefore the personal study plan should not only be seen as a guide for the studies but also as a realistic view of the person's own skills and capabilities. (Onnismaa, Pasanen 2000, 100-101)

Portfolio

Another way of observing the students' skills and capabilities can be seen in the form of a portfolio. Linnakyla describes the portfolio as a collection of assignments that the students have chosen to show for the outsiders. It is a wider version of the study plan. It includes some of the best work with the explanation of the actual study process. The portfolio can give a view for the readers of the new challenges and the ideas that students' have. The format of the portfolio is not relevant. It can be done as a file, video or any format figured as long as the process of choosing can be seen. It is essential that the student discusses about the strengths and weaknesses along the study process and evaluates themselves. (Linnakyla, 1994, 10-12)

The portfolio can be divided into two different kind: basic portfolio and portfolio that is officially shown. The first one contains all the materials included in the study process e.g. The personal study plan, assignments and reports. The latter one is a collection of the most important materials chosen from the basic portfolio. This kind of portfolio can be done in a way that it is ready to be shown not only for the teachers but also for employers as a supportive tool when applying for a job. The aim of the portfolio in both cases for the student is to recognise their own strengths and to acknowledge the areas that are in need of development in the study process. It shows the teachers the process wider and deeper than exams held in the end of the courses. (Maikkola, Olkkonen, 2004, 201-202)

When talking about the methods used for the counselling in the Degree Programme of Facility Management, it is clear that the portfolio is not so common at the moment as the strategy is to support the students more likely to have open discussions instead of writing. Not having the portfolio in use though was clearly dividing the opinions of the teachers as some of them seemed to believe in the importance of the portfolio.

"There is no portfolio. All the work done is in R5 programme saved but not combined as one file."

"Unfortunately portfolio is not in use, I think E-portfolio could be taken more seriously into consideration"

"There is no need for portfolio to anybody, as we recommend open discussions."

"It is so up to the students to use the portfolio. Although that would be extremely important for the students to realize their own development it is a punch of extra work beside all the other assignments, maybe the students would be overloaded?"

According to Maikkola and Olkkonen, the portfolio itself is one tool for counselling. When counselling meetings are regularly organized the students can get a better base for their own portfolios. The counsellor should not only advice how to do it but also give clear deadlines for the students and evaluate them time after time. It is a lot easier in case the counsellor has own experiences of making the portfolio. (Maikkola, Olkkonen, 2004, 201-202)

Using the portfolio as a tool can be a tricky thing. On one hand, it can be seen a very clear guideline for the students to follow their own study path. It also encourages people to finish their tasks on time as portfolio is normally done with certain deadlines. However it can be seen as extra work both from the students and the teachers side as it has to be monitored continuously or it will lose its whole meaning. Even though it might be a lot of extra work, it could give the students a better view of their capabilities and time to change the possible weaknesses they have before the actual graduation. This all will have an effect later on, not only when applying for the job but in the future job itself.

Tutoring

Both the personal study plan and the portfolio need more effort from the students, whereas tutoring is more teachers' and tutor students' responsibility. It is a way of helping the student along the whole way of their study processes including the making of the study plan. It is helping out in studies and learning processes in order to support the students in their choices. It is also giving advice on how to make the final thesis and how to get the necessary information for it, as well as giving career counselling. As problems occur in every phase of the study process, tutoring happens from the beginning of the studies until the end. (Maikkola, Olkkonen, 2004, 12)

According to Maikkola and Olkkonen, tutoring can be seen as four different divisions. The first division is called learning content tutoring. It occurs especially in the beginning of the studies. The goal of this type of tutoring is to give clear information about the content of the studies and to help motivating the students for their learning processes. The second type of tutoring is to give guidance both in general issues of the studies and in academic skills. The third part of tutoring is called psychosocial tutoring. Psychosocial tutoring is an unofficial counselling done in private between the tutor and the user in order to discuss about all possible problems in studying as well as in private life situations. The last division is career counselling which aims to find the purposes and goals of the studies as well as the capabilities and strengths of the student. (Maikkola, Olkkonen, 2004, 12-29, 151-152)

Tutoring, which is mainly concentrating on the first two years of the studies was generally seen well organized and clear by 77% of the respondents. A lot of comments on behalf of it came by the teachers, who credited the tutor students as in their opinion the students seem to be well motivated and enthusiastic about their role. The negative comments were mainly concentrating on tutor teachers.

"Tutoring would need more development, some of the teachers are not committed enough for this Degree Programme and the tutoring of it, I think it would be important for me to get some support from my colleagues."

"I honestly believe, that not all the tutor teachers realize that they should concentrate also for the professional view of the studies."

"Teachers who are tutoring should be also trained for it some how."

"One problem occurs in the fact, that the teachers who are teaching the MFA students are not tutoring teachers."

"All the teachers should be involved in tutoring, not only tutoring teachers, everybody should take responsibility"

"The problem in tutoring is clearly between the second and third year where the style of guidance and counselling changes. And no, it is not clear for the students what is meant by career counselling, definitely not."

The interview shows up also that The University of Applied Sciences offers a course on the planning of the studies during the first year. The aim of this course is to help in problems, that occur on the content of the Degree Programme and to offer different choices for the optional studies. Every class has their own named teacher operating as a tutor. Students see the tutor regularly both independently and in smaller group meetings. The tutor teachers are organizing meetings among themselves to discuss possible problems and developing the tutoring and issues related to it. A clear problem occurs on the fact that mostly the tutoring teachers are not actually teaching the students of the Facility Management studies, which does not necessary give the tutoring teachers a clear picture what is needed from the professional counselling side for the students. Somehow also the roles of the teachers seemed to be quite unclear not only for themselves but also from the other teachers' point of view, as some teachers were not clearly aware of the roles of the other teachers.

4. Roles of counsellors

Maikkola and Olkkonen view counselling as giving guidance and goals where the biggest issue lies on the fact how the counsellors themselves see their relationship to the job. It all lies on the counsellors, the amount of commitment and role they are willing to take and what are their capabilities. It is up to them whether they are actively involved in guidance or just offering support for the students and helping them to find out the answers for their problems by themselves. According to the research of Jyrhama R, mostly three different types of counsellors can be found. The first type of counsellors are eager to give direct information and straight answers. The theories behind the guidance are short and practical, whereas with the second type there are more theories and models used to give the students different choices for the problems as well as guidance to help them in thinking by themselves. The third type of counsellors values criticism and instead of giving direct information they like to lead the students to find out answers. This kind of counselling is more likely researching the problems and letting the students to realise by themselves what needs to be done or leave undone. (Maikkola, Olkkonen. 2004, 143-144)

The roles of counsellors vary according to the actual job descriptions and responsibilities of the counsellors. When concentrating e.g. on the career counselling the teachers seemed to find more supportive role where they are having discussions with the students in order to find out their preferences and then support them in finding out solutions by giving guidance in e.g. where to look for the information, what kind of studies are needed, etc. As to the question on how the counsellors see themselves, the answers were rather similar. All the respondents agreed that it is essential to give some clear answers for certain things, e.g. general issues of the studies. It is also very important to listen carefully to the ideas and feelings of students and support them in thinking by themselves. Although all the respondents seemed to agree that it is the best way to make the students learn, 28% of interviewees admitted that in many situations they are too lazy to push the students to think by themselves and are giving straight answers too easily.

“Well yes, I give a variety of choices as I think students should use their own heads. But unfortunately it is not always that easy, sometimes I am too lazy or busy as the timetables are very strict and there is a lot of work. Yes, then I probably give too easily just straight answers. Sometimes it does not help anyway if you try to push them to think, it just takes too much time. Mostly we think together though.”

The roles are more simple for example in guidance of the thesis and questions related to it as 77% of the respondents were more eager to give straight and clear answers for the students. Giving straight critic was seen more useful for it as writing the thesis is a long process and it was often too easy to get confused and lose the track. However all the respondents agreed that plenty of choices are given and all realistic choices supported. The same more simple role was seen in general and practical matters, as the students also need quick answers.

5. Gaps in guidance and counselling of the Degree Programme and proposals for development

In the beginning of all the interviews the goal of this thesis was explained and all the respondents were introduced quickly and briefly to the evaluation paper and to the problems that occur in it considering the guidance and counselling in the Degree Programme of Facility Management. When the respondents were questioned about their own opinions on the problems they personally see in counselling, the answers led mostly to psychological factors and the need of training on dealing them than to studying itself. Although the School of Tourism has a supporting counsellor, to whom the students can turn to in personal and difficult matters, it seemed that realizing the possible difficulties of the students were more problematic than thought.

“I find myself not capable on handling the problems that affect for the studies but are personal. I have no such training. I know I am suppose to give information where to go to talk to if needed, but how do you recognize this kind of problems?”

“I feel I am not able to support the students in their difficulties, that are coming from the personal life. It would be essential to even have some sort of training for this kind of things. I mean none of us are really psychologist but to get a view on this kind of matters might help.”

”There is definitely a big need for the training of the teachers as we all feel like we have no tools in confronting students who are facing some problems. I myself do not know how to realize the psychological factors, how to realize them and when to get involved with the problems.”

One can say that the psychological factors are often difficult to notice even by professionals. There are many students who are not willing to be open enough to communicate about their problems and the counsellor should really know so much more about the person to know what is under neat, which obviously in the normal educational system is almost impossible. If the students are not telling about their problems by out of own initiative, it is more likely that the help might not arrive in time. Even though this is a difficult subject to solve, it can be said that there is definitely a need for training of the staff as they all feel the same insecurity towards the subject. Training might not make them professionals on the field of psychology, but would give them more support and self-confidence as well as more assurance that they are able to do their job properly. The training can be organized as a small course and partly kept internally by teachers, whose field is psychology. The other option is to organize courses and trainings by outside trainers. This kind of training should be done regularly. Time after time it would be advisable to discuss the views and possible problems the teachers are facing when counselling.

One of the issues that came up when interviewing was not only the lack of skills and proper training in the psychological field but also the adequate training to teach multicultural groups, whose needs are often different with the domestic group. This is not only because of the language skills, but also because of the cultural backgrounds and educational systems in different countries. The opinions seemed to vary a lot as

some of the respondents seemed to have a few problems in that area where the others believed there were no problems at all. It is clear that different courses and training should be organized for the teachers either by teachers who are teaching inter-cultural communication and cultural studies or by some professional trainers outside the organization. The teachers should be made aware of the differences behind the decision-making and behaviour that the students from other cultures have. They should also be taught and explained that other cultures have different school systems and those systems have an effect on their ways of studying in Finnish school systems. Finding out solutions can be difficult, but it is extremely essential that teachers know how to plan their courses and to guide the multicultural groups in a way, that all the students will get the same possible information and have understanding of the rules of the society. When the teacher gains the understanding of cultural behaviour, it is easier to identify the problematic areas in counselling. It is fair to say that the whole school has to work as a team and all the teachers involved should have regular meetings where not only plans are made but problems are discussed openly. Even though not every person acts in the same way, people from the same cultures have certain values and attitudes that are taught. Studies of Hofstede and other researches might help in understanding some issues related to the cultures. The teachers should constantly get training for the subject. They should also have meetings with each other, where the ideas would be changed between each others. The knowledge of the cultural things also have also an effect on finding practical training places for foreign students.

When asked about the support the interviewees would like to receive it from the local community and province for foreign students, there were a lot of similar thoughts. Practical training places are always an issue that raises discussions. Finding the right place for a student to do the training is difficult as it is almost impossible to know beforehand whether the students will get the amount of knowledge on the workplace that they are looking for. The school needs to get all possible support for the subject from local companies. Most of the respondents felt that it was a lot easier to place the Finnish students for work placement than the foreign ones as 88% believed that local companies should have more courage to take foreign students into the organization and train them.

“We have to be able to produce positive experiences for the companies and help supporting them to make the material for their on-the-job training as it encourages them more to take the foreign students into practical training. Even though the students are responsible by themselves of their own training, the school is trying to support them as much as possible. We have a lot of projects together with the Universities nation wide, but we probably have to add the Finnish language as compulsory studies for foreigners to ease up this part as one of the problems is the language skills.”

The problems many companies even in service field suffer from is the amount of staff. Many companies had to reduce the staff into the minimal in order to be cost-effective. In many companies the staff is overloaded with work and they have no energy to make any extra work e.g. to train foreign students, when they would have to use other languages. Many companies are using the trainees instead of employing more people and in their point of view the trainee should get into the organization as fast as possible. A lot of companies prefer that the trainee would have an adequate skills in Finnish language, which should be considered in the Degree Programmes. The Head of the Department agreed that from this perspective it would be essential to have compulsory courses in basic Finnish for the foreigners on the first couple of years of the studies. Although we are living in the world of open borders, proper communicational skills still play significant role in every day situations.

When talking about proper communicational skills, one can say that there are problems between the counsellors in the Degree Programme of Facility Management. The results of the interview gave a clear idea that beside the training for the psychological factors and for the counselling of multicultural groups one major issue seems to rise above all other issues - the lack of communication. There is not enough discussions and meetings between some of the teachers, even though they all are involved in the counselling process. Communication according to 57% of the respondents was inadequate as not all the teachers are taking full responsibility of their commitments. Motivational issues came out clearly as did the lack of commitment also.

”Teachers could be clearly more involved in a way that they could be more motivated in asking about the things and not just expect that the information is handed to them.”

”The responsibility lies on the ”Senior Lecturer of the Degree Programme” as that is his job to take care of the students at that point. If the person is not committed and interested in dealing with that, maybe it could be wise to give the job for somebody who is interested in it and motivated.”

These comments above were related to the problems that all the interviewees shared about the communicational problems, which occur on the third year of the studies, when the counselling is transferred to the teacher responsible of it. Although several opinions came also about the lack of commitment the Senior Lecturer of the Degree Programme has towards the students, the interview of the Head of the Department showed that the Senior Lecturer does not share the similar responsibility of the guidance and counselling than the counsellor, who is named for it. The interview showed that not even the teachers were familiar with the responsibility issues. Most of the respondents were clearly claiming that other teachers were not enough involved and did not want to communicate with the other ones, where as some teachers explained that not enough information is coming to them. As communication is always a two way street, also in this case open discussion is the best solution. Regular group meetings need to be organized and all the problems concerning the communication have to be discussed openly to solve the problems. The Head of the Degree Programme should be the person who is calling these meetings together. One way of finding more about the problem is for the Head of the Degree Programme to interview all the teachers individually and after that to discuss the opinions and issues that have come up together with everybody.

Another relevant subject for the discussion is the structure of the Degree Programme. All the respondents shared basically the same view of the structure of the Degree Programme as it was seen very clear and continuously developing all the time. However, a controversial opinion about the studies came out as 87% believes that the Degree Programme should be developed more to face the demands of the working life.

”The plan for teaching should reply for the needs and changes of the working life.”

”It is essential to know what the students need. Have we asked from them really at any point? And the working life, what do they need? There is no clear sector where this program is aiming at, the strongest point of this programme in my opinion would be to concentrate on hospitality and in tourism management.”

“The Plan for teaching is changing all the time, we are heading now to the new one as we speak. We should honestly have more discussions not only with the teachers but the students and the organizations about the needs and demands of the working life and see nationally and internationally that the plan answers for those demands.”

When writing this thesis, the School of Tourism is receiving a new plan of teaching for the Degree Programme of Facility Management. There is not enough information yet about it, but it is agreeable that the plan should face the demands and the needs of the continuously changing working life. Organizational cultures are changing and workers are under constant reconstruction of their jobs and organizational structures. The same way the educational systems have to change along the way as we are educating students to perform on their best in their future careers on those changing organizations. The students have to be taught to adjust in different situations and to be able to use their learned skills to learn new things and attitudes. A lot of students clearly see the Degree Programme of the Facility Management a part of the hotel and catering industry and seem to forget that the hospitality industry is much more than that. When I myself studied the Facility Management a few years ago, it was still very unclear even on the second year what we were studying and what the options for the future career were. Maybe the structure of the Degree Programme should be done in a way that after the first year of general studies, the second year would already provide divided specializations in certain fields, e.g. by separating hospitality in hotel and catering industry and hospitality in for example in hospitals. Also, I believe that it would make it a lot easier for the teachers to provide guidance and counselling when the students had a clearer picture of what they want.

6. Conclusion

According to the Ministry of Education, every school is responsible for observing their level of quality, not only by themselves, but also with the evaluators outside of the organization. There was an evaluation report done about the Degree Programme of Facility Management last year. It was clearly seen from the report that even though some parts of the Degree programme are well organized and functional, some gaps occur especially in guidance and counselling. The aim of this thesis was to research more those possible gaps and find out propositions to solve the problems.

An interview of seven teachers was done to research more the possible problems. Each respondent is involved in guidance and counselling at some part of the studies in the Degree Programme of Facility Management. All the teachers seem to have a clear idea, which are the biggest problems concerning the subject. The problems can be listed as follows:

- Teachers' full commitment on counselling
- Resources to have more time to guide the students
- Need of training for psychological field
- Multicultural counselling, cultural differences and need of training on that field
- Definition of career counselling
- Communication and transferring of information, especially between the second and third year

A lot of complaints were given about commitment issues. All the teachers involved in tutoring or guidance and counselling have to understand the meaning of committing themselves to the subject. First of all, it is important to realise what is generally meant by guidance and counselling. It is not only giving information on general matters or issues related on studies, but also giving support and guidance in every day issues and future aims and goals. It is essential to get enough resources from the school to have more time for the discussions with the students. Even though the teachers were not complaining about the lack of time given, it was clear that the counselling process of

multicultural groups takes more time than domestic ones when one have to take into consideration the cultural factors as well. Time should also be given to help the students to understand the meaning of career counselling and as it was said earlier I think the subject should be taken into consideration during the first year of studies already.

The other relevant issue that came up with the interview was that most of the teachers were unsure of themselves and their capabilities in the field of psychology. I believe though that they are more capable than they think, but in order for themselves to feel more secure about the subject, proper trainings has to be organized regularly. Training can be done both internally by teachers with psychological background as well as with the outside trainers. I believe that it might be useful to organize trainers from outside of the school environment as they have probably different views and opinions on subjects. It is often forgotten in schools that students are not the only ones who need education and training.

Another problem, beside the ones mentioned above, seemed to be the lack of communication between the teachers. This, however, should be the easiest one to solve as it is a matter of regular meetings and open discussions. It is not helpful to anybody if some teachers are unhappy about the situations but not giving their opinions freely and openly to others. Blaming one another is never a solution. One has to find out proper way of dealing things as a team. In this case the team leader should be the Head of the Degree Programme who has to deepen the knowledge of the gaps that occur.

As I am handing over this study, I am hoping that it can be a useful tool for teachers in counselling process to see that even though some of them did not see all the possible gaps, there is always something that can be done better. I believe that all these problems are possible to solve with a co-operation of everybody. The co-operation not only makes it a better environment for the teachers to work with, but also for the students to study in.

REFERENCES

Geert Hofstede, *Cultural dimensions* (Referred to on 7th of August, 2008)

<http://www.geert-hofstede.com/>

Lairio M., Nissila P., Puukari S., Varis E. 2001, *Opinto-ohjaajat monikulttuurisuuden ja maahanmuuttajien tukijoina*. Teoksessa Muutoksista Mahdollisuuksiin. Jyväskylä

Launikari Mika, Puukari Sauli, *Multicultural guidance and counselling*, CIMO, Kirjapaino Oma Oy, Jyväskylä 2005

Lerkkanen Jukka, *Koulutus- ja uravalinnan ongelmat*, Jyväskylän Ammattikorkeakoulun julkaisu, 2002

Linnakylä Pirjo, *Portfolio arvioinnin ja oppimisen tukena*, Kasvatustieteiden tutkimuslaitos, Jyväskylä, 1994

Maikkola Merja, Olkkonen Tarja, *Tuella ja taidolla - ohjauksella energiaa opintopolulle*, Oulun yliopiston opetuksen kehittämissyksikön julkaisu, dialogeja 6. Oulun yliopistopaino 2004

Moitus Sirpa, Huttu Kristiina, Isohanhi Irene, Lerkkanen Jukka, Mielityinen Ida, Talvi Ulla, Uusirauva Erkki, Vuorinen Raimo, *Opintojen ohjauksen arviointi korkeakouluissa*, Edita, Helsinki, 2001

Ohjaussuunnitelma 2007-2008, JAMK

Onnismaa Jussi, Pasanen Heikki, Spangar Timo, *Ohjaus ammattina ja tieteenalana 2 – ohjauksen toimintakentät*, WS Bookwell oy, Porvoo 2000

Puukari Sauli, *Multicultural counselling* (Referred to 11th of April, 2008)

<http://www.profesijupasaulis.it/konferencija/06/13.ppt>

Turkulainen Martti, *Monialaisuus ammattikorkeakouluissa*, Opetusministeriö, Helsinki, 1999

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS:

Background of the interviewee and general questions about the counselling in Marata:

- 1) Name and profession
- 2) The target group of the guidance and counselling, opinions of counselling generally
- 3) Any differences in multinational counselling (own opinion)?
- 4) Job description? Beside the guidance and counselling, what kind of job descriptions/area's of responsibilities you have at your work? Own opinions of them?
- 5) Describe your own opinions about personal study plan, portfolio and tutoring in your school

Skills and problem areas in guidance and counselling:

- 6) What kind of information technical skills/other skills you have for the guidance?
- 7) Opinion of guidance and counselling in the MFA? (also multinational counselling)
- 8) Your strengths/role in guidance and counselling (also multinational counselling)?
- 9) Which parts of the counselling have been problematic for you?

Developing the counselling in the Degree Programme of Facility Management

- 10) What kind of support you wish to have from:
 - a) The educational centre
 - b) Local community and province
 - d) Other ways? (e.g. Nation-wide)
- 14) In your opinion, is there a need for more training for the counsellors?
- 15) How would you develop the area's of guidance and counselling if the target were a) counsellor's by themselves b) the content/goals of the Degree Programme
- 16) Other comments of the counselling in the FM-programme
 - a) structure
 - b) cultural views
 - c) skills and abilities needed