

# **Organizing International Services**

**JAMK University of Applied Sciences – School of  
Business**

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Bachelor's Thesis

February 2016

Degree Programme in Facility Management

School of Business and Service Management

Author(s) Kuivalainen, Miikka	Type of publication Bachelor's thesis	Date 13.02.2016
		Language of publication: English
	Number of pages 78	Permission for web publication: x
Title of publication <b>Organizing International Services</b> JAMK University of Applied Sciences – School of Business		
Degree programme Facility Management		
Supervisor(s) Jorma Kananen		
Assigned by JAMK University of Applied Sciences – School of Business		
<p>Abstract</p> <p>The purpose of this research was to explore how the JAMK University of Applied Sciences International Services are, generally, functioning, and how they are organized. Another aim was to find out how satisfied the employees of JAMK are with these supportive services. The objective was to explore whether there would be inefficiencies that could be removed from the international functions of the School of Business.</p> <p>The research methods used were both qualitative and quantitative. The qualitative research was carried out through individual theme interviews with four JAMK employees with international duties. The quantitative research was conducted using a questionnaire mailed to the JAMK departments. Mailing the survey form gave the response rate of 42% out of 270 questionnaires sent. The questionnaire was targeted to the employees who were considered to be customers of the international Services.</p> <p>The results show that the current state of the entire International Services is on a good level, and that the employees seemed to be mostly satisfied throughout the organization. The matters to be improved included more communication between the centralized International Services and the educational departments. There seemed to be confusion concerning the responsibilities of the internationalization tasks to be conducted either by the International Services or the educational departments.</p> <p>There are numerous ways for organizing large groups of people, in this case those with international functions. Based on the research, the communication between various entities is highly important. The clarity of the responsibilities and a clear common strategy should always be taken into account when planning how to organize different functions.</p>		
Keywords/tags ( <a href="#">subjects</a> ) internationalization, higher education, international services, organizational structure		
Miscellaneous		

Tekijä(t) Kuivalainen, Miikka	Julkaisun laji Opinnäytetyö, AMK	Päivämäärä 13.02.2016
	Sivumäärä 78	Julkaisun kieli Englanti
		Verkkojulkaisulupa myönnetty: x
Työn nimi <b>Kansainvälistymispalveluiden organisointi</b> Jyväskylän ammattikorkeakoulun liiketoimintayksikkö		
Tutkinto-ohjelma Degree Programme in Facility Management		
Työn ohjaaja(t) Jorma Kananen		
Toimeksiantaja(t) Jyväskylän ammattikorkeakoulun liiketoimintayksikkö		
<p>Tiivistelmä</p> <p>Tämän tutkimuksen tarkoituksena oli selvittää, miten Jyväskylän ammattikorkeakoulun kansainvälistymispalvelut toimivat yleisesti ja kuinka nämä palvelut ovat organisoitu. Toinen tavoite oli selvittää, kuinka tyytyväisiä työntekijät ovat näihin palveluihin. Tarkoituksena oli saada selville, voitaisiinko liiketoimintayksikön kansainvälistymisen toimintoja saada organisoitua tehokkaammin.</p> <p>Tutkimuksessa käytettiin laadullista ja määrällistä tutkimusotetta. Laadullinen tutkimus suoritettiin tekemällä neljä teemahaastattelua, joiden kohteena olivat työntekijät, jotka työskentelevät kansainvälistymisen parissa. Määrällisessä tutkimusosiossa käytettiin kyselyä, joka lähetettiin Jyväskylän ammattikorkeakoulun eri koulutusyksiköihin. Kokonaisuudessaan 270 kyselylomaketta postitettiin suoraan yksiköihin, mikä antoi vastausprosentiksi 42 %. Kysely suunnattiin henkilöstölle, joiden ajateltiin olevan kansainvälistymispalveluiden asiakkaita.</p> <p>Tutkimuksessa kävi ilmi, että kansainvälistymispalveluiden nykyinen toiminta on hyvällä tasolla ja henkilöstö ilmaisi olevansa enimmäkseen tyytyväisiä näihin palveluihin. Kehitysehdotuksina nousi esille parempi yhteydenpito keskitettyjen kansainvälistymispalveluiden ja koulutusyksiköiden välillä.</p> <p>Isojen ryhmien ja toimintojen organisointiin on monia erilaisia vaihtoehtoja. Tässä tapauksessa kohteena oli kansainvälistymisorganisaatio. Tämän tutkimuksen perusteella yksi tärkeimmistä asioista on kommunikointi. Mietittäessä eri toimintojen organisointia selkeät vastualueet ja yhteiset strategiset tavoitteet pitäisi aina ottaa tarkasti huomioon.</p>		
Avainsanat ( <a href="#">asiasanat</a> ) Kansainvälistyminen, korkeakoulutus, kansainvälistymispalvelut, organisaatorakenteet		
Muut tiedot		

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# 1 Introduction

The purpose of this thesis is to study JAMK University of Applied Sciences International Services in general and focus on the School of Business department. At the beginning, the author was not sure whether this would be a topic worth pursuing. As the author looked more into the topic, he came to realize that internationalization and its functions in Education Institutions would be, indeed, interesting and an important area to study.

The purpose of the JAMK University of Applied Sciences International Services is to support and offer opportunities for the personnel, students and partners at all levels to internationalize and develop the internationalization of the entire organization. The author has been on the customer side of the International Services, as he has done practical training abroad in the United States and also a four-month exchange in Montreal, Quebec, Canada. These two experiences gave the author a great understanding of how things work outside of the International Services and what it includes on the customer side. Now, this is a great opportunity to explore what is happening behind the scenes and discover positive changes that could directly benefit JAMK University of Applied Sciences and their customers.

The initiative for this type of research came from the School of Business department, which is part of the JAMK University of Applied Sciences. There have been some questions about the future of International Services in the department, and this study was suggested to discover possible future perspectives for the internationalization. Hence, there is a need for this sort of research, as this has not been done before for the School of Business department.

The area of this study is management. The most suitable definition in this case could be by Henry Fayol (1949, 5) as he has stated that management is forecasting, planning, organizing, commanding, coordinating and controlling. Management contains all of those actions, and they serve to achieve the desired goals, and organizing is one fundamental part of management. Management and organizing are

a broad field of study and in the center of it is organizational behaviour, which examines the behaviour of individuals and organizations, and the interaction between these two entities. Organizational behaviour is supported by the field of strategic management, which studies the management of companies and organizations in competitive situations. Strategic management helps to understand the positioning of companies and the connections between business strategy and organizational structure. (Peltonen 2007, 15.)

We are living interesting times in Finland as well as in other parts of the world, where the economical instability has had an effect on many things. Presumably, this will keep having further effects. We have already witnessed that money supply has shrunk enormously, and more savings are expected in Finland. Every organization and institution has to take a look in the mirror and really evaluate whether they are operating the way they are supposed to. Change is inevitable, and these future years will offer each and everyone of us a chance to change, grow and develop.

Universities in Finland are also planning on laying off hundreds of personnel in the next couple of years and mainly due to the lack of finances. We cannot just keep doing things the way we have always done them, unless we have a good enough reason for that.

This research offers information about organizational structures, focuses on the case of JAMK University of Applied Sciences International Services in the School of Business. The research was done by conducting interviews and designing a questionnaire for the personnel of JAMK University of Applied Sciences. In this research report, the first part describes the research implementation, followed by the theory part which includes strategy and different organizational structures along with education organizations. At the end of the research, there are the research results, suggestions, and finally the conclusion with reliability and validity as well as feedback.



## 2 Research Design

### Research problem and methodology

The purpose of this study is to discover how the JAMK University of Applied Sciences International Services is functioning and how it is organized. Another aim is to discover, how satisfied personnel of JAMK are of these services. If possible, the goal is to explore ways to improve the School of Business' internationalization functions.

Therefore the research problem of this study is:

**“What is the current state of the International Services and does it demand improvements to make School of Business’s personnel more satisfied of these services?”**

To help getting answers to the problem, here are the research questions:

**“Which are the issues when the personnel is interacting with the International Services?”**

**“Do they see these services as helpful?”**

**“What could be done in order to make the International Services functions in School of Business even better in the future?”**

### Client

JAMK University of Applied Sciences is located in Jyväskylä, Finland and was founded in 1994. Today, JAMK is a university of approximately 8500 students throughout four different departments. Other campuses are located around the city of Jyväskylä although one of the campus buildings is located in Tarvaala, Saarijärvi, which is about 65 kilometres north of Jyväskylä.

JAMK University of Applied Sciences provides higher education based on the requirements of working life. Mission includes carrying out applied research, development and innovation activities (RDI) that serve University of Applied Sciences

education. These actions support the world of work and regional development, and also organizing continuing education to sustain and promote lifelong learning in working life. (JAMK, 2015.)

By the year 2020 JAMK University of Applied Sciences wants to be Finland's best University of Applied Sciences with solid evidence of the quality of education, internationalization and the promotion of entrepreneurship. (JAMK 2015.)

JAMK University of Applied Sciences is truly an international organization. This can be seen from the 300 partners it has in over 50 countries. Annually in Jyväskylä, there are approximately 350 international degree students and 400 exchange students. School of Business hosts large part of these international students in their courses. According to the School of Business (interview, 2015), in the fall of 2015 there was 138 international students in the International Business degree programme. On top of that, other students attend to their courses, which means total of approximately 150 students. These mobility numbers are only one indicator of internationalization, but they assure us of the importance of this matter. JAMK acknowledges significance of being international at all levels as internationalization is visible throughout organization. In order to achieve the goal set for 2020, JAMK University of Applied Sciences International Services must be top notch. (JAMK 2015.)

### **Research methods**

Every thesis writer has to choose the approach, which he or she decides to use in the research. Usually the choice is made simply between qualitative and quantitative methods, but both of these include various different ways to proceed. It all comes down to what the research is all about and what are we trying to gain through it. In this study both, qualitative and quantitative methods, are used, which is also referred to as triangulation in literature. Kananen (2011, 130), states that this can help to understand the phenomena better and also improve the reliability and validity of the research.

According to Kananen (2011, 37), quantitative research deals with numbers and the relationships between them and qualitative research covers all other research. Qualitative research is regarded as the “mother” of all research and it offers the possibility to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomena at hand. Qualitative research focuses on a few specific observation groups, which can be studied thoroughly using different research methods. It is important to remember though, that qualitative research does not aim to make generalizations and the results hold true only in the case one is studying. The aim is to describe the phenomena, understand them and get to the heart of the matter. (Kananen 2011, 37; Kananen 2014, 17.)

The most common data collection methods in qualitative researches are interviews, questionnaires, observation and knowledge based on different kinds of documents. They can be used one at a time or then, as a combination of all in one research. If we want to know what people are thinking or why they are behaving in a certain way the easiest thing to do is ask them. Out of all these options, interviews can be considered the most flexible. The interviewer can repeat, correct or rephrase misunderstood questions and discuss with the informant more freely. The most important goal for interviews is to gain as much information as possible of the subject. Therefore, it is recommended to provide the themes and questions beforehand for the interviewee if possible. (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2013, 71-73.)

There are several advantages when conducting interviews and especially focused interviews, where phenomena are discussed from different angles. Focused interview is more like a conversation and discussion is supposed to go from the general to the more specific. In interviews people are in instant interaction with each other, which makes it easier to find out the motives behind the answers. Interviews are also the most suitable, if we know in advance that the answers will most likely be complex, and that there is room for some interpretation. Being in instant interaction gives the interviewer the ability to ask more specified questions, depending on the answers and furthermore, getting rationalizations for them if needed. (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2001, 35; Kananen 2011, 52.)

Qualitative research is suitable for this thesis, as the purpose is to study and gather deeper knowledge of the JAMK University of Applied Sciences International Services. In order to use qualitative research methods, the study group should be specified enough. In this case the subjects are the JAMK University of Applied Sciences International Services and the School of Business Department. For the data collection method, the focused interview was chosen, which helps us to get certain kind of information that could not be acquired with other methods. Choosing observation was ruled out in this case, mainly because the information about organization structure and functionality between units requires more in depth explanations which cannot be achieved with observation. The focused interview is also the most common method used in qualitative research, and it can be conducted with individuals or groups. (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2001, 35; Kananen 2011, 52.)

In addition to the interviews, a quantitative questionnaire was used to get more research data. This made it possible to get a more general opinion of the functionality of the Internationalization Services in different departments. A questionnaire is a typical data collection method usually used in quantitative research. This means that numerical data related to the issue is collected from the individuals concerned with a phenomena. Conducting questionnaire requires the researcher to know the population which should be the target group. Although, usually it is not economically smart to include everyone who is affected by phenomena but instead, a representative sample suffices to get reliable results. International Services are supposed to support all students, employees and partners regarding international cooperation and mobility issues. With a survey to the personnel of JAMK University of Applied Sciences, it was possible to get the view points and thoughts of the customers of these services. (Kananen 2011, 73.)

With the combination of qualitative and quantitative research, the intention was, first, to understand the functions of the International Services and, second, to acquire the view points of the people inside JAMK University of Applied Sciences. These findings should give a good understanding of the current state of these support functions and be a basis possible improvements.

## **Analysis methods**

### **Interviews**

In qualitative researches, collected data can be text, recordings, pictures, videos or something else that is produced by an individual. In most cases, the data is text and it can be analysed with different methods. First option is to go through the data multiple times and try to figure out what the answers are really about. However, this can only be done if there is not a lot of data. With larger quantities of research material, all of that needs to be combined one way or another. Usually this means transcribing the data into a text form. This enables the usage of different kinds of software in the analysis e.g Excel. The idea is to summarise and group answers into different segments. These segments are then coded with short explanations of what they are about and this is called the coding stage. The analysis can be done as a theory-based, when the codes are supported by a certain already existing theory. Another option is to use the research material as a basis and create completely new classification according to the phenomena. (Kananen 2015, 88-94.)

The interviewees are employees of JAMK University of Applied Sciences. Their work includes tasks regarding the International Services, hence they were justified choices to get a better understanding of different functions. Two of the interviews were conducted face-to-face and the remaining two, using Skype. All of the interviews were recorded, in order to get a better transcript and to ensure validity of the data itself. The duration of the interviews were approximately half an hour each and they were completed within a month's time. All of the individuals who were asked to give an interview agreed to give one. All of the participants seemed interested about the topic and were eager to assist in the research. Interviews were transcribed from recordings in a propositional level, which means that only the main ideas and messages were written down. After this, the material was categorised into different groups and combined accordingly in Excel. The analysis was based on the research material and classifications were done according to the answers and the research questions.

As mentioned before, the interviews were focused interviews and the same themes were discussed with three of the four interviewees. ([Appendix 3.](#)) All of the interviews were conducted in Finnish, as it is the mother tongue of the respondents. At the transcribing stage, answers were translated into English. Interviews started with conversations about internationalization in general and in the education environment. After that, discussions continued to JAMK University of Applied Sciences and different internationalization functions it has, and some specific tasks interviewees perform in their position. At the end of all four interviews, thoughts about future insights were discussed and speculated. One of the interviews differed from others, because the job description and position was not exactly the same as the others. In that interview the focus was to get deeper understanding how International Services is organized as a whole, and what functions does it include.

### **Survey**

The questionnaire for the personnel of JAMK University of Applied Sciences was conducted to support the qualitative material and to get perspectives from outside of the people who work in different internationalization functions. Questionnaire included 22 questions, of which six were open ended and the rest 16 were multiple choice. Survey was in Finnish and it was made with the Sphinx Survey software. The questionnaire form is attached at the end of this report. ([Appendix 1.](#))

The questions were related to International Services and dealing with internationalization issues in general and in respondents own departments. Two-sided survey was printed to paper forms and mailed to different education departments to ensure a better response rate. In 2014, there was 686 employees working for the JAMK, of which 353 were teachers (Henkilöstökertomus, 2014.). Total of 270 forms were sent out and the response rate ended up being 42%, with 114 answers. Over half (64%) of the responses were given by teachers. (Table 15.) In this case it would indicate, that the sample represented 18% of the teaching personnel of JAMK. Using online survey was ruled out because the response rate might have been too low. According to Kananen (2011, 93), response rates in mail

surveys are generally around 30%, depending from the subject and population. Whereas with online surveys the response rate is usually even lower.

The research results from quantitative material are usually presented in different tables and statistics. From these the researcher can draw up frequency distributions, which show how the answers were distributed in a specific question. In addition, cross tabulations makes it possible to compare answers between different variables and find similarities or differences in answers. These two are also the most commonly used methods to present quantitative results. There are specific standards and rules when presenting the results, which should always be taken into account. Usually tables and statistic have to be manually adjusted to match these requirements. (Kananen 2010, 103-105.)

Received questionnaires were keyed back to the Sphinx software for statistical processing and analysing. With the help of this software, it was convenient to proceed to the analysing stage as the software itself produces graphs which are compatible with Microsoft Word. Although, the tables needed adjusting to make them look visually appropriate. The answers were analyzed by making frequency distributions, as well as cross tabulations in order to find out differences or similarities between different departments. Open ended questions were coded numerically into different groups and categorized according the resemblance of the answers.

### **3 Theoretical Framework**

In this chapter I will go through the concepts related to organizations including, why they exist, their structure and their functionality. Also connection between strategy and organizational structure is discussed. I intend to bring up the most vital theories written earlier about the matter. These main concepts need to be clearly discussed and deeper knowledge and understanding is needed in order to continue with my own research concerning JAMK University of Applied Sciences and its international services. To gain better understanding on how International Services are arranged in

this case, this literature review is critically important and I aim to find all relevant information concerning the topic. This theoretical framework is also going to work as a support for the empirical part.

### 3.1 Strategy

Strategy means a certain type of plan, which is created to achieve specific set goals and gaining competitive advantage over competitors. There has been a lot of studies on strategies and competitiveness, which usually go hand in hand. It is really hard to have one correct definition for strategy and there must be as many of them as there are people who try to give it an explanation.

One of the leading author on strategy and competitiveness is Michael E. Porter and according to Porter (1996), strategy is creating coherency among different activities and the success depends on doing many things well. He continues, that integrating among them is essential and if there is no fit among these functions, there is no distinctive strategy and little sustainability. Bengt Karlöf (2004, 7), defines strategy as the decisions and procedures made here and now to ensure future success and that all opportunities are utilized.

A strategy sets the organization's direction and the strategy can be prepared for short- and long-term goals. The strategy states which products and markets the company will pursue and, as important, those it will not pursue. The strategy specifies the source of competitive advantage for the organization and how the company will differentiate itself in the marketplace. (Galbraith, Downey & Kates, 2001, 3)

In order for the strategy to reach the whole personnel of the organization and in order for the personnel to commit to the strategy, the description of the strategy should be logical and clear. (Salminen 2008, 31)

According to Huczynski and Buchanan (2001, 524), John Kay (1999) has defined that field of strategy is about balancing between the company's internal capabilities and



its external environment. This leads us to the importance of organizational structure, as one of the influences when determining which one or ones to choose, is the external environment.

Strategy is a vital part of any company or organization. Without a strategy company does not have guidelines and it might not be clear what are the goals tried to achieve. Strategy creates the foundation for the company's activities and it enables development and helps discover new strategical directions. Strategy needs to cover the entire organization and it has to adapt according to the external environment. It is important to have interaction between all the departments of the organization and guide the performance as a whole and also take into account individuals inside the departments at all levels. (Robbins, Judge & Campbell 2010, 442.)

### 3.2 Organizational structure

As mentioned in the beginning, organizing is one area of management, which usually needs to be developed and changed continuously, depending on the surrounding environment. These changes enable companies to stay competitive and profitable.

Organizational design is, according to Bloisi, Cook and Hunsaker (2007, 707), a process that supports in achieving objectives, goals and strategies. This means that in any company or organization, which has more than just a few employees, the managers need to be able to instruct the responsibilities and tasks to their employees. These tasks must be clear and structured in a reasonable way, which ensures that all actions are guided towards the strategies and goals of the organization. (ibid.)

Organizational design includes the decisions and actions which will eventually become the organizational structure. Decisions have to be made in individual jobs, what kinds of departments or groups of jobs there should be and finally, how the authority is divided throughout the structure. Considering these decision and structures, on the other end of the continuum some structures are called

mechanistic and bureaucratic and on the other end more organic. These types of structures will be explained more in depth later in this chapter. (Ivancevich, Konopaske & Matteson 2014, 487-489.)

*“An organization is a social arrangement for achieving controlled performance in pursuit of collective goals.”(Huczynski & Buchanan 2001, 447.).*

This short explanation shows that the importance of order, structure and common goals are the most vital parts in organizations. We can find at least three different approaches arising when studying organizations; functions, structures and common goals. In addition, the most studied phenomena seem to be human and group behavior in these environments. Every organization has a specific set of goals and efficiency requirements, which means that their operations must be arranged, developed and controlled properly in order to fulfill these requirements. There is no such thing as the one and only right structure for a particular organization. Instead, we have to remember that all the different organization structures are not equally efficient. An organization has to adapt to the environment surrounding it and find the best suitable structure. Next, some of the theories and concepts of organizational structure will be explained.

Traditionally, organizations and their structures are described how an organization is divided into work groups. Showing the reporting and authority relationships that are functioning between individuals and groups and how everything is connected together. Structure gives separate identities for different work groups and is very important to the effectiveness and communication between groups and individuals. (Brooks 2009, 191.)

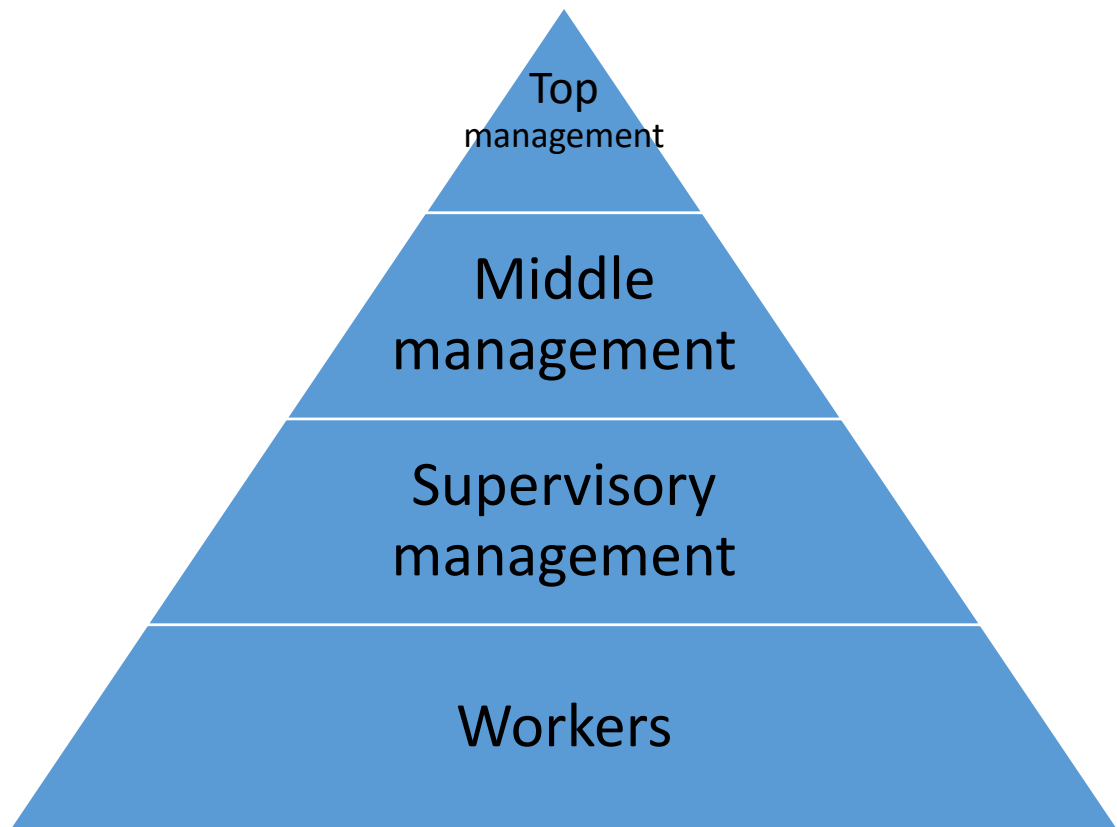


Figure 1. Traditional example of hierarchal organizational structure  
(Kuivalainen, 2015.)

According to Greenberg and Baron (2003, 549), organizational structure refers to the formal configuration between individuals and groups and how the tasks, responsibilities, and authority are divided within organization. Another explanation written by Bloisi, Cook and Hunsaker (2007, 710), defines it as the networked arrangement of positions and departments through which the essential tasks of an enterprise are divided and grouped to create the systems that carry out business strategies.

The purpose of organizational structure is to divide up organizational activities and allocate them to subunits and to co-ordinate and control these activities so that they can help achieve the aims of the organization (Huczynski & Buchanan 2001, 447.). Every system for example, a building needs a clear structure to function as they are

meant to. In our everyday life we do not necessarily think about that, but processes of different organizations and buildings, for example, are quite similar: highly different functions must aim at common goals. The majority of these entities have a lot of different operations going on simultaneously, and they must cooperate in order for them to perform efficiently and effectively.

Organizations can be characterized in a way as self-contained and they are constantly under some changes. Whether it is external or internal reasons that call the need for a change, usually a change is good and it is needed to give new perspectives on the way things are done. Organizations should be growing and becoming more complex. When this happens, some new departments might be created or deleted as the workload increases. Different functions may become centralized by the avoiding duplication of different tasks, which results in a higher level of effectiveness. (Greenberg & Baron 2003, 555.).

*“The process of delegating power from higher to lower levels within organizations is known as decentralization. It is the opposite of centralization, the tendency for just a few powerful individuals or groups to hold most of the decision-making power” (Greenberg & Baron 2003, 554.).*

In other words, centralization and decentralization describe the level of centralization and decentralization in an organization’s decision making. Organizations have to decide in which matters they centralize the decision making and where that is not necessarily needed. Usually, organizations are never fully centralized or decentralized, which depends on the external and internal opportunities, challenges and threats. (Harisalo 2008, 23-24.)

Centralizing the decision making can speed up things, and when the decisions are made people know they have to act according to them. In big and complex organizations centralizing increases the possibility to make the wrong calls, since there are a significant amount of information that the staff should be aware of. Change, uncertainty and unpredictability are some reasons for choosing decentralization. When working in these kinds of environments, an organization can

not anymore rely on the fact that the top management only can be aware of all the essential opportunities or issues and hence make the right decisions. In organizations where decision making is decentralized, the information flow, commitment and job satisfaction are usually stronger than in centralized ones. (Harisalo 2008, 23-24.)

### **Different structures**

One basic categorizing of organizational structures is described by Karlöf & Lövingsson (2006) in three different ways, which differ in the way how work duties and responsibilities are divided. These three are functional, divisional and matrix organization. Functional and divisional structures are both also a part of departmentalization. Therefore, these two are combined and discussed under the same section. From the literature there can be also found some mutations of these plain, main structures and some newer structures of which the network and the lean organizations will be emphasized.

#### 3.2.1 Departmentalization

##### **Functional organization**

When organizations develop and grow in a way that it is nearly impossible for just one manager with one group of employees to take care of the functions, usually the functional structure steps in. This means that the departments are planned according to what are the main functions of the company; in universities these can be divided for example in different fields; research and development, marketing and finance. This is also referred as departmentalization as its basic form. (Karlöf & Lövingsson 2006, 22.)

In functional organizations employees are divided in specific expertise areas and all these separate groups have their own goals, planning and budgeting and the top management takes care of the horizontal coordination. This is usually done by using hierarchical supervision, mutual communication, principles and coherent company culture. Functional structure usually works the best in stable environments and it is

common in small and medium sized enterprises as well as organizations where special knowledge of specific fields is required, like universities. (Karlöf & Lövigsson 2006, 23.)

Advantages of this kind of structure are the possibility to specialize in tasks, relatively low amount of competition and job duplication inside the company and for management it is easier to actively guide and control all parts of the organization. There are also some disadvantages, which might occur when trying to create coherent company culture. Since different departments set their own goals and if there is lack in communication and messages get caught in between departments, planning and reaction time can be long. (Karlöf & Lövigsson 2006, 21-25; Buchanan & Huczynski 2010, 520; Greenberg & Baron 2003, 555.)

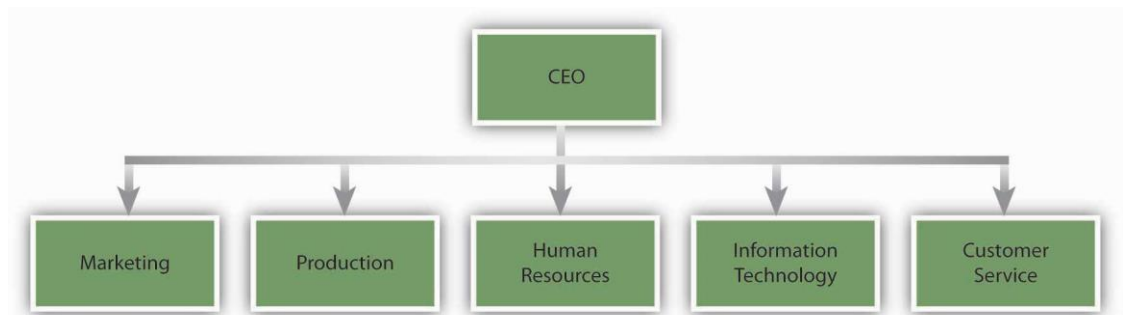


Figure 2. Functional structure.

(<https://new.edu/resources/organizational-structure--4>)

Functional structure of an organization allows us to have the benefit of economies of scale, by sharing the facilities to perform everyone's own tasks without duplicating them. Outcomes from this kind of structure are the ability to specialize in specific tasks, which produces experts on certain areas and highly skilled workforce for the organization. (Greenberg & Baron 2003, 555.)

## Divisional organization

As the organization keeps expanding more and spreads to maybe some new areas or goes international, divisional organization structure is widely used. In this type of structure functions are divided into divisions. They coordinate the functions needed to deliver the product, for example manufacturing, finances, research and development or they might also coordinate deliveries to some specific geographical areas or market segments. Divisional structure is also referred as one part of departmentalization. (Karlöf & Lövingson 2006, 26.)

Divisions are meant to work as companies inside of a company and usually how the divisions are determined depends from one of the three following aspects which are important for the company's functions. First, the division can focus on specific product or category, second, it can serve a specific geographical market area, and third, division can focus its services for a specific customer group. In this kind of structure the independence of division is the key aspect and the main idea is that they function as separate strategic business units. One division can also consist of multiple business units and companies might have areas of business, which are taken care of in several division. (Karlöf & Lövingson 2006, 26.)

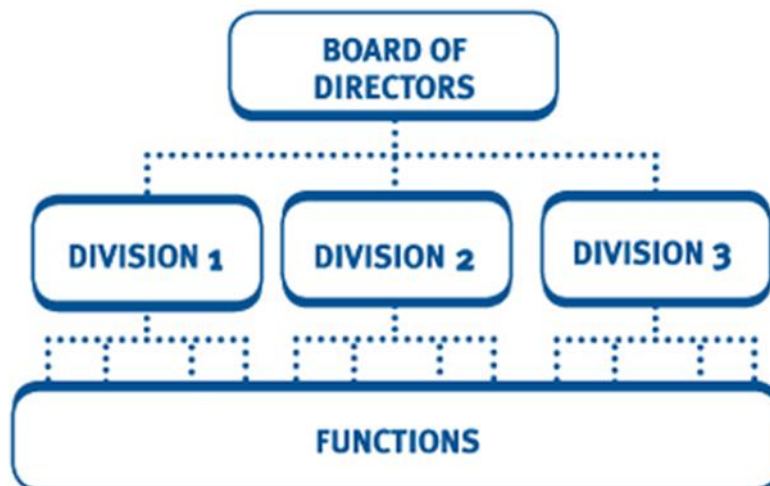


Figure 3. Example of a divisional structure.

<http://kfknowledgebank.kaplan.co.uk/KFKB/Wiki%20Pages/Divisional%20Structures.aspx>

### 3.2.3 Mechanistic and Organic organizations

#### **Mechanistic organization**

Mechanistic structure is quite similar to functional organization, but in mechanistic model there are more strict rules and it uses as a bases more of bureaucratic structure. Specialization does exist in both of them, but in mechanistic model different departments do not exist the same way as in functional organizations and more hierarchy is present.

*Mechanistic structure is a type of organization structure possessing a high degree of task specialization, many rules and tight specification of individual responsibility and authority, and one in which decision making is centralized (Huczynski & Buchanan 2001, 515.).*

According to Bloisi, Cook and Hunsaker (2007, 708), in research done by Burns and Stalker (1966), which is the origin of the concept in this context, they noticed that mechanistic organizations tend to be stiff and often found in rather steady environments. Some characteristics of such organizations were listed in their study. In mechanistic structures organizational tasks are divided into specialized and functional duties and individual tasks are more abstract. Roles have a specific definition of rights and responsibilities and are related to functional position. Loyalty and obedience are insisted on by superiors and knowledge is held by those at the top of the hierarchy.

As mentioned earlier, mechanistic organizations allow high degree of specialization and there is also many rules. Power is assigned to few people located at the top of a hierarchy who give direct orders to their employees. Mechanistic model seeks to maximize efficiency and production. In order to this type of structure to be effective, external environment has to be relatively unchanging and stable and the technology should be roughly unchangeable. The best example of using mechanistic structure efficiently is known to be McDonald's, where they have every job positions highly formalized and every task is done the same way all over the world. Many authors use



the example of them making fries, which are done the exactly same way in all of the McDonald's since the beginning. This enables them to do the same products at lowest possible cost everywhere. (Greenberg & Baron 2003, 564; Huczynski & Buchanan 2001, 516; Bloisi, Cook & Hunsaker 2007, 723.)

### **Organic organization**

Organic structure is almost completely the opposite of the mechanistic structure mentioned earlier in the text as it emphasizes the importance of adaptability and development.

*Organic structure is a type of organization structure possessing little task specialization, few rules and a high degree of individual responsibility and authority, and one in which decision making is delegated (Huczynski & Buchanan 2001, 515.).*

Organic organizations can be described as relatively informal, decentralized and simple as there exists very few ranks and titles are used. Contrast to the mechanistic mentality, organic model seeks to maximize satisfaction, flexibility and development. In the right kind of environment, both mechanistic and organic structures can be used efficiently and depending on the situation, it varies which of these two would fit better. (Ivancevich, Konopaske & Matteson 2014, 476-477.)

In organic organizations, knowledge and experience is valued for its contribution to the common task and individual tasks are seen relating to the organization as a whole. Individual tasks are also continually redefined through interaction with others. Responsibility is shared, with control, authority and communication having a lateral rather than vertical direction. Specialty of specific jobs is very low and instead, a wide knowledge of many different tasks is important. Authority from the top is not used that much and decisions have a tendency to be made in a very democratic, participative way. The organic organization encourages to use of all human potential, which makes it really flexible to changing demands, whether they are internal or external. (Bloisi, Cook & Hunsaker 2007, 708; Greenberg & Baron 2003, 565; Ivancevich, Konopaske & Matteson 2014, 477.)

### 3.2.5 Matrix organization

Organizations can be divided not only by function but also by product or market, or by a special blend of function and product or market known as the matrix form (Greenberg & Baron 2003, 555.). This means the structure is led simultaneously from two different directions, and the main idea in this structure is that there exists two separate chains of commands. One characteristic of a matrix organization is that there are multiple reporting channels: employees might have to report to the regional manager as well as to the closest manager in charge. A matrix organization can be described as one form of organic structure. (ibid.)

The aim of the matrix model is to maximize the strengths and minimize the weaknesses of both functional and product bases. In other words, the matrix design combines functional and product departmental bases (Ivancevich, Konopaske & Matteson 2014, 486.).

Figure 4. Below will help to understand the structure better.

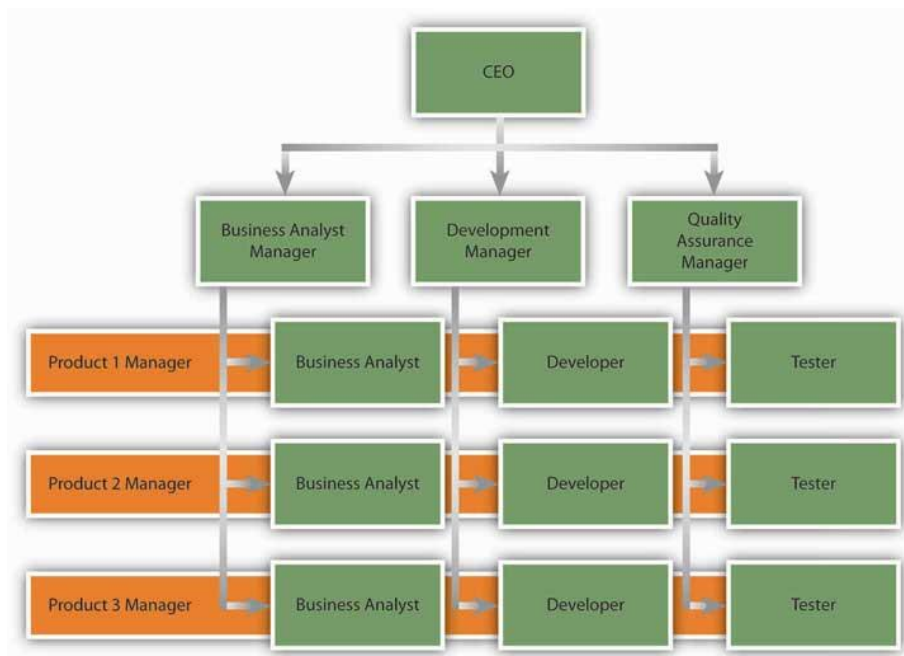


Figure 4. Example of a matrix structure.

<https://new.edu/resources/organizational-structure--4>)

The matrix structure was developed in the late 1950s to cope with increasingly complex technological problems and rates of change (Huczynski & Buchanan 2001, 447). The matrix structure originated in aerospace, but it can also be used in an industry where different functional expertise can be borrowed to another department temporarily. In traditional organization structure models, some of which were mentioned earlier, orders come from one specific manager, which is the biggest difference compared to the matrix structure as they can come from at least two different managers and possibly at the same time. For example, one authority takes care of and manages the formal aspects of the contract, which could be the salary related issues and the other authority might be involved more in hands-on doing and specific projects or tasks. (Bloisi, Cook & Hunsaker 2007, 716; Brooks 2009, 198.)

The advantages of a matrix organization are that it makes it possible to concentrate on two separate entities at the same time. Consequently, information processing will become intensive as the communication between these cross functions has to be a clear dialog. This might help employees to gain a common boundless understanding of the organization regardless of whether they are separated by different products or geographical areas. The matrix structure also ensures quick sharing of resources as they work under two different entities. (Karlöf & Lövingsson 2006, 35.)

Every organization faces some sort of challenges and obstacles but it is important that these issues are dealt with and solutions are found. One of the possible encounters in matrix organizations can be caused by the dual chain of commands, This sort of structure requires a high level of good communication to make sure that employees know their roles and tasks and that there is no conflicting messages inside the organization. (Peltonen 2007, 36.)

### 3.2.6 Network organization

Network organizations have emerged because the classical hierarchical and sort of more bureaucratic models are too slow to react to the quick changes in the environment. Networked organization can be communities of practice between

individuals with same kind of experiences or purposes to supply chains of companies that are in the same industry and exchange knowledge. In the network, activities still need to be coordinated and integrated, but this integration relies on knowledge and relationships and a clear common sense of purpose. (Doukidis, Mylonopoulos & Pouloudi 2004, 302.)

*“In network structures a small core organisation coordinates, for example, design, production, transportation and marketing across four legally and geographically separate organisations. The central core is rather like a spider tugging on the strands of a web reaching out to the other organisations in the network. These organisations may be removed or added to give more flexible arrangement.” (Brooks 2009, 200.)*

Networks can be more or less dominated by one company or then more equal-partner type of arrangements. Usually one downsized, delayed, core competences-based company is in the center of the dominated network, who outsources its production functions and keeps only the core competences. In dominated network smaller companies in the network do not communicate with each other that much and most interaction is made through the dominating company. In some cases networks can be equal-partner networks, which consists of similarly sized companies and all of the companies control the network's activities together. (Huczynski & Buchanan 2001, 544.)

Network organizations are also sometimes referred as virtual organizations, which indeed means that company's major business functions might be outsourced and the core focuses only on what it does the best. Large organizations have started outsourcing various functions, depending if some other company is able to do the same work as efficiently and maybe even at a cheaper cost. Core organization can be small group of executives who oversee all the activities done in-house and they coordinate relationships with other organizations that take care of functions signed to them. Managers in network organizations mostly just coordinate and control external relations. (Robbins, Judge & Campbell 2010, 440.)

### 3.2.7 Lean organization

Lean organization structure and way of thinking is one of the newest mindsets and it has become more popular in recent few years. Originally it came from Japan's auto industry, when the car manufacturer Toyota came up with a new process for manufacturing and that mindset has since spread from manufacturing to all different fields including organization structures.

Purpose of the lean thinking is to maximize customer value and using fewer resources to create that value for customers. The goal is to provide value to the customer using a perfect value creation process and eliminating all waste. This type of process, where waste is continuously eliminated throughout the entire value stream enables to use less human effort, space, and capital and time to make services or products for the customer. Responding to changing customer needs will become easier with higher quality and variety, and also the time getting ready product or service to customer decreases. (Lean Enterprise Institute, 2015.)

Lean process aims to give customer desired product or service whenever it is needed and the quality should be excellent. This should enable the provider to give really good customer experience and keeping the production costs relatively low. Some basic principles to ensure this are always to keeping in mind the customer value and building the quality from inside the processes. Using smaller production units and avoiding middle storages. (Staats & Upton 2011.)

Lean enterprise institute has a five-step process on their website to help implementing the lean principles in the company's functions and it includes the following steps. First task is to specify value from the standpoint of the end customer by product family, and then identify all the steps in the value stream for each product family and eliminating whenever possible those steps that do not create value. After first two steps, company should make the value-creating steps occur in tight sequence so the product will flow smoothly toward the customer and when the flow is created, the idea is to let the customer pull value from the next activity

occurring. After all these steps are done, company should begin the process again and continue it until perfect value is created with no waste. (Lean Enterprise, 2015.)



Figure 5. Five-step lean process.

(Lean Enterprise Institute, 2015.)

Lean organizations usually have a clear and long term vision, which is achieved systematically developing processes and people working in the organization. The goals are equally benefitting the customers, organization, employees, stakeholders and the society. (Lean Enterprise Institute, 2015.)

### Summary

There are various ways of organizing groups of people and organizations and each of these structures have their advantages and disadvantages. In most cases, organizations switch from one structure to another as they grow or if new opportunities or threats are arising. To sum up these seven structures above, below is a table that indicates the main advantages and disadvantages of each structure.

Table 1. Advantages and disadvantages of different structures.

St	Advantages	Disadvantages
Functional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourages specialization</li> <li>• Functional efficiency</li> <li>• Prevention of job duplication</li> <li>• Ability to manage and control entire organization easily (Karlöf &amp; Lövingsson, 2006.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of cooperation and communication between functions</li> <li>• Decision making pushed on top</li> <li>• Rather slow on reacting to external changes (Peltonen, 2007.)</li> </ul>
Divisional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enables to satisfy specific customer needs and development of specific expertise areas. (E.g. geographical knowledge, customs.)</li> <li>• Quick reaction to changes (Peltonen, 2007.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chance of job duplication</li> <li>• Personnel costs can be higher than needed (Ivancevich, Konopaske &amp; Matteson, 2014.)</li> </ul>
Mechanistic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High degree of specialization</li> <li>• Highly efficient in stable environments</li> <li>• Economies of scale (Greenberg &amp; Baron, 2003.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rigid rules</li> <li>• Centralized authority on top</li> <li>• Inability to react external environment (Greenberg &amp; Baron, 2003.)</li> </ul>
Organic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordination between peers</li> <li>• Knowledge of different jobs</li> <li>• Quick reaction to changing environment (Greenberg &amp; Baron, 2003.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roles and duties being vague, might occur confusion (Greenberg &amp; Baron, 2003.)</li> </ul>
Matrix	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allows to focus on everyone's expertise</li> <li>• Efficient information exchange between units-&gt; productivity &amp; quick decision-making</li> <li>• Through projects developing other functional area skills</li> <li>• Flexible to share human resources across units/projects (Peltonen, 2007.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internal complexity &amp; confusion of tasks</li> <li>• Possible power struggles between managers</li> <li>• Double management expensive to maintain (Robbins, Judge &amp; Campbell, 2010.)</li> </ul>
Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allows large operations without bigger investments</li> <li>• Possible to focus on what company does the best</li> <li>• Flexibility</li> <li>• Culturally diverse (Ivancevich, Konopaske &amp; Matteson, 2014)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintaining relationships takes a lot of effort</li> <li>• Lack of longer commitment (Peltonen, 2007.)</li> </ul>
Lean	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase productivity &amp; value</li> <li>• Better &amp; more accurate products</li> <li>• Reducing costs at all levels</li> <li>• Eliminating waste</li> <li>• Continuous development (Swank, 2003.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Takes a lot of time to implement throughout the organization</li> <li>• Constant changes might frustrate employees (Swank, 2003.)</li> </ul>

### 3.3 Education Organizations

The Finnish higher education system consists of polytechnics and universities. The mission of the universities is to conduct scientific research and provide instruction and postgraduate education. Polytechnics train professionals in response to labor market needs and conduct research & development. Polytechnics are also known as Universities of Applied Sciences. Their education emphasizes close contacts with local businesses, industries and the service sector. The University of Applied Sciences degree programs are aimed to meet the requirements and needs of ~~the~~ the working life. This is done by having a distinct work-related emphasis and by educating qualified graduates for diverse professional positions. (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2015: CIMO, 2015.)

#### **JAMK University of Applied Sciences**

JAMK University of Applied Sciences is an international higher education institution that consists of four education departments: The School of Health and Social Studies, School of Technology, Teacher Education College, and School of Business. All of these departments operate under the JAMK Administration, which includes the Board of Directors as well as a rector from each education unit. In addition, JAMK University of Applied Sciences includes Research & Development activities, and different services for its employees, students and partners. (JAMK information, 2015.)



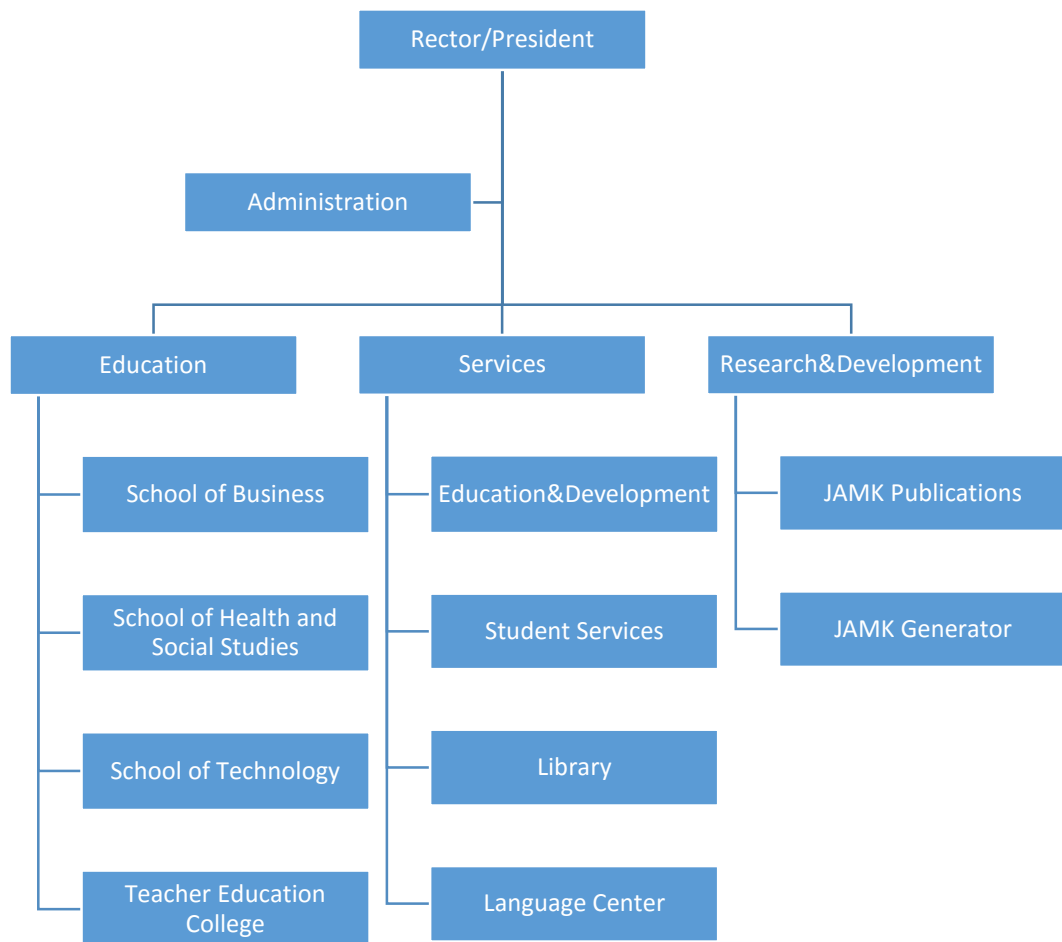


Figure 6. JAMK University of Applied Sciences Organizational Structure.

(Kuivalainen, 2015.)

The School of Health and Social Studies offers education in areas such as health, welfare, and cultural sectors - It is also a popular development partner for businesses and organizations in the same field. The School of Technology is divided into four separate departments; Information and Communication Technology, Mechanical Engineering, Logistics, and Natural Resources and Civil Engineering. The Teacher Education College offers programs in teacher education, continuing education, and also activities including research, development and innovation. The School of Business offers education in the ever changing international business and service

sectors. They specialize in entrepreneurship, innovative learning culture and research and development. (JAMK information, 2015.)

### Tampere University of Applied Sciences

Tampere University of Applied Sciences was formed in 2010 when Pirkanmaa University of Applied Sciences and the previous Tampere University of Applied Sciences merged. It is now one of the biggest Universities of Applied Sciences in Finland with approximately 50 degree programs, 10,000 students and 730 employees. Tampere University of Applied Sciences consists from the following departments; Education and Research & Development, Business Operations and Services, Development and Quality Management, HR Services, and Higher Education Services. (TAMK Organization, 2015.)

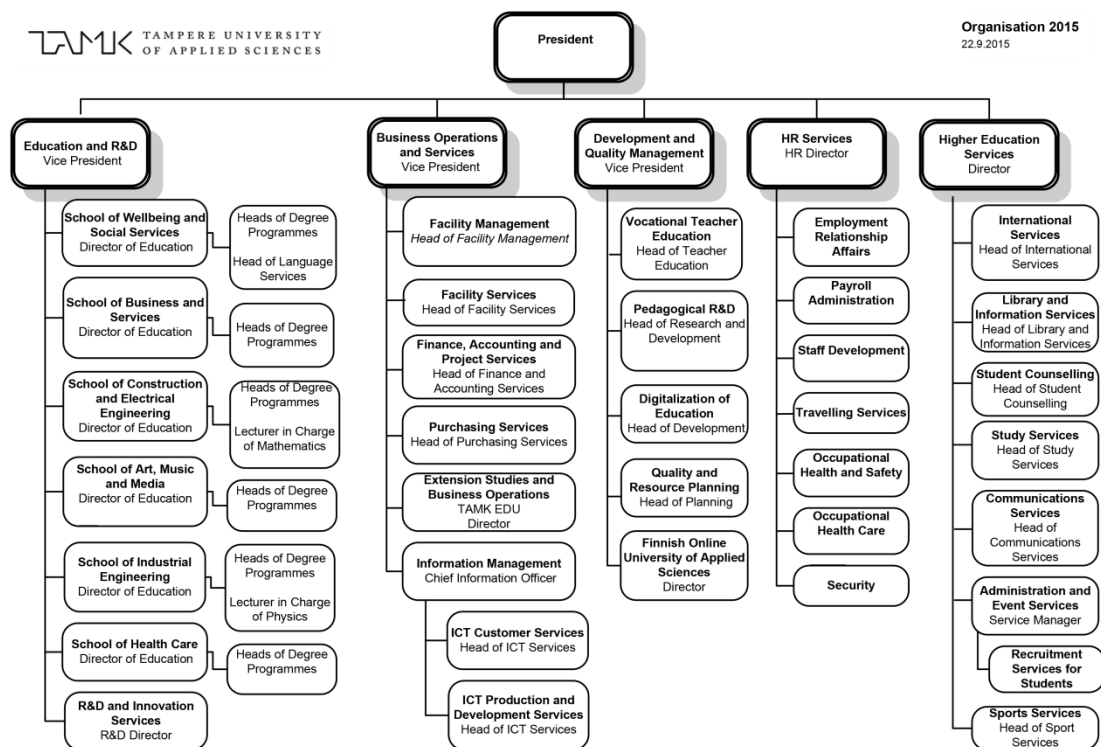


Figure 7. Tampere University of Applied Sciences Organizational structure.

(<http://www.tamk.fi/web/tamken/organization>. 2015.)

Majority of Higher Education Institutions in Finland are organized the same way as these two Universities of Applied Sciences mentioned above. From different organizational structure models and theories talked about before, we can see that these organizations follow the principles of departmentalization structure model. (See figure 2.) As Karlöf & Lövigsson (2006, 22.) have said, that functional or departmentalization structure usually means that employees are divided in different and specific areas of expertise. This sort of structure is said to work really well in education organizations, where special knowledge of certain fields are vital. These separate groups are managed horizontally by the management, emphasize being on mutual communication, principles and coherent company culture. In addition, different groups have their own set of goals and planning according to their own field or department.

## **4 Research Results**

This research consisted of four interviews with employees who work within the International Services. In addition, a questionnaire was given to the personnel of JAMK University of Applied Sciences. The objective was to get specific information about the functions of International Services and how the employees of JAMK are experiencing these services. First, the findings from the interviews are explained, followed by the results from the survey.

### **4.1 Different functions of International Services**

The interviewees are referred to here as respondents 1 through 4 and, the order of them is not the same as when conducting the interviews to ensure the privacy of the respondents. These findings helped to get to the bottom of the International Services and its functions in general. As a comparison, there is also information from Tampere University of Applied Sciences and its International Services, acquired via email exchange.

This part will explain what the International Services is, who work there and what their jobs include. Afterwards, there will be more about the structure and strategy of these services.

According to the information gathered during the interviews, JAMK University of Applied Sciences International Services is part of the Development Services that operate under the Administration. The vice Director is the head of these services and along with the International Services, the Development Services include Student Services, Educational Development Services, R&D-development Services, Quality Assurance, and Languages and Communication. International Relations Manager is the head of the International Services and reports to the Vice Director of the University. Besides the International Relations Manager, there are four people working full time in International Services. Their duties include processes related to outgoing/incoming exchange students and their grants, staff mobility, reporting and statistics, personal guidance, coordination of the ERASMUS+ programme, partner school contracts, and development of internationalization and processes at JAMK University of Applied Sciences.

Different departments have their own international coordinators, who serve their students, staff and partners in cooperation concerning international affairs and mobility. This means that there are four international coordinators, of which three are full time coordinators. At the Teacher Education College, the coordinator only works a certain amount of hours of as an international coordinator. Each of the coordinators operates under their own unit's Director, and their duties may vary depending on the department.

In some departments, there are separate people taking care of issues related to practical training abroad and exchange periods whereas some have one individual taking care all of these functions. The respondents were all satisfied with how their own position was structured, whether they take care of all of the internationalization functions in their department or not.

*“If we want to develop practical training processes, we need different kind of concept, people, and networks than in exchange cooperation.” (Respondent 4)*

*“We do a lot of cooperation between departments. If someone hears about a good cooperation prospect suitable for others, we exchange information and get things going.” (Respondent 2)*

*“International Services made sure that all International Coordinators were on the same page and knew how things work. Coherent cooperation between departments was created perfectly.” (Respondent 3.)*

#### **4.2 View of the structure of International Services**

JAMK International Services is organized in sort of half centralized and half decentralized model. This structure has been in use for the International Services since 1996. There has been some changes, as the number of Education Departments was once reduced from eight to four. At that time there had been basically ten International Coordinators. During these kinds of organizational changes, work responsibilities are reviewed and changes are made if needed to ensure the functionality.

*“Few years ago there was discussion, whether International Services should be completely centralized. This would mean that all the International Coordinators would work under the International Relations Manager” (Respondent 1)*

*“More employees (in International Services) would enable to have back-up system and if someone is absent, assigned person can replace that position” (Respondent 1)*

There are various different solutions for the organizing and from time to time these different options are discussed. These new structural changes could have different job descriptions e.g. from having departmental responsibilities, to having certain specific areas of responsibility regardless of the department.

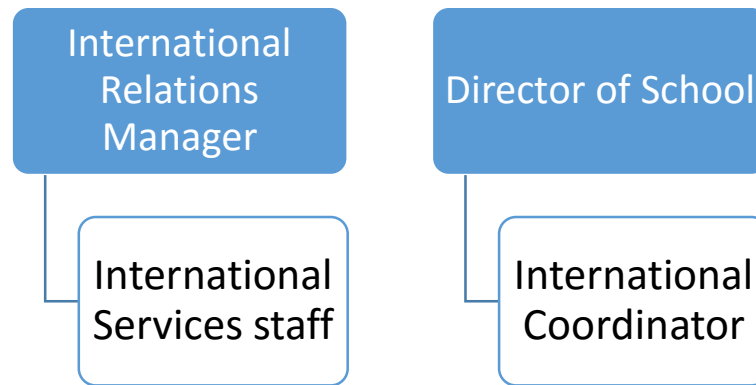


Figure 8. International Services Organizational Structure.

(Kuivalainen 2016.)

The official centralized JAMK International Services offer specific services not related to each department's content. All the work that can help, support, or make processes smoother are done at the International Services e.g. after a certain point, different application processes are the same whether or not students come from the same department or degree program.

Some pros and cons of this kind of structure were stated by the respondents and overall the opinion about this divided structure was positive:

*"It guarantees the quality of the services as well as that everyone is treated equally." (Respondent 1)*

*"Having centralized International Services and separate International Coordinators in departments works really well." (Respondent 2)*

*"International Coordinators are part of the Departments where they function and are seen as part of the whole, rather than belonging to International Services." (Respondent 1)*

*"Challenges occur as the unit of International Services is rather small and this makes us vulnerable for sudden changes. If something new and unexpected comes up and everyone already has their plate full, it is hard to get resources to answer this need." (Respondent 1)*

The International Coordinators being in the units, rather than directly under the International Services was seen as a good thing. It was considered to make it easier to understand and get inside the department's issues. Even though most of the application process procedures are handled in the International Services office, respondents felt that the work load in the units is still quite extensive. International Coordinators job description includes helping students and staff in internationalization issues, finding new partner schools and keeping in touch with them, and also continuously trying to improve all of these functions. In addition, giving presentations, attending to conferences and education export projects would need more time. The respondents felt that majority of their time goes in helping the students with their exchange/practical training placements and taking care of the Personal Learning Plans.

*"Personal Learning Plans of exchange students (outgoing/incoming) take majority of the time. There is not enough time to think strategic improvements as much as needed." (Respondent 4)*

*"Another person could be helping in the operational level in departments. One would take care of all the everyday processes and the other could focus on the networking and development." (Respondent 3)*

The respondents had the feeling, that their jobs include a lot of different tasks and sometimes there is not enough time to do much needed developmental work. There was suggestions like one above, that there could be another person helping with all the work. This would make it possible to focus more on the development of processes and acquiring new partners. There was also one good aspect brought up, when talking about the fact that the International Coordinators are dealing with a lot of stages concerning internationalization.

*"You need to know the partners and contracts to be able to tell the students, what they are offering. This way everyone can find exactly the right place for them." (Respondent 2)*

Overall, the respondents were satisfied on how things are functioning now, but there is always room for improvements. The main thing that came up in the interviews, was definitely the need of an extra pair of hands. International Coordinators are also supposed to participate in developing internationalization and follow intensively global research fields. At the moment, there does not seem to be enough time to do that and some sort of changes would need to be done.

### **Strategy**

The Ministry of Education and Culture has instructed that the Higher Education Institutions should not have a separate international strategy. Instead, Universities of Applied Sciences should have one overall strategy, where internationalization plays a big part.

*“This National Internationalization strategy, which guides all Education Institutions in Finland, is valid until the end of this year (2015).” (Respondent 1)*

*“Separate internationalization strategy is not required, but we definitely should have one. Majority of our European cooperation schools have one.” (Respondent 4)*



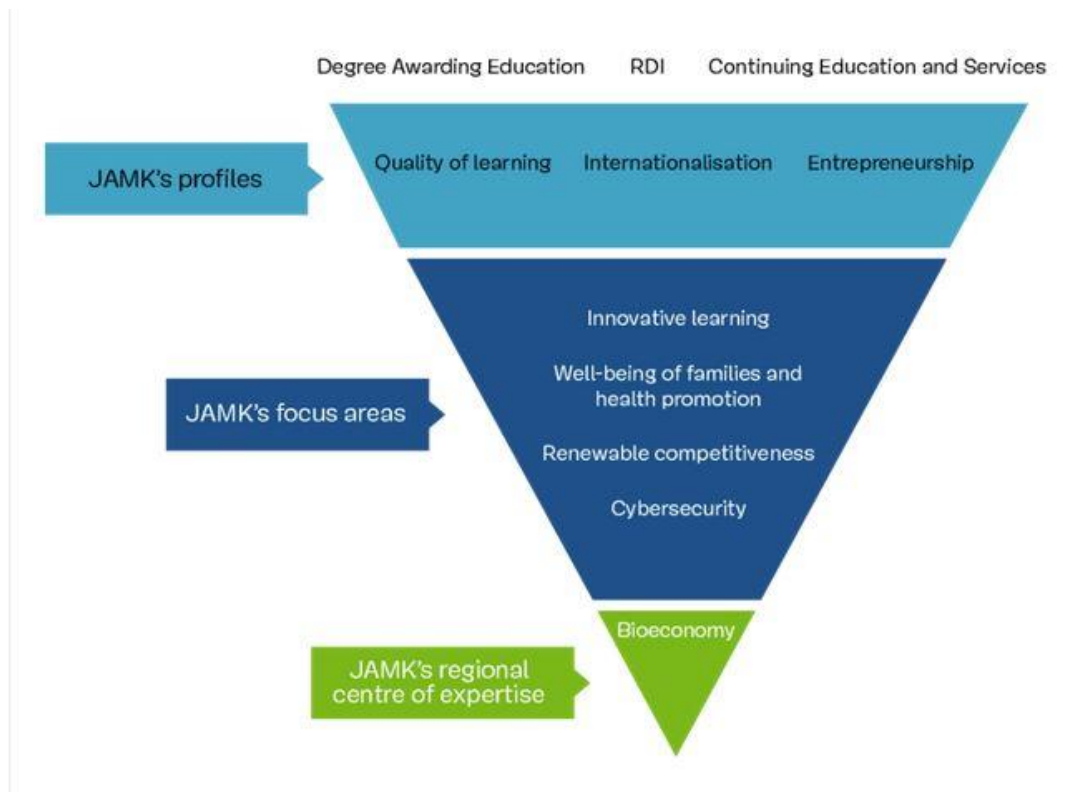


Figure 9. JAMK University of Applied Sciences Strategy.

(JAMK, 2015.)

JAMK's strategy emphasizes success on the quality of learning, internationalization, and entrepreneurship. (See figure 9.) There can also be some qualitative and quantitative goals that support the strategy e.g. adding more double degree cooperation with other schools. There have been discussions about whether or not there should be a specific Internationalization Strategy, but this has mainly been only on departmental level. This would mean that each department defines their own specific focus areas and goals.

The International Services goal is to help achieve the strategy and its goals. There are specific quantitative and qualitative goals and different ways to measure the success. One of the important functions is to support all the departments achieve their own goals. These include mobility, developing the processes related to incoming and outgoing exchange students, and helping departments and International Coordinators handling these issues. There are also some general goals set for the

International Services, which are to develop all the processes and support services e.g. Intranet pages, different documents, forms and instructions.

### **Tampere University of Applied Sciences International Services**

The role of the Tampere University of Applied Sciences (TAMK) International Services in their school organization is the same as in JAMK University of Applied Sciences. From the information acquired from TAMK, it appears that the International Services are part of the Tampere University of Applied Sciences Higher Education Services which is run by the Director of the Education Services. The Head of the International Services reports to the head of the entire Higher Education Services, who reports to the President of Tampere University of Applied Sciences.

*“International Services mission is to support in achieving organizational goals stated in the overall strategy.” (TAMK, 2015.)*

The tasks of the International Services include for example, to control international mobility contracts, support degree programs in the arrangement of mobility projects, arrange international weeks, and create new networks. Annually, every unit gets their own set of international goals which are regularly checked by the Management Team, International Services, and Education departments.

The International Services Unit is managed by the International Services Manager. It also includes one representative from Research, Development and Innovation unit and a representative from the Student Union TAMKO. In addition, there are eight planners in the International Services as well as ten International Coordinators in different education departments. Those coordinators are lecturers or planners. Therefore, being an International Coordinator is only one part of their job. The job descriptions are similar to those of the JAMK International Services staff including issues of outgoing students and incoming students, international mobility projects, short-term exchanges, financial issues, international teacher and personnel exchanges as well as maintaining the statistics of international matters.

## Structure of the International Services

The Tampere University of Applied Sciences International Services describe their organization structure as centralized. Tampere University of Applied Sciences and Pirkanmaa University of Applied Sciences merged a few years ago and different solutions for the organizing were studied by making comparison to other higher education organizations. Both of these schools had had a centralized structure before and they had found it functional. This structure has now been in use since the beginning of the academic year 2010-2011.

*“Only change was done in 2015, when the amount of international coordinators was reduced. This led coordinators to have broader entities to take care of.”*

With their centralized structure, Tampere University of Applied Sciences aims to guarantee high-quality and unbiased processes and services for everyone. The common procedures are agreed on together in the International Services, and the communication with degree programs is constant. This structure has received excellent internal and external feedback. All the processes and instructions are comprehensive, which has been noticed nationally as well as internationally. One of the challenges is due the big size of the polytechnic. Gathering and sharing all the important information has been challenging from time to time as there are many different degree programs and actors involved.

## 4.2 Opinions of personnel about international functions

The purpose of the questionnaire was to get thoughts about Internationalization and International Services from the employees of JAMK University of Applied Sciences. In this section, there is first a general overview of the results and then comparisons of the answers between different departments. This made it possible to compare opinions and answers, between School of Business and other respondents.

In the survey form, ([Appendix 1.](#)), all of the different education units were separated. To make the results clearer and easier to read, departments were combined as

shown below. (Table 2.) This way it was possible to combine all of the 11 variables in the survey, into three different departments and other-category. The total amount of responses was 114 out of 270 sent survey forms. This gives us the response rate of around 42%. The School of Business (32%) and the Other-category (36%) represented two thirds of the responses. The School of Health and Social Studies (22%) and the School of Technology (10%) had the smallest amount of representatives in this case. (Table 2.)

Table 2. Respondents by department

	N=113
	%
School of Business	32
School of Health and Social Studies	22
School of Technology	10
Other	36
TOTAL	100

The last section of the questionnaire was focused on getting some background information from the respondents. These four questions will be explained first, which were about their gender, occupation and department where they work at. This gives us a decent review of the respondents who answered to the questionnaire. The departments are already shown above, in the first table. Majority of the respondents were female (65%), whereas males represented approximately a third (35%) of the sample. (Appendix 2.) The respondents work in different positions across the JAMK organization and lecturers gave a half (51%) of the responses. Rest of the answers were quite equally spread out with other positions, including Principal Lecturers (4%), Part-time teachers (9%), Administration (18%), and Other (18%). ([Appendix 2.](#)) From these figures we can see that the sample represented rather well different parts of the organization as well as people in different positions.

The first two questions were asking about how international the JAMK University of Applied Sciences is seen and how important the role of being international is seen in the Higher Education Institutions. Both of these questions had scales from one to five

with different opinions to choose. In order to compare results between the different departments, these following tables are cross-tabulated.

Over half (64%) of the respondents feel, that the JAMK is moderately international and every fourth (24%) thinks that JAMK was extremely international. Every tenth (9%) considers level of internationality somewhere in between the continuum and only 4% chose to answer slightly. Overall, JAMK University of Applied Sciences is seen quite international. Between departments there are some differences in answers, but differences are not significant enough for statistical testing. For example, to get reliable Chi2 test results, the value in each cell should be 5 or higher. In this case, that criteria is not met. (Table 3.) One possibility to get more reliable Chi2 test results is to combine groups and then run the test again. Here it was tried to do, by combining all the other groups together, except School of Business. However, there were still 3 cases, which had value less than 5. Even so, the test result concluded that there was not any significant differences in frequencies. Possible reasons for the different views in the level of internationality could be related to how often people are dealing with international issues. Some departments might have more international cooperation in their functions than others.

Table 3. Influence of different department in the international level experienced  
Dependence is highly significant. Chi2 = 28,35, df = 9, 1-p = 99,92%. Warning: 9 (56.3%) cases have an estimated value of less than 5 hence the rules of Chi2 are not really applicable.

N =	Business 36 %	Health and Social Studies 25 %	Technology 11 %	Other 41 %	TOTAL 113 %
Slightly	3	0	27	0	4
In between	14	0	0	12	9
Moderately	58	68	73	63	64
Extremely	25	32	0	24	24
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100

Second question was closely related to the first one, as it asked the importance of internationalization in Higher Education Institutions. (Table 4.) All of the respondents work in this environment and purpose was to get thoughts of how much people value being international. Over half (59%) valued highly internationalization and considered it very important. Second popular answer was that it is seen as quite important which was answered by a bit over every fourth (28%) of the respondents. All of the respondents seemed to think that internationalization is indeed important as there were none not at all answers. Rest of the replies were divided between of average importance, which was chosen every tenth (9%). Smallest group being slightly important with 4% response rate. Again here, some cells have value of under 5, which implies the trustworthiness of Chi2 test.

Table 4. Importance of internationalization in education institutions by department  
Dependence is highly significant. Chi2 = 26,16, df = 9, 1-p = 99,81%. Warning: 9 (56.3%) cases have an estimated value of less than 5 hence the rules of Chi2 are not really applicable.

	Business	Health and Social Studies	Technology	Other	TOTAL
N =	36	25	11	41	113
	%	%	%	%	%
Slightly important	6	0	9	2	4
Of average importance	3	0	36	12	9
Quite important	14	48	18	32	28
Very important	78	52	36	54	59
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100

In the research, there was also asked how internationalization is visible in their working environment. This was an open-question and total of 100 people out of 114 respondents told their insights of this matter. After transcribing the results, answers were grouped into five different categories according to the similarity of answers. ([Appendix 2.](#)) Most visible thing, how internationalization can be seen, was all the international students attending to classes as well as international teachers. (Figure 10.) This group represented almost a third (27%) of the answers. As stated earlier in

this report, half (51%) of the respondents were lecturers. JAMK University of Applied Sciences can be considered rather international with large number of exchange students, teachers would easily encounter international students. However, sample group had also people working in other tasks as well e.g. administrative and office work. These respondents stated, that a lot of their work includes guiding, helping and interacting with international students as well. The fact, that there are students and staff from all around the world, suggests that the use of common language is needed. Another third (27%) of the respondents said, that English language is used on a regular basis while giving lectures or customer service.

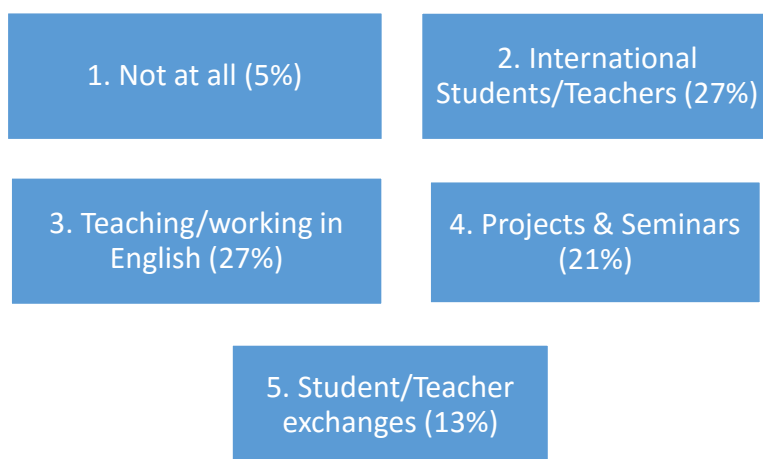


Figure 10. How can internationality be seen in respondents work.

In addition, different kinds of international projects and seminars were quite common as every fifth (21%) mentioned these aspects. Some examples of these were education export projects, supporting local companies to go international and coordination of summer schools. Fifth group was categorized as different exchange programs and supportive tasks related to those functions. This group represented a little over every tenth (13%) of respondents in this specific question. Few of the respondents had been on a teacher exchange themselves and others had been dealing with issues related to incoming/outgoing exchange students. Only 5% said

that internationality is not visible in their work and rest (7%) of the answers could not be categorized, thus they are not taken into account in this case.

In the next part of the survey, the questions were asking whether respondents have been dealing with JAMK's International Services or not. If they had, follow up questions asked what were the occasions as well as the frequency. These questions would give us more specific information, how familiar the respondents are with International Services.

Over half (60%) out of 68 respondents had been dealing with the International Services and the rest (40%) stated they had not. ([Appendix 2.](#)) From this cross tabulation table (Figure 11.), we can see the differences between department's answers. Respondents from School of Health and Social Studies seemed to have used the International Services the most, with almost all (84%) answering yes. Second group being the Other-category, where half (51%) have been dealing with these services. Out of School of Business respondents, also over half (67%) stated the interaction with International Services. These values show that the usage of JAMK International Services can be considered pretty high in the sample group. School of Technology's responses differ from others, as almost all (82%) answered that they have not dealt with International Services. This can be possibly due to the fact that School of Technology's group had the smallest amount of responses with only 11. Regardless, it could be concluded that people from all across the organization seem to have been dealing with International Services at some point of their career.

From statistical Chi2 test, 3 values in these answers were considered higher or lower than expected frequency. From School of Health and Social Studies responses, only 16% stated they had not been dealing with International Services. Whereas total amount of No answers was 40%. This indicates that from that specific department, almost all of the respondents (84%) have been interacting with these services. Other significant differences were, according to the test, the answers from School of Technology. Difference in that specific case cannot be said to be reliable, as the respondent's amount was notably smaller (11).



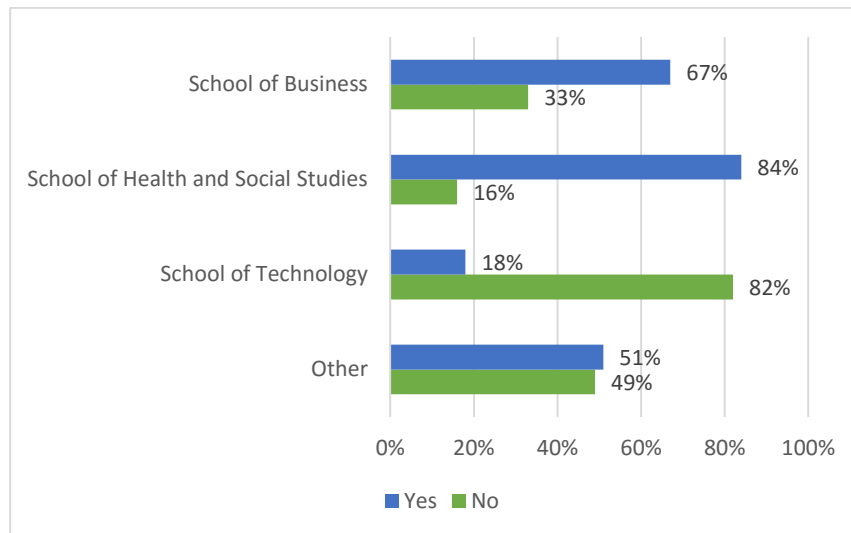


Figure 11. Influence of different department to interacting with International Services. (N=68.)

Dependence is highly significant.  $\chi^2 = 16,0$ ,  $df = 3$ ,  $1-p = 99,9\%$ .

After respondents answered whether they had interacted with International Services, they were asked to describe what the occasion was. This was another open-question, where one could write in their own words reasons for dealing with these supportive services. Total responses for this question was 66 and these answers were again after transcribing, grouped into different categories. All together four separate groups could be determined. ([Appendix 2.](#)) Additionally one tenth (12%) of the answers are not taken into account here, as they could not be grouped in a convenient way.

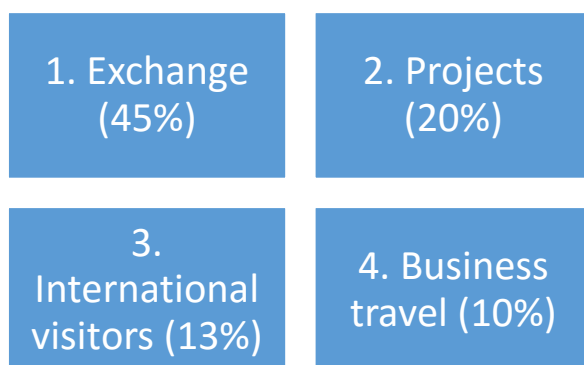


Figure 12. Occasions of dealing with the International Services.

Almost half (45%) of the responses were talking about issues related to exchanges. (Figure 12.) The ERASMUS exchanges of both the students and staff were mentioned in most of the answers as well as some short-term exchange trips. The second category (20%) was grouped according to different comments about various projects. These respondents had been interacting with the International Services concerning education export projects with China and South-America. Group number three (13%) consisted of different aspects related to the international visitors in JAMK. These tasks included orientation weeks for the incoming visitors or students, different visits by partners and arrangements concerning the Summer School. The smallest group that could be drawn from the answers was the fourth one, with a tenth (10%) of responses. These were related to getting help or more information about business travels.

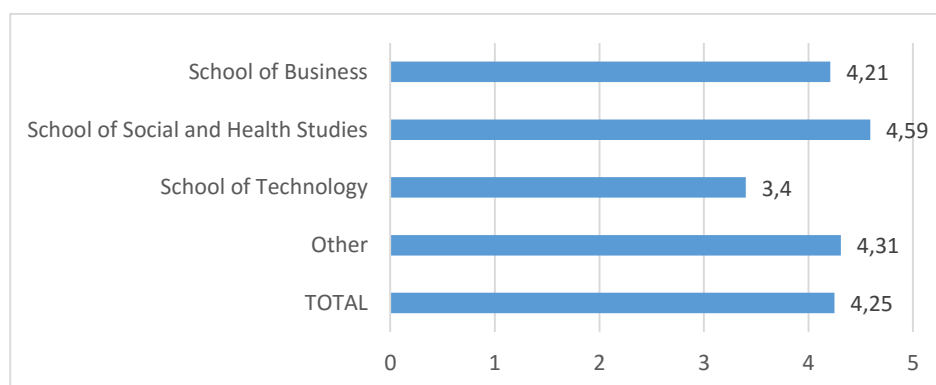
The questionnaire also asked how often the respondents had been dealing with the International Services. Altogether 68 people had been interacting with them at some point, and the frequency distribution was spread out accordingly as shown below. (Table 5.) Almost half (43%) had used these services a couple times a year, which seems to be the most common answer. Other options scored roughly the same results, as almost every fifth (19%) chose the frequency of once in a year, or in a few years. The respondents do not seem to have interacted with International Services that often, at least not on a daily basis. Only 6% stated that they had had interaction

weekly. Monthly communication with the services was stated only a little more than over every tenth (13%) of the respondents.

Table 5. Frequency distribution in dealing with International Services

	N = 68
Weekly	6
Monthly	13
Couple times in a year	43
Once in a year	19
Once in a few years	19
TOTAL	100

The next part of the survey wanted to discover how important the role of International Services is rated by the respondents. This section consisted of two questions. ([Appendix 1.](#)) First, the sample group was asked to rate how important they consider these services in the whole organization of JAMK University of Applied Sciences. In order to get a more understandable graph, a table of mean values by department is used here. (Figure 13.) The total mean value in this particular question is 4.25, which is between slightly important and very important. The majority of all the departments seemed to think that the role is at least slightly important. Only the School of Technology scored lower here with mean value of 3.4. That would indicate it being between of average importance and slightly important. Once again, this difference in the result of the School of Technology may be due to the lower number of respondents. However, that cannot be said to be the absolute truth. The bigger the sample group is in each department the more reliable results we could get.



Cell values are means calculated ignoring non-responses.

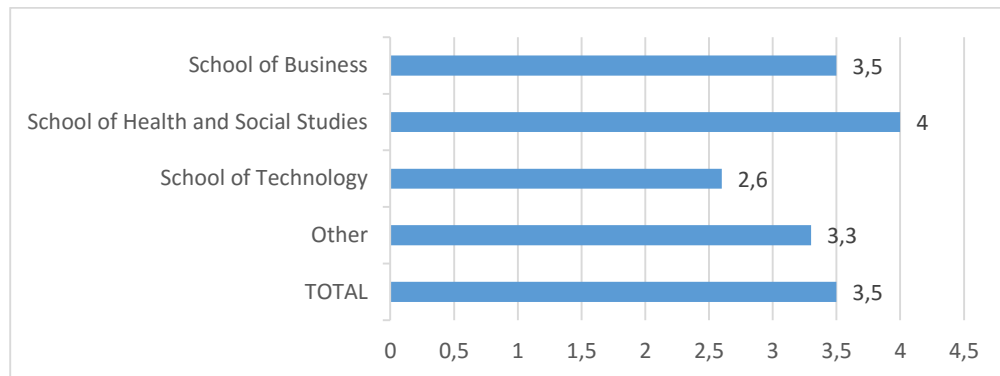
Values are based on a scale of 1 (Not important at all) to 5 (Very important). Parameters are established by the notation: Not important at all (1), Of little importance (2), Of average importance (3), Slightly important (4), Very important (5), Undecided (-).

Figure 13. Mean values of the importance of International Services by department. (N = 113)

From these mean values we can see that the School of Business scoring is almost the same as the total mean value of all the departments. Overall, this could indicate that the role of International Services in the JAMK organization is valued across the separate departments. There does not seem to be that significant differences indicating that somewhere across the whole organization these supportive services would not be seen important.

The previous question tried to discover the opinion of the International Services in general. The following question continued around the same topic as the respondents were asked to tell the importance of these services to their own position. Earlier in the survey, the respondents were asked whether they had interacted with International Services. (Appendix 1.) This question is about whether that supportive service is valued in their daily working life or not. The answers were compared by table of means separating each department. (Figure 14.) The total mean of answers was 3.5. The highest score here was that of the School of Health and Social Studies with an average of 4. The School of Technology (2.6) and the Other category (3.3) scored a bit under the mean value. According to these results, the respondents from

the School of Business see the International Services as important as other departments on average as they scored exactly the total mean value of all the 113 responses.



Values are means calculated ignoring non-responses.

Values are established by the notation: Not important at all (1), Of little importance (2), Of average importance (3), Slightly important (4), Very important (5), Undecided (-).

Figure 14. Mean values of the importance of international issues handled in departments. (N=113)

In these two questions the frequency distribution tables would not illustrate the answers properly. These tables would have had a lot of zero responses cells. This does not make it possible to use for example the Chi2 statistical testing, which would show us if the differences are significant enough to be taken into account. To conclude, these two questions demonstrate that the International Services are valued as an important function of the JAMK organization. Even though the importance in respondent's general work is not seen as that important.

After asking about the usage, purposes and importance of the International Services, respondents were challenged to think more about how these supportive services are organized. The survey asked whether the organization is seen clear or not and if not, an open space was reserved for explanations. This specific question was aimed to

discovering if people who work at JAMK know where to get help related to international issues.

Distribution of the answers by department is show below. (Table 6.) Out of 114 responses, 93 people chose to answer this question. Over half (60%) thought that the organization is clear enough and the rest 40% considered it some way not clear. From these results we can see that the School of Business's answers were most evenly divided. A little over half (53%) thought that the organization is clear from their perspective, whereas almost half (47%) saw it as not that clear. The School of Technology represents the opposite of other department's answers. Over half (60%) stated that they do not see the organization clear and the rest 40% indicated towards clarity. Once again, the number of respondents in the School of Technology cannot be ignored. That specific group had the smallest amount if representatives and in this question it was only 10 people. In the Other-group, every third (28%) said that organization is not clear and the majority (72%) of the respondents thought the contrary. Here statistical Chi2 testing showed that none of the frequencies were significantly higher or lower. This results should be reliable, as all the cells had a value bigger than five.

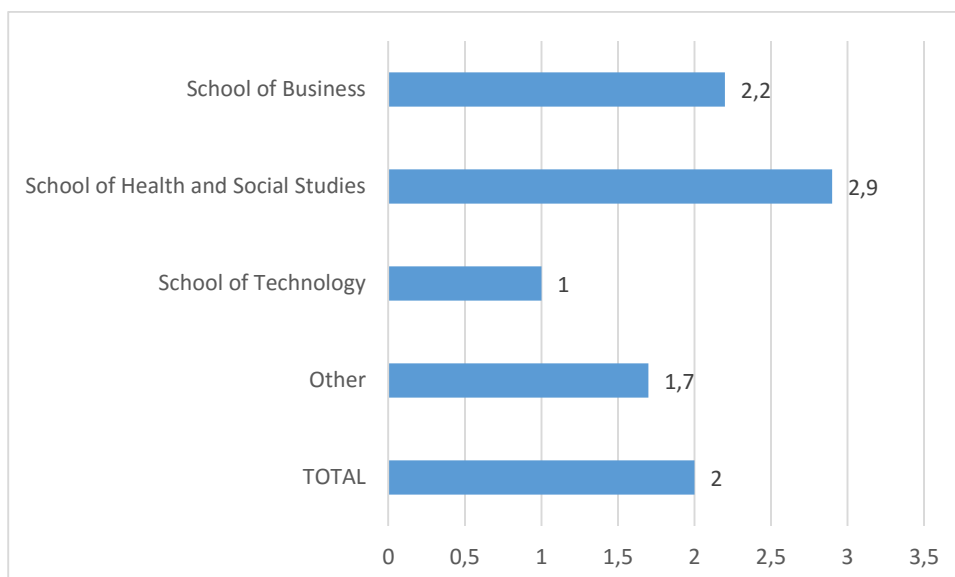
Table 6. Is the International Services organization seen clear or not?  
Dependence is not significant. Chi2 = 4,29, df = 3, 1-p = 76,78%.

	N =	Business 32 %	Health and Social Studies 22 %	Technology 10 %	Other 29 %	TOTAL 93 %
Yes		53	64	40	72	60
No		47	36	60	28	40
TOTAL		100	100	100	100	100

These results could indicate that majority of the respondents know what the International Services do as a whole and if some sort of help is needed they know

where to get it. In the following question, the respondents had the opportunity to explain the reasons, if they do not see the organization clear. Overall, out of 40 people who previously expressed the opinion of this organization not being clear, 35 respondents wrote explanations. However, these could not be grouped into any rational categories. The majority of the respondents did not have enough knowledge of the International Services as an organization to explain whether its organizing is good or not. This was stated as the main reason for answering that organization is not seen clear, in the previous question. The difference in the role of International Coordinators and the International Services was not obvious to some of the respondents. This was explained, that in some occasions it is not clear which tasks are the responsibility of departments and which belong to the International Services. The respondents emphasized also the interaction with International Coordinators, rather than the International Services.

Next the survey asked respondents to rate the help received from the International Services unit on a scale from 1 to 4. Earlier in the research it was shown that 68 people out of 114 admitted, that they had been dealing with the International Services at some point. However, when asked to rate the help of these services, 112 people answered. This might be due to the fact that the difference between the centralized International Services and international issues handled in the departments is not that obvious. It could be argued that this confusion might have had an effect on these responses, but it cannot be known to hold true. In order to know whether this mattered, it would have been wise to address the issue and ask it from the respondents beforehand. Another issue worth noticing, is that a third (37%) of the respondents did not give their opinion about this matter and chose the fifth (undecided) option. (Table 10.)



Values are means calculated ignoring non-responses.

Values are established by the notation: Tolerable (1), Acceptable (2), Good (3), Very Good (4), Undecided (-)

Figure 15. How the help received from International Services unit is viewed by departments.

The total mean value of the responses was 2,0 which according to the scale used here, rates being at acceptable level. (Figure 15.) The best rating was given by the School of Health and Social Studies (2,9), being almost at a good level. The School of Business did not fall far behind from that with rating of 2,2. The Other-category responses went a little under acceptable (1,7) and the smallest group, the School of Technology scored 1 which indicates tolerable level. In addition to this table of means, below is also a figure which shows how did people who had been interacting with these services answered compared with those who had not. (Figure 16.) As mentioned before, almost all (84%) of the respondents who had not been interacting with the International Services did not give an answer and choose the variable undecided. Overall, from those respondents who had used the International Services the almost half (43%) considered it being very good and a third (34%) at least in a good level.



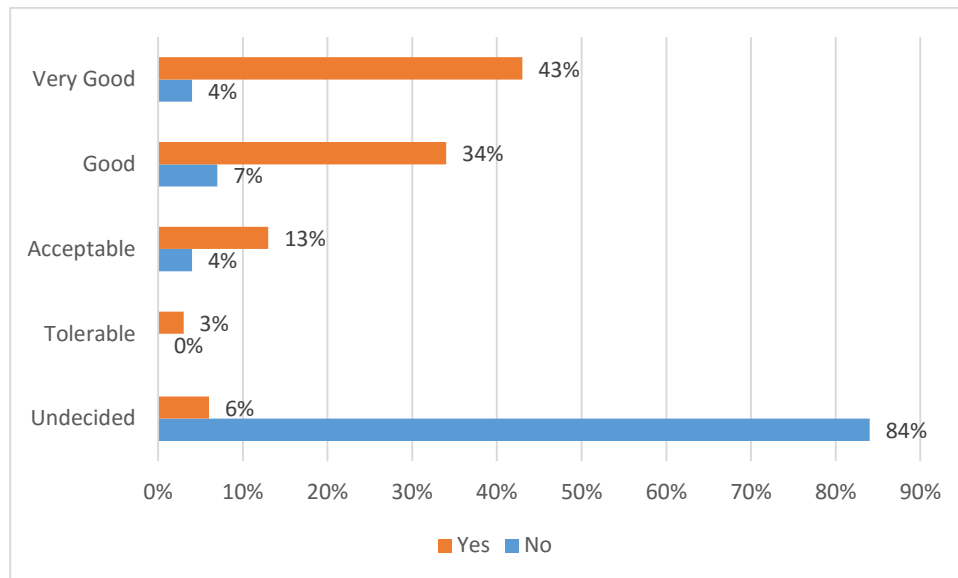


Figure 16. How the help received from International Services unit is viewed by people who have used the services versus who have not.

After this the questionnaire proceeded to reveal opinions, if the International Services are supporting the respondent's personal internationalization. Providing information and helping with internationalization issues at all levels can be considered as one of the tasks of these supportive services. Scale for the answers was from not supporting at all to support being very good. Undecided option was also available, which gained over a third (38%) of the answers. From the rest of the responses, every fourth (24%) considered that support from the International Services is at a good level in their personal internationalization. Fifth (18%) of the respondents felt that they have a slight effect on the level of personal internationalization. Every tenth (9%) stated that the International Services do not have any effect on the matter, whereas 6% gave a neutral answer with somewhere in between.

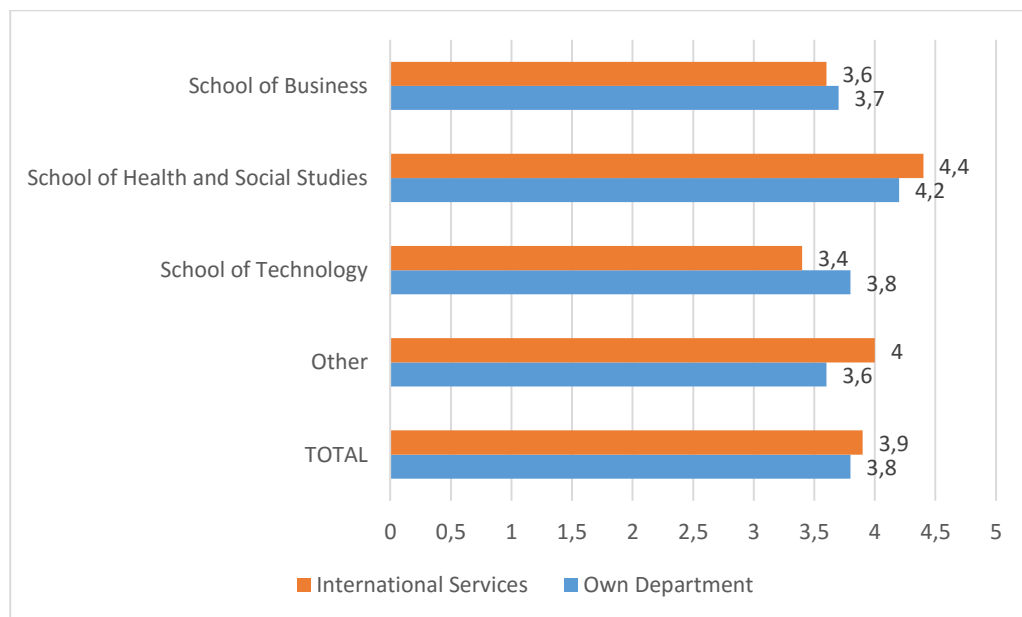
Table 7. How well the International Services support personal internationalization by department.

Dependence is slightly significant. Chi2 = 24,72, df = 15, 1-p = 94,62%.

N =	Business 36 %	Health and Social Studies 25 %	Technology 11 %	Other 40 %	TOTAL 112 %
Not at all	14	4	18	5	9
Slightly	17	16	27	18	18
In between	11	0	0	8	6
Good	25	52	9	15	26
Very good	0	8	0	5	4
Undecided	33	20	46	50	38
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100

The most (52%) of School of Health and Social Studies respondents considered the support received being good. Moreover, a tenth (8%) of them also considered the support being very good. The results of the Other-group imply that a fifth (15%+5%) of the responses think that the International Services support is at least on a good level. The most equally divided answers were received from School of Business with the biggest response group being on a good level (25%). Every tenth (11%) respondent stated it being somewhere in between, and the rest thought it having a slight affect (17%) or no affect at all (14%). A third (38%) of the respondents did not really answer the questions, which does not enable us to make reliable conclusions. There are some differences between these departments, but according to the Chi2 testing they are only slightly significant. Moreover, there are 16 cells that do not have a higher value than five. This indicates that this result is not really applicable. The departments were also tried to be combined into two groups, the School of Business as its own versus all the others. This grouping still had five cells, which did not meet the criteria, and frequency was not seen significant enough as the test result stated: Chi2 = 5.7, df = 5. 1-p = 66.0%.

The last sections of the questionnaire were about how satisfied the respondents were with the centralized International Services and with the international issues handled in one's own department. In addition, the respondents were able to give open answers to describe in which matters they would appreciate more help from each of the entities. These variable questions consisted of five different options from very dissatisfied to very satisfied. In addition, an option for not expressing an opinion was made possible with the choice undecided. When asked about the satisfaction towards centralized International Services, 41% of the 112 respondents chose this option. Whereas in the question about the respondent's own department, the undecided option gained a fifth (26%) of the 111 answers. (Table 10.) The results are presented here as averages. The higher the value is, the more satisfied the respondents are. (Figure 17.)



Cell values are means calculated ignoring non-responses.

Parameters are established by the notation: Very dissatisfied (1), Dissatisfied (2), In between (3), Satisfied (4), Very satisfied (5), Undecided (-).

Figure 17. Mean values of satisfaction towards International Services and own department's procedures by department.

According to the results, overall the respondents are satisfied with the International Services (3,9) and with each of their own departments handling of international issues (3,8). The School of Health and Social Studies results show, that the respondents feel like they are a bit more satisfied to the International Services (4,4) when compared with the result for their own departments score (4,2). The Other-group scored also same sort of result, as their own department's mean satisfaction value was 3,6 and for the International Services it was 4,0. The School of Technology and the School of Business had these results the other way around. The School of Technology scoring 3,4 for the International Services, whereas their own department gained 3,8. The School of Business mean values were closes to the total mean values and they seemed to be equally satisfied to both their own department (3,7) and the International Services (3,6). These results give overall opinion of the satisfactory level, but it is vital to notice that the averages can be formed in many different ways. One valuable aspect from the results, is that the School of Business's respondents had the biggest amount of very dissatisfied or dissatisfied answers. (Table 11.) Approximately a tenth (14%) of the respondents were not satisfied with the International Services and a fifth (19%) were not satisfied with their own departments handling of international issues.

In the open-answer sections the respondents had various different comments, some were related to the issues asked and some were not. The most noticeable issue that was brought up by a number of the respondents, was that there should be more communication and cooperation between the International Services and departments on a regular basis. More information about exchange opportunities, providing more support materials and bigger participation in Research and Development functions were other things that were mentioned in these answers. Generally, increase in practical issues, whether they are related to exchanges, international partners or summer schools, would be wanted. These similar issues were raised, when the respondents were telling about subjects where they would appreciate more help from their own department. In addition, reports from foreign country visits and feedback from those trips were wanted. The respondents felt that

this would benefit all of the employees as everyone could see what is going on around the world and if there are new things that should be applied also at JAMK.

In the last question of the research the respondents were able to give recommendations to improve the organizing of the International Services. This open-answer question was put at the end of the questionnaire, where the respondents could share their thoughts of improvements concerning international issues. Total of 107 people answered whether they had suggestions or not and a fourth (17%) of them had something in mind. (Table 8.)

Table 8. Improvement ideas by department

Dependence is not significant. Chi2 = 2,82, df = 3, 1-p = 57,96%.

Warning: 2 (25.0%) cases have an estimated value of less than 5 hence the rules of Chi2 are not really applicable.

	Business	Health and Social Studies	Technology	Other	TOTAL
	33	25	10	39	107
	%	%	%	%	%
No	76	92	80	85	83
Yes	24	8	20	15	17
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100

Here the respondents listed topics quite similar to previous answers, where they were asked to write issues where they would appreciate more help. Suggestions were made that the International Services should be combined with the Student Services and they would work together. International Coordinators were asked to be more involved with the Research and Development field and a closer cooperation between Coordinators and the International Services was brought up. Some of the respondents felt that more visibility and promotion of international issues would bring departments more together. This would make the whole organization to work more closely towards the common strategies and goals. Some of the education units

do not have their own International Coordinator and are not located in the same premises with the International Office. This was listed as one of the reasons for not being able keep up with all the important aspects related to internationalization.

### 4.3 Suggestions

As the questionnaire results show, the majority of the respondents are familiar with International Services and have been interacting with them. However, there also seemed to be some sort of confusion about which specific tasks are dealt with by the International Services and which are the responsibility of a department. It was argued that there is not enough communication between the separate entities. Providing more information about opportunities for the personnel to be more involved with international functions was also thought as one improvement. When it comes to those performing international tasks, there seemed to be an excessive amount of workload for an employee to be able to get fully involved with everything.

As mentioned earlier in the research part, the International Services are now organized in a half centralized and half decentralized way. The centralized International Services take care of specific tasks, where there is no need for special knowledge of different study fields. They also try to keep the communication flowing between the departments and other supportive services, and develop the internationalization of the entire JAMK University of Applied Sciences. The departments have International Coordinators who are responsible for the international procedures in each unit and work under the department's Director. This type of structure has been in use at JAMK University of Applied Sciences for quite a long time and it has worked accordingly. The research also brought up the fact that, from time to time, there has been discussions whether the structure type should be changed. There is no single correct way to organize groups of people, and there are various issues that have an effect on the composition of the organizations.

One possible change could be completely centralizing the International Services, which would mean that the International Coordinators would also be under the International Relations Manager. In the theory part of this research different pros and cons of centralizing and decentralizing were discussed. Centralizing was said to speed up the decision making, and there would not be confusion of how to act in each situation. This would make it possible to take action quickly if something sudden and unexpected occurred. On the contrary, it was argued that in bigger organizations centralizing may cause more wrong calls as the amount of relevant information needed to make the right decisions is greater. The positive aspects of decentralizing the decision making include information flow, commitment and job satisfaction, which are usually said to be higher than in the centralized ones. (Harisalo, R 2008, 23-24.)

One way of improving the difficulties in the current arrangement of the International Services, discovered in the research, could be solved by centralizing these functions completely. The International Coordinators would still be working inside the education departments and they would have the competences and knowledge of specific issues. The Coordinators would have their own responsibilities in the education departments as well as some tasks they would take care of together with other members of the International Services. This change would possibly distribute the workloads more evenly, and the unit could better react to sudden changes. In the research, the interviewees mentioned that there would be use for an extra pair of hands in the job positions and covering those absent would also be easier. In addition, implementation of separate internationalization strategies would make the processes more efficient. JAMK University of Applied Sciences could have one overall international strategy and different departments could have their own ones. These departmental strategies would go more in depth of what should be done in order to stand out in their own specific field.

## 5 Discussion

### Reliability and validity of the research

In scientific research, reliability and validity are important aspects when assessing the work. Reliability means, that the same study should be able to be repeated with the same results. This requires a clear and precise explanation of the research phenomena, as well as of all the other stages. Validity refers to whether the research really was about the phenomena it was supposed to cover. These concepts are originally from quantitative research, but the coherency of all research should be explained in a precise manner. (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2013, 140-143.)

Documentation is one of the most important ways to ensure the credibility of a thesis. Documenting the reason for each solution and choice that you make in the various stages of your work is essential. Keeping a diary on all the actions connected with the thesis is one way of making sure of this. When choosing the data collection, analysis and interpretation methods, documenting the reasons and justifications for each and every decision is critical. These choices should always be made according to the research problem and research questions. These choices must also be universally accepted and the right ones in the scientific field. In other words, the reliability of research means that the study fulfills all the scientific criteria mentioned above. The researcher should try to approach the reliability and validity issues with an objective mind set. All of the interpretations should only be based on the research data and be transparent enough for the assessor to agree with the results. (Kananen 2010, 144-145.)

### Qualitative research

In qualitative research, the quality of research can be affected by various issues. Researcher's own interpretations are usually the results of the qualitative research, which usually means there can be as many interpretations as there are researchers. It is important to remember what is studied and what the reasons for choosing that subject are. Researcher's relation to the phenomena may have an effect to the



results, if the individual already has a certain type of presumptions. Researchers should try to keep an open mind and try not to guide the results towards the way he or she thinks they are supposed to be. The data collection methods and procedures may have also effect on the end come. How the research material was collected and analyzed is one critical aspect. Interviews can be done face-to-face or via telephone, quality of the recordings may vary and interviews can be conducted for individuals or groups. Besides these factors, the research should give detailed reasons, why specific people were chosen for the interviews, how the analysis and conclusions were drawn, and whether or not these results can be considered reliable. (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2009, 140-141.)

Reliability of qualitative research results can be studied with saturation. This means that when conducting for example interviews, at some point of the process the same issues are coming up. Usually after this point it is not reasonable to continue with interviews, as there is a chance that they will not produce any new information. In addition, after the researcher has analyzed and made his or her own conclusion from the data, the outcome should be send back to the informants. This will guarantee that the answers are understood the same way and the results can be relied on. Besides these two methods, the results can be reviewed and interpret by another person to see if the conclusions are valid and rational. Also references to previous studies or theories work as one indicator when evaluating the reliability of the qualitative research results. (Kananen 2008, 123-127.)

In this thesis, qualitative research was conducted in order to get more information about the phenomena at hand. Researcher did not have that much specific knowledge about it before, which can be seen as a good thing. There was not any biases towards one way or another. Qualitative part of this research was important in order to be able to continue conducting the questionnaire.

The qualitative interviews were conducted face-to-face and via Skype. All of them were recorded using a mobile application and the recordings ended up being clear. This made it possible to transcript the answers and if needed, review the answers

multiple times. Diary was not kept, which could have given more reliability for the different stages. Skype interview can make the interviewees feel distant to the interviewer and results may have been different compared to face-to-face situations. This aspect was taken into account, but the different schedules forced to proceed in this manner. More valuable information could have been collected, if the interviewees would have had more time to prepare and think about the issues they want to bring up. To maximize the benefit of these interviews, the topics discussed were given a week or two beforehand. Choosing the right people for the interview has also an important role regarding the results. Interviewees were chosen depending on how closely and long they had been dealing with the phenomena. After the analyzing stage, the material was sent back to the informants to ensure that there were not mistakes of any kind and corrections were made accordingly.

### **Quantitative research**

Quantitative research used in this study was a questionnaire, which has a various aspects that should be considered when evaluating the validity. The respondents should be able to understand the questions the way they are intended to and the questions should help to solve the research problem. The size of the sample has a crucial relation to the accuracy of the results. The sample should present all the parts of the entire population in order to get the most reliable results. This is the most important part of reliability in quantitative research. (Kananen 2010, 129.)

Here we can see roughly, what was the target group of the questionnaire. (Table 9.) Majority of the respondents were lecturers, as it was meant to be, and these figures below are the amounts of the personnel who work in teaching positions. Some of the respondents worked in other positions, but it is difficult to estimate what would be the exact target group size if everyone's included. Although, earlier in the research it was mentioned, that in 2014 there was 686 employees working for JAMK, of which 353 were teachers. This total amount of employees could be also used as the target group size, but as the teaching staff represented majority of the respondents, these figures below are used as a basis. In the second columns, there are the numbers of

teaching personnel in each department, followed by the number of the respondents in the research. Two last columns are percentages. The first one shows what is the response rate received from each department and the last column is the percentages of each department from all of the answers. The purpose in this research was to focus more on the School of Business's point of view. From the table 9. we can see, that their respondents represented half of the entire teaching personnel in the School of Business. This indicates that their responses should be fairly credible. Overall, the size of the sample is rather sufficient. One way to make this more reliable, would be defining more specifically all of the respondents. This would make it possible to compare the exact amounts of people in certain positions to overall target group.

Table 9. Respondents by department

	Target group N	Research N	Represents %	N=113
				%
School of Business	71	36	50	32
School of Health and Social Studies	106	25	12	22
School of Technology	93	11	11	10
Other	62	41	65	36
TOTAL	332	113	34	100

When the researchers is not that experienced doing scientific research, there is a possibility that surveys have some mistakes. The questions might not be clear enough for the respondents to understand them correctly. In this study, there was a chance that some concepts could be misunderstood. In the survey, respondents were asked series of questions about the International Services and international

issues handled in their own departments. The difference between these two entities should have been explained in order to get more answers. Questionnaires lay out has also effect on the responses. In this case, the research was printed out on paper forms and this allowed the respondents to review the entire questionnaire. Some of the respondents also skipped parts of the questionnaire, leaving some of them empty. The majority of the survey forms were given out in a staff meetings, which might also effect the answers. In these meetings, people are gathered to discuss other issues and the questionnaire was added to all of that. However, handing out surveys in these particular occasions most likely gave a better response rate compared to sending each form individually.

The risk of dishonesty can be lowered if the respondents stay anonymous and the privacy issues was taken into account here as well. The questionnaire only asked that kind of background information, which could not be led back to a specific respondent. However, the delivery of the forms in a group situations, might have had an effect on the way people see the privacy issue. The respondents were filling out the surveys in the same room with others and this may have led to answers not being as thorough as possible.

The validity of the research was also tried to ensure by using different methods. This is also referred as triangulation. Qualitative research helped to understand the phenomena better, which helped to proceed to the quantitative research. This also gave another angle to the research subject.

### **Feedback**

One objective of this research was to discover what the current state of the International Services is and how satisfied the JAMK University of Applied Sciences personnel is with these services. The solution for the research problem was tried to find out using theories of different organizational structures. In addition, other data collection methods were used. These included qualitative theme interviews, where the goal was to get inside knowledge of the different functions of international issues, as well as a survey which aimed at exploring how familiar and satisfied

personnel of JAMK is of these services and whether they are using them. The main goal was to discover, if it would be possible to arrange all of these internationalization functions better and accomplish even better entity. The main point of view was from the School of Business department, which acts as the client for this research.

The theory part in this thesis discusses about strategy, different organizational structures and how these two are linked to each other. As Robbins, Judge and Campbell (2010, 442.) have said, strategy needs to cover the entire organization, and it has to adapt to the external environment. They also emphasized the importance of interaction between the different departments throughout organizations. In this study, JAMK University of Applied Sciences has one overall internationalization strategy. Some of the respondents in the qualitative research thought that it would be better to also have specific departmental strategies related to internationalization. The communication between the different parts of large entities is highly important. The strategy should, indeed, cover the entire organization, but there could also be more specific strategies. Different educational departments have different kinds of external environments as they work in various fields. The internationalization strategy is now present throughout the organization on a general level. In order to differentiate and stand out more from the competition, it might be a good thing to have more specific and detailed strategies.

JAMK University of Applied Sciences is organized into different departments and study fields. In this type of an organizations, that is usually the most convenient way to organize various entities. Moreover, the most visible issue in the organizational theory part in this research turned out to be the centralizing and decentralizing. Earlier in the research, it was said that JAMK International Services is arranged in a sort of half-centralized and half-decentralized way. Usually this is the case as it might not be smart to centralize all the processes or all the decision making. According to Harisalo (2008, 23-24.), the decisions depend on different opportunities, challenges and threats. The fact that in large organizations there is a lot of information that should be taken into account when making decisions can also affect whether to

centralize or not. Usually, the best way to ensure the right calls is to have all that information at hand.

The respondents in this thesis felt like the current system functions well. However, there was some confusion about the responsibilities between the departments and the International Services. Departmental international issues are mostly handled by the department's management with the International Coordinators. When centralizing, it is vital to ensure communication between all the entities. This will make sure that everyone knows what is happening, and the strategies can be followed. In the suggestion part, one option was to move the International Coordinators also under the International Services. This might allow those central functions to work more efficiently, and they could better react to sudden changes. However, it is also critical that these people work closely with each department in order to maintain the specific knowledge related to their functions. The respondents felt that, currently, it is extremely important that people work closely with the fields that they are supporting. This enables them to stay on top of their competition and know what is going on in the field.

For further studies, this type of research could potentially help making the structures and coherency of these functions better. In the future, this would need more thorough study of other researches and possibly some type of action research. This is how it could be tested how some organizational changes would affect different functions. Deeper opinions and points of view from each department would generate more data in order to find out the difficulties to be removed. With more time and resources, it would be possible to dig in deeper to find out all the relations between the various entities and make sure that communication is working and everyone is aiming towards the same goal.

### **Self-evaluation**

The results of the interviews gave a good understanding about what the International Services include and moreover what other internationalization functions JAMK University of Applied Sciences has. The questionnaire also gave

valuable information on how other personnel throughout the organization see these supportive services. Respondent's answers varied and were colorful, which can be due to the fact that there are differences on how much people have been interacting with the international affairs. The respondents who had interacted with International Services, or International Coordinators, were overall satisfied. From the School of Business point of view, there did not seem to be significant difference compared to other departments. Overall, the research methods gave the right kind of information, which enabled to make conclusions. Improvements for the organizing of the International Services and other internationalization issues handled, were discussed at the end of the research results. To sum, it might be feasible to enhance the communication and sharing of tasks to make the work even more efficient. One option to make this happen could be centralizing the International Services. This might improve the cooperation between departments as well as give more resources to be more active at all internationalization issues.

This being my first thesis and a longer process of making a research in a bigger scale, there was various challenges. First of all, the topic of the study did not seem that clear in the beginning of the work. There were struggles on how to define the core of it all and there were a lot of days when the process seemed endless. Inexperience in making larger research reports meant, that I had to learn a lot of things while doing. Sometimes it took several different ways of conducting certain issues, but in the end, I feel that it all fell in their right places. Finding the accurate kind of theory related to the topic and narrowing it down took its toll. Hence, the theoretical part of this research is not as in depth as it could be. With more experience and familiarity with the organizing would make it possible to improve that part of the study. Never the less, this theory part gives a glimpse to different organization structures and strategy. From there it was possible to get results with the help of other research data collected.

Despite all the struggles and frustration the research was pulled together. Theoretical framework was found, correct research methods were discovered and results were drawn from the collected data. Overall this study follows the rules of

scientific research and being a rookie doing these kinds of researches, the entity seems to be complete. A lot of things could have been done in a different way, but at this stage I feel that this was a learning process and in the end the ball was delivered to the end zone.



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## Appendices

### Appendix 1. Questionnaire

#### Kansainvälistymispalvelut

syksy 2015 - Jamk: Kuivalainen Miikka

##### Kansainvälisyyden kokeminen

- 1 2 3 4 5
1. Kuinka kansainväliseksi koet Jyväskylän Ammattikorkeakoulun ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
2. Kuinka tärkeänä näet kansainvälistymisen roolin korkeakouluissa ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Ei lainkaan (1), Hieman (2), Siltä väliltä (3), Melko (4), Erittäin (5).

##### 3. Kuinka kansainvälisyys näkyy työssäsi (kirjoita lyhyesti)?

##### 4. Oletko asioinut JAMK:n kansainvälistymispalveluiden kanssa?

- ☐ 1. Ei (siirry kysymykseen nro 7) ☐ 2. Kyllä

##### 5. Millaisessa yhteydessä asioit Jamkin kv-palveluksiköissä (kirjoita lyhyesti)?

The question is only appropriate if asionti = "Kyllä"

##### 6. Kuinka usein asioit kansainvälistymispalveluiden kanssa?

- ☐ 1. Päivittäin  
☐ 2. Viikoittain  
☐ 3. Kuukausittain  
☐ 4. Muutaman kerran vuodessa  
☐ 5. Kerran vuodessa  
☐ 6. Kerran parissa vuodessa  
☐ 7. En lainkaan

The question is only appropriate if asionti = "Kyllä"

##### 7. Kuinka tärkeäsi koet kansainvälistymispalveluiden roolin JAMK:n organisaatiossa?

- ☐ 1. Merkityksetön  
☐ 2. Jokseenkin merkityksetön  
☐ 3. Siltä väliltä  
☐ 4. Jokseenkin tärkeä  
☐ 5. Erittäin tärkeä  
☐ 6. Minulla ei ole kantaa asiaan

##### 8. Kuinka tärkeäsi koet kansainvälistymispalvelut omassa työssäsi

- ☐ 1. Merkityksetön ☐ 2. Jokseenkin merkityksetön  
☐ 3. Siltä väliltä ☐ 4. Jokseenkin tärkeä  
☐ 5. Erittäin tärkeä

##### 9. Pidätkö JAMK:n kansainvälistymispalveluiden organisointia selkeänä?

- ☐ 1. Kyllä ☐ 2. Ei

##### 10. Jos "Ei": perustele vastauksesi, miksi ei ole selkeä?

The question is only appropriate if selkeys = "Ei"

##### 11. Kuinka koet saamasi avun kansainvälisyyteen liittyvissä asioissa Jamkin kansainvälistymispalveluksiköiden osalta?

- ☐ 1. Välttävä ☐ 2. Tyydyttävä  
☐ 3. Hyvä ☐ 4. Kiitettävä  
☐ 5. Ei tarvetta/ei kokemusta

##### 12. Kuinka hyvin koet JAMK:n kansainvälistymispalveluiden tukevan omaa henkilökohtaista kansainvälistymistäsi

- ☐ 1. Ei lainkaan ☐ 2. Hieman  
☐ 3. Siltä väliltä ☐ 4. Hyvin  
☐ 5. Erittäin hyvin ☐ 6. Ei näkemystä asiasta

##### 13. Kuinka tyytyväinen olet yleensä Jamkin kansainvälistymispalveluihin

- ☐ 1. Erittäin tyytymätön ☐ 2. Jokseenkin tyytymätön  
☐ 3. Siltä väliltä ☐ 4. Jokseenkin tyytyväinen  
☐ 5. Erittäin tyytyväinen ☐ 6. En osaa sanoa/ei kantaa

##### 14. Missä asioissa toivoisit saavasi enemmän tukea Jamkin kansainvälistymispalveluilta?

##### 15. Kuinka tyytyväinen olet OMAN KOULUTUSALASI kansainvälistymisasioiden hoitoon?

- ☐ 1. Erittäin tyytymätön ☐ 2. Jokseenkin tyytymätön  
☐ 3. Siltä väliltä ☐ 4. Jokseenkin tyytyväinen  
☐ 5. Erittäin tyytyväinen ☐ 6. Ei kantaa/ei kokemusta

##### 16. Missä asioissa toivoisit saavasi enemmän tukea omalta koulutusalan kansainvälistymispalveluilta?

##### 17. Onko sinulla kehitysehdotuksia kansainvälistymispalveluiden organisoinnin osalta?

- ☐ 1. Ei ☐ 2. Kyllä

## Appendix 1(2).

## 18. Millaisia kehitysehdotuksia(kirjoita lyhyesti)?

The question is only appropriate if kehitysehdotuksia = "Kyllä"

## Vastaajan tiedot

## 19. Vastaajan ikä

- ☐ 1. 20-29   ☐ 2. 30-39   ☐ 3. 40-49  
☐ 4. 50-59   ☐ 5. 60-69

## 20. Sukupuoli

- ☐ 1. Mies   ☐ 2. Nainen

## 21. Koulutusala

- ☐ 1. Kulttuuri   ☐ 2. Liiketalous  
☐ 3. Luonnonvara   ☐ 4. Matkailu- ja ravitsemus  
☐ 5. Sosiaali- ja terveysala   ☐ 6. Tekniikan ala  
☐ 7. ICT   ☐ 8. Kielikeskus  
☐ 9. Tekniikka ja liikenne   ☐ 10. Hallinto  
☐ 11. Jokin muu

## 22. Työnimike

- ☐ 1. Yliopettaja   ☐ 2. Lehtori  
☐ 3. Tuntiopettaja   ☐ 4. Hallinto/toimisto tms.  
☐ 5. Jokin muu

## 23. vKey

## 24. Date of data entry

## Appendix 2. Tables and figures.

Table 10. How the help received from International Services unit is viewed by the departments.

	School of Business	School of Health and Social Studies	School of Technology	Other	TOTAL
Tolerable	3%	0%	0%	3%	2%
Acceptable	11%	8%	18%	8%	10%
Good	26%	32%	9%	20%	23%
Very good	29%	44%	9%	23%	28%
Undecided	31%	16%	64%	48%	37%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 11. Satisfaction towards the International Services by department.

	School of Business	School of Health and Social Studies	School of Technology	Other	TOTAL
Very dissatisfied	3%	0%	0%	0%	1%
Dissatisfied	11%	4%	0%	5%	6%
In between	11%	4%	27%	8%	10%
Satisfied	28%	28%	18%	13%	21%
Very satisfied	17%	40%	0%	18%	21%
Undecided	31%	24%	55%	58%	41%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 12. Satisfaction towards own department's procedures by department.

	School of Business	School of Health and Social Studies	School of Technology	Other	TOTAL
Very dissatisfied	8%	0%	0%	0%	3%
Dissatisfied	11%	0%	0%	15%	9%
In between	8%	4%	27%	5%	8%
Satisfied	33%	72%	9%	21%	35%
Very satisfied	25%	20%	18%	13%	19%
Undecided	14%	4%	46%	46%	26%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 13. Distribution whether interacted with International Services or not

	School of Business N = 36 %	School of Health and Social Studies 25 %	School of Technology 11 %	Other 41 %	TOTAL 113 %
No	33	16	82	49	40
Yes	67	84	18	51	60
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100

Table 14. Gender of the respondents

	N= 109 %
Male	35
Female	65
Total	100

Table 15. Occupation of the respondents

	N = 100 %
Principal Lecturer	4
Lecturer	51
Part-time Teacher	9
Administration/office etc.	18
Other	18
Total	100

Table 16. Grouping of the visibility of internationalization open-answers

How can internationalization be seen in your work?
1. Not at all (5%)
2. International students/teachers (27%)
3. Teaching/working in English (27%)
4. Projects & Seminars (21%)
5. Student/teacher exchanges (13%)
Non-categorized (7%)
N = 100

Table 17. Grouping of occasions when interacting with International Services

What was the occasion when interacting with International Services?
1. Exchange (45%)
2. Projects (20%)
3. International visitors (13%)
4. Business travel (10%)
Non-categorized (12%)
N = 66



## Appendix 3. Focused Interview

### Execution

Interviewer:

Date:

Duration:

Interviewee:

Occupation:

### Themes

1. Internationalization



2. JAMK University of  
Applied Sciences



3. Future insights