

Operating environment

We live in an environment that can no longer be called a roller coaster, because it cannot be trusted to stay on track. Neither is it a see-saw, because it doesn't always swing predictably. Nor is it a carousel, because its motion is not systematic or repetitive. Perhaps the operating environment could best be likened to an amoeba. It changes constantly, somewhat uncontrollably and unpredictably. Some of the megatrends of change are globalisation and its forces, worldwide uncertainty, the federalisation of the EU, urbanisation, the aging of the West, the "Woody Allen society" (everything open 24/7), the complex risk society, the flood of information, increasing structural differences and a fall in the cost of services. We are shifting away from a society of majorities to a mosaic of minorities and the self-organising structures of the information society. It means a transfer away from sameness and towards individuality and diversity.

Many national and international projects and studies have recently focused on increasing service business competence. Our advanced information society is characterised by four fifths of all jobs being concentrated in the service sector. Still, the service sector is in many ways underdeveloped in Finland and the Helsinki metropolitan area. Productivity has even declined in the weakest areas. Finland needs more practical research and product development in service operations; these could lead to a significant new service export industry for Finland in the future.

Hospitality management companies now face the particular challenges of profiling and differentiating their services and increasing competitiveness. Some critical success factors are continuous customer satisfaction, health and quality factors, multidisciplinary and specialist staff competence, readiness to change, and the prediction of trends and operating environments. Polarisation, functioning chains, memorable brands, well-planned reforms and cooperation transcending traditional professional boundaries are key concepts. Operators in the sector should be unprejudiced. It would not be crazy to consider what could be learnt and internalised for instance from the self-irony, social criticism, topicality and shared traditions of couplet songs. Skilled couplet writers can make songs about contemporary phenomena in ways that make fictional stories and characters come alive in listeners' minds. Couplets are meant to entertain. Many hospitality management companies have similar objectives in principle.

There is a need to manage chaos and complexity. There is also the question of the new norm, which emphasises comprehensive understanding of the significance of business competence, services and technological applications. The new norm for hospitality management is based on sustainable and experimental operating methods. Businesses must no longer react to change but optimally initiate it. Focus is no longer on today's processes but on tomorrow's strategies. Real value and achievements are crucial. In the new norm, operations can still be creative, dynamic and bubbly, however: things happen all the time, but the core of the business idea is crystal clear, like an amoeba.

The world changes, demand is fragmented and change speeds up. What kind of competence will a service professional of the future need? One viewpoint into the competence needed amid change was provided by Akio Morita, then CEO of Sony, when he said:

"We never ask our customers what they want. They don't know. Instead we apply our brain-power to what they need, and will want, and make sure we're there, ready." - Akio Morita, CEO, Sony

The kinds of experts who know before the customers what the customers will want? Who have the sensitivity to follow changes in customers and customer needs? Pioneers who create genuine new ways of producing services and don't content themselves with copying others?

The hospitality management sector needs innovation for the development and marketing of services and products and for strategic work. Innovation is reflected in an ability and sensitivity to follow changes in customers and their needs, and in the consequent skill to improve services. Service innovations are technological and production-related solutions and new operating models. Innovation particularly means leading the way: experts who create genuine new ways of producing services and don't content themselves with copying others.

Training is based on changes in the labour market. It is essential to predict change and prepare for it. Change is evident in the way that many service businesses strive to develop their brands, concepts, products and operations. Some seek growth, others cost savings. Some look to expand and internationalise. Small businesses are more cautious. They are characterised by the basics: providing services, quality and products.

A major development tool is business competence. It refers especially to managing service businesses, developing service products and innovating. Business is a mindset that emphasises comprehensive understanding of the significance of business competence and technological applications. In companies this is reflected in new applications of old work methods: process development, testing, benchmarking, experimenting, piloting and product development.

Another important area for development is networking. No one, particularly not small service businesses seeking to break into foreign markets, can succeed alone, but must join networks and alliances. The universities of applied sciences of the Helsinki metropolitan area place di-verse Finnish and international cooperation channels and an extensive network of companies and projects at the companies' and students' disposal.

The third tool is genuine internationalisation. It doesn't just mean language skills and cultural competence, but understanding of international markets. It is the ability to understand differ-ent levels of globalisation, the strategic thinking behind international companies' strategies, and cultural changes.

A fourth point of emphasis is innovation. In an information and experience society, innovations are a central element in service businesses' competitiveness. The job of a service professional and entrepreneurs requires constant rethinking and operational development. Current jobs and markets are learning environments that professionals must learn to read. Work is constant learning. Therefore working, just like studying, must have diverse forms and methods.

Competence development process

In the Degree Programme in Service Operations, the learning process is a future-oriented proc-ess of research and development during which competence is developed by systematically seek-ing answers to questions that cannot be solved just on the basis of previously acquired informa-tion or competence. Learning is a way of creating new knowledge and competence, which links learning to the innovation activities of the sector and the region. The time of study is an indi-vidual and collective project of developing expertise and stretching and exceeding oneself, where students seek a relevant and useful combination of competences to meet the needs of the future workplace. The basis of competence development consists of the latest research data in service business, which is refined and modified in order for students to become devel-opers in a developing sector. In competence development the important thing is not to memo-rise information but to learn to use and process information in order to create new operating methods, models, interpretations and explanations for the issue at hand at each time.

Competence development arises from a competence-enriching community and development platform that links innovative individuals and groups to each other. A group is an environment of shared expertise, in which the learner's role is that of an expert, a developer and an opinion leader. Students grow into development experts by adopting the methods of innovation organi-sations and participating in the activities of innovative knowledge-generating communities.

Learners develop their competence by interacting with their environments and fields. Some of the resources of competence development are a learning culture that promotes creativeness and target-orientation, expert guidance and instruction, and a learning environment that sup-ports development. Competence tutoring is provided in a participatory manner. Every lecturer is a tutor who supports the growth of expertise with his or her professionalism and work meth-ods. The learning environment is formed by a competence network, an innovation environment, a platform for competence development and structures that support learning. The construction of learning environments emphasises facilitating people, their enthusiasm and their interaction to achieve creativity. Instruction does not focus on presenting, repeating and checking informa-tion but strives to create a learning process that becomes apparent as progressive problem-solving, continuous learning, and developing and exceeding oneself. The aim is to achieve com-petence that is useful in knowledge-intensive service organisations, where work is increasingly a function of creativity, and whose management depends on the ability to create a responsible, result-oriented leadership culture based on leaving room for individual creativity. Competence becomes apparent as influence and development skills.

Description of the Degree Programme

The degree programme consists of studies common to all students, four optional advanced modules (Customer-Oriented Service Business Development; Communication and Customer Re-lationships; Finance and Business

Processes; Travel Demand Management) and elective study units. The structure of the studies is shown in the table. Some study units are implemented at Laurea, some at Haaga-Helia.

		1. year	2. year
OP	STUDIES	30	60
YRE2	RESPONSIBLE LEADERSHIP		
YRE201	Responsible Business Operations	5	
YRE203	The Self as an Agent of Responsibility		5
YRE202	Responsibility in One's Own Working Environment		5
YRE3	METHODS OF WORKPLACE DEVELOPMENT		
YRE301	Action Research in Organisations	5	
YRE303	Tools for Managing the Future	5	
YRE302	Analysis of the Operating Environment	5	
YRE4	CUSTOMER-ORIENTED SERVICE BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT		
YRE401	Strategic Management of a Service Business	5	
YRE402	Customer-Focused Development of Service Products and Concepts	10	
YRE403	In-Depth Consumer Knowledge	5	
YRE5	COMMUNICATION AND CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIPS		
YRE502	Communication Skills and Corporate Communications	5	
YRE503	Customer Relationship Management	10	
YRE6	BUSINESS MANAGEMENT AND PROCESSES		
YRE602	Financial Management	5	
YRE603	Management of Processes	5	
YRE604	Staff as a Company Resource	5	
211	DEVELOPING THE IMPACT OF SERVICE OPERATIONS		
YRE801	Partnerships as a Resource		5
00669	English for managers and professionals		5
YRE804	Service Brand Management		5
00819	Growth Entrepreneurship		10
YRE100	THESIS		
00415	Thesis		30
		30	60

YRE2 RESPONSIBLE LEADERSHIP, 0 cr

Description:

- students will understand the concept of responsible leadership as a whole
- students learn to see responsible leadership as a part of strategic management and their personal approaches to work
- students will examine their relationships with responsible leadership

The module supports students in completing their theses, particularly by providing perspectives, and trains students in using a research-oriented, systemic approach.

The student will be able to:

- understand the concept of responsible leadership as a whole
- learn to see responsible leadership as a part of strategic management and their personal approaches to work
- examine their relationships with responsible leadership

The module supports students in completing their theses, particularly by providing perspectives, and trains students in using a research-oriented, systemic approach.

Content:

The study units form an entity that progresses from a general perspective to a personal one, emphasising the idea of the individual as a responsible operator. The Responsible Business Operations study unit opens the conceptual field of responsible leadership. Responsibility in the Operating Environment guides students to examine the context of their own work, while My Work as a Responsible Operator focuses on examining individual ways of working and experiencing.

The Responsible Leadership module limits its scope to social responsibility, which always relates to managing networks, trust and interaction. Social responsibility stresses the effects of a company's operations on the company's stakeholders, immediate community and society. Some of the main stakeholders are the organisation's staff, the customers and partners. The themes of prediction, complexity and basic values run through the whole module, with a slightly different emphasis in each study unit.

Responsibility is seen from the point of view of managing man-made systems. Thus leadership is not an individual's expertise that affects a system from the outside; instead, the leader is a part of the social system, where influence and effects go in many directions. Ultimately the most essential elements are individual operators' actions and the relationships between operators.

The module's methods of instruction emphasise participatory work methods and the students' active roles.

YRE201 Responsible Business Operations, 5 cr

The student is able to:

- to provide conceptual skills
- to teach students to analyse companies' operations from the point of view of responsible operations
- to help students promote responsible business operations with their own actions
- to teach students to apply the core concepts of responsible leadership in their thinking and deduction

Contents of the study unit:

- Challenges posed by the operating environment for socially responsible operations
- Critical challenges for service businesses from the point of view of responsible business operations
- Understanding responsible business operations as a whole, particularly from the point of view of social responsibility
- Ethics and morals in decision-making and operations
- Benefits of responsibility for a service business
- Characteristics of a responsible service organisation

Study unit description:

The study unit creates a conceptual basis for the students' own activities and for examining the operating environment in the module's other two study units. The concepts of responsible business operations are extensively linked to the professional modules of the degree programme and to the strategic leadership module.

The themes of prediction, complexity and basic values are connected to the study unit. The topic of pre-diction has the greatest emphasis in this study unit.

The research-oriented approach is supported by possible visits from business representatives and field trips to companies. On these visits, visitors share their expertise as to how they have resolved the challenges of responsible business in their own work.

YRE203 The Self as an Agent of Responsibility, 5 cr

The student is able to:

- recognise their own basic values and work methods better
- learn to examine their work as part of a social system
- be motivated to reflect on and develop their approaches to work and their relationships with responsible business operations.

Contents of the study unit:

The content of the study unit consists of the participants' personal experiences, so it cannot be defined in advance. Objectives are set for each small team at the beginning. They are related to an improved understanding of one's own leadership.

The essential aspects of work are the interaction of the team and commitment to process-style work. The small teams act as "holograms" of responsible leadership in which contents and work methods both support the theme under discussion. Trust and caring leadership as the topics of orientation work are important for responsible leadership and prerequisite for this kind of individual work in small teams.

Orientation work

- Trust
- Caring leadership
- Introduction to active work methods

Study unit description:

The aim is to develop the students' professional identities and examine their reaction, information processing and survival strategies in various workplace situations. The study unit begins with shared orientation lectures, after which students are divided into 2-3 small teams. The small teams work together in the long term. Each team adopts a different approach to reflecting on their own work. Possible methods include work supervision and drama work.

Regardless of the approach, the aim is to offer students a platform for examining their own leadership and/or activity through individual workplace situations. The makeup of the teams is influenced for instance by the students' work roles (e.g. managerial experience) and interests, and by the group's size.

The themes of prediction, complexity and basic values are linked to the study unit. The main focus is on basic values

Previous studies:

Preceded by the Responsible Business Operations study unit.

YRE202 Responsibility in One's Own Working Environment, 5 cr

The student is able to:

- improve their use and application of a research-oriented and systemic approach to work
- specify their views of their operating environments from the point of view of responsible business operations
- understand the significance of a good reputation as a part of social capital

Contents of the study unit:

- social responsibility in a company's business operations and its prerequisites
- leadership as a builder of the organisation's interaction
- work with stakeholders
- identifying the strengths and weaknesses of business operations

Study unit description:

The study unit is based on the students' independent work, which is composed out of separate assignments to form

a “project” or “business story”. The aim is not to change or develop the operating environment but above all to understand it better from the point of view of responsible leadership.

The themes of prediction, complexity and basic values are linked to the study unit, with particular emphasis on complexity.

The students’ own observations, analyses and shared discussions alternate in the study unit.

Any literature related to the study unit may be handled in study group form.

Previous studies:

Preceded by the Responsible Business Operations study unit

YRE3 METHODS OF WORKPLACE DEVELOPMENT, 0 cr

Description:

To improve the students’ methodological skills in examining and developing work, the work community and business operations.

The student will be able to:

- understand, internalise and manage the context and adopt a research-oriented development approach
- understand the process of researching and utilising information as a whole
- know the main workplace development methods
- use different methods in their own operating environments in situationally appropriate ways (i.e. understand what knowledge is needed and what methods can be applied to acquire it)
- define their knowledge needs and compile and apply knowledge to their own operating environments
- evaluate and manage the information gathering process

The module supports the students’ thesis work.

Content:

The module consists of a theoretical-methodological framework (toolkit) and methodological studies (tools).

The aim of the theoretical-methodological framework (toolkit) is that:

- students will understand the process, objectives and meaning of a research and development project
- students will understand the main trends in philosophy of science and their differences with regard to research (main trends and extremes; background hypotheses)
- it will provide skills in understanding, planning and choosing a research setting

The framework (toolkit) aims to create an overall picture of workplace development and the role of research in development. It strives to tie the different elements of Workplace Development Methods into a cohesive whole and to link the module more broadly to the students’ theses. The Workplace Development Methods module takes place at the beginning of studies and one of its aims is to help students plan their theses (research/project plan). At the end of the module there is a planning semi-nar, in which students present their research and development project plans (research/project plan).

The framework (toolkit) studies are not separated into their own study unit, but are implemented as a part of the methodological courses (tools).

YRE301 Action Research in Organisations, 5 cr

The student is able to:

- o understand the process, objectives and meaning of a research and development project
- o understand the main trends in philosophy of science and their differences with regard to research (main trends and extremes; background hypotheses)
- o have skills in understanding, planning and choosing a research setting
- o understand and have mastered the principles of developmental work studies
- o are familiar with the main tools and methods of developmental work studies

Contents of the study unit:

- o thesis process, objectives and significance
- o trends in philosophy of science and their differences from the point of view of research

- o the research setting
- o action research settings and principles
- o action research methods, including observation and narrative research
- o developmental work studies as action research

Study unit description:

Action research is an approach in which the researcher is closely involved with the operations of the organisation being studied, and works with the members of the organisation to solve mutually identified problems and achieve set targets and objectives. The researcher and the members of the target organisation together investigate the emergence of the problem, gather information on the phenomenon, consider alternatives for its origins and development, and test possible solutions for improving operations. During the study unit students plan an action research-based project to carry out.

YRE303 Tools for Managing the Future, 5 cr

The student is able to:

- o identify their knowledge needs, acquire information, understand and modify/structure information and utilise information in ways suitable for problem-solving
- o understand the significance of updating information and continuous learning in their operating environments
- o be familiar with the tools and methods of the main areas of futures research
- o understand the significance of continuous anticipation in their operating environments

Contents of the study unit:

Data Literacy

Probing and questioning; defining tasks; information-gathering strategies; identifying sources; use of information in solving problems; synthesising acquired information; evaluating the information-gathering and learning process.

Futures Research

Recognising and monitoring change; critically evaluating change; outlining possible development paths; defining objectives; determining appropriate development paths. Includes familiarisation with quantitative and qualitative methods and utilising outcomes. Methods include trend analysis and Delphi.

Study unit description:

The aim is to improve the students' methodological skills in gathering and processing information, and to develop their mindsets towards one of lifelong learning.

Students acquire methodological skills in futures research, begin to adopt an approach of continuous anticipation/forecasting, and learn to relate positively and curiously to constant and ever-faster change and the opportunities it creates in their own operating environments.

The study unit consists of two modules: Information Literacy and Futures Research.

Management of information literacy is used to increase individuals' or organisations' knowledge and understanding of the organisation's current status and operating environment, to create foundations on which to base decisions and the identification of potential benefits, and to form a basis for measuring change.

Futures research maps the business opportunities of the future. It aims to identify megatrends and weak signals in the operating environment, point out development directions for the sector, and evaluate the effects of recognised change drivers and change processes on the sector or business cluster in question. Some elements for analysis include change drivers and development trends in supply, technology, competition, demand and consumer spending behaviour.

Previous studies:

None.

YRE302 Analysis of the Operating Environment, 5 cr

The student is able to:

- o know the main sources of market information
- o know the main methods of operating environment analysis, with their benefits and limitations
- o utilise market

information in diverse decision-making situations

Contents of the study unit:

Understanding the operating environment. Research settings, research materials and analysis methods. Special characteristics of research methods. Practical examples of the applications of different re-search methods. The available options in choosing research methods and the bases for decision-making. Qualitative and quantitative methods. Determining the research population and choosing samples. De-veloping and evaluating data gathering instruments. Processing data. Interpreting results.

The study unit familiarises students with analysis and auxiliary tools that can improve the quality of decision-making. Methods include:

- o quantitative methods: statistical deduction, segmentation (factor analysis, clustering)
- o qualitative methods: content analysis, interviews, focus groups.

Study unit description:

Operating environment analyses aim to provide more detailed information on the world outside the organisation. Operating environment analyses include competition analyses and market studied, which are used as a basis for decision-making for instance in business planning, in taking existing products to new markets, and in launching new products.

The analyses map potential demand, the competitive scenario and the current status of supply. The prevalent market and competitive scenario is evaluated by compiling information on the current status and operators of the sector and the prospects of the near future, using diverse research methods. Data and evaluations acquired through quantitative methods can be supplemented and deepened using qualitative research methods.

Previous studies:

None.

YRE4 CUSTOMER-ORIENTED SERVICE BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT, 0 cr

Description:

Students can critically evaluate and purposefully, creatively and profitably develop the operations of a service business.

The module supports work on theses on related topics.

The student will be able to:

- understand the strategic orientation of service development work
- predict complex changes in the sector and in consumer behaviour, and envision new opportunities for service development
- put novel and sustainable models that stand out from mass supply into practice and evaluate their impacts
- adopt a proactive approach to developing the organisation and wider networks
- take financial factors into account in their development efforts, in both the long and the short term
- take the cultural factors of the sector into account in their development efforts

Content:

The module consists of three compulsory and two elective study units.

Learning process:

Customer–Oriented Service Product and Concept Development (10 cr) forms the foundations of the module, creating an overall picture of long-term service development.

Strategic Management of Service Operations (5 cr) discusses strategic planning and management, and renewals of the strategic thinking of a service business.

In-Depth Consumer Knowledge (5 cr) looks in detail at change factors affecting demand and consumer behaviour in the service sector.

YRE401 Strategic Management of a Service Business, 5 cr

The student is able to:

- o understand, internalise and master the main principles and methods of strategic planning
- o evaluate a service company's operating strategy and choices
- o evaluate and situationally create alternative strategies for the achievement of a company's objectives
- o understand the effects of strategy renewals on CRM strategies, competence strategies and internal business processes

Contents of the study unit:

- o principles and methods of strategic planning
- o radical strategy reforms
- o strategies of the new economy
- o effects of strategy renewals on CRM strategies, competence strategies and internal business processes

Study unit description:

The study unit looks at the significance and methods of strategic planning and management in the context of a service business. The emphasis is on radical strategy reforms, and on looking for and producing strategic innovations in a rapidly changing operating environment.

Previous studies:

None.

YRE402 Customer-Focused Development of Service Products and Concepts, 10 cr

The student is able to:

- o develop their skills in examining, specifying and analysing the operating environment and in anticipating new opportunities for developing service operations
- o have the courage to come up with creative ideas, although always taking financial, cultural and other such factors into account in both the long and the short term
- o actively interact with diverse operators (other students, development platforms, etc.) and participate openly in information sharing
- o create a plan for developing a service product/concept and rehearse putting it into practice (i.e. commercialising it)
- o analyse and evaluate the impacts of development work
- o develop a proactive, long-span development approach to the organisation's operations
- o analyse the effects of their own work from the organisation's point of view

Contents of the study unit:

- o Strategies for developing service operations
- o Various earnings principles
- o Service product/concept life cycle models
- o Customer-oriented product planning and the product development process
- o Service modelling
- o Service profiling and differentiation
- o Value as experienced by the customer
- o Competitive factors in services
- o Cost accounting, profitability
- o Pricing
- o Legislation
- o Productisation, branding and commercialisation
- o Analysing the impact of development work

Study unit description:

This study unit forms the foundations for the Customer-Oriented Service Business Development module, creating an overall view of development work. The other units in the module are clearly linked to this one and are implemented in parallel with it. The study unit particularly supports theses related to developing service products and concepts

Previous studies:

None.

YRE403 In-Depth Consumer Knowledge, 5 cr

The student is able to:

- o understand the factors that affect demand and consumer behaviour in the service sector, in depth
- o predict complex changes in consumer behaviour, and envision the new opportunities they bring
- o familiarise themselves with the latest research data and apply the methods and out-comes of other people's research to their own operating environments
- o consider and interactively evaluate the significance of new consumption habits in relation to service development

Contents of the study unit:

- o consumer behaviour as a multidisciplinary research subject
- o latest research outcomes and methods related to consumer behaviour
- o new kinds of consumer groups; the postmodern consumer

Study unit description:

This study unit provides a solid basis for the customer-oriented development of services. The study unit looks at change factors affecting service demand and consumer behaviour, on the basis of which students start to think about new kinds of services to meet customer needs. Students become familiar with the multidisciplinary field of consumer behaviour research and apply the latest research outcomes and methods in practice.

YRE5 COMMUNICATION AND CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIPS, 0 cr

Description:

Improving the students' skills in planning, implementing and managing communication, and in developing customer relationships.

The student will be able to:

- evaluate a company's communications and their effectiveness in furthering the achievement of the company's objectives
- plan communications in line with companies' objectives
- improve their own interaction, presentation and team communication skills
- understand the main principles of the CRM philosophy
- understand the significance of CRM and CRM strategies as a part of business strategies
- know the main methods of clientele analysis, CRM and partner portfolio management
- know the operating principles and benefits of computerised CRM systems
- apply different situational methods in their own operating environments
- understand, internalise and master the main principles and methods of strategic planning
- evaluate and situationally create alternative strategies for the achievement of a company's objectives
- understand the effects of strategy renewals on CRM strategies, competence strategies and internal business processes

Content:

The module consists of five study units.

Strategic Management of Service Operations (5 cr) covers the renewal of strategic thinking and the principles of financial management.

Communication Skills and Business Communication (5 cr) discusses individual communication skills, communication as a part of customer relationship life cycles, and customer communication methods.

Customer Relationships (10 cr) discusses the framework for customer relationship communications and CRM, methods for creating, maintaining and developing customer relationships, and customer and partner portfolio management.

In addition, students choose two five-credit elective study units

YRE502 Communication Skills and Corporate Communications, 5 cr

The student is able to:

- o evaluate a company's communications and their effectiveness in furthering the achievement of the company's objectives
- o plan and develop communications in line with companies' objectives
- o improve their own interaction, presentation and team communication skills

Contents of the study unit:

- o expectations regarding personal communication skills in an international operating environment
- o the individual as a coordinator of profiling cooperation in a team
- o analysing one's own communication skills
- o development plan for own communication skills
- o personal communication workshops: interaction and presentation skills, team communication
- o communication as a part of customer relationship life cycles
- o demands for customer service communications in the international operating environment
- o profiling plans as a support for customer service communications
- o customer communication in hospitality management: text types, topics and target groups
- o functioning team communication as a prerequisite for successful customer communications
- o external communication services to support customer communications

Study unit description:

The study unit familiarises students with the theory and methods of customer communications within the context of service businesses, and enhances the students' personal communication skills.

YRE503 Customer Relationship Management, 10 cr

YRE6 BUSINESS MANAGEMENT AND PROCESSES, 0 cr

YRE602 Financial Management, 5 cr

YRE603 Management of Processes, 5 cr

The student is able to:

- o discern the processes for quality management in a service business
- o understand, internalise and master the main indicators and control mechanisms for strategic business management
- o understand the significance of developing and managing a company's network relationships and their related processes
- o understand the main principles and methods of chain management
- o assess a company's competence needs

Contents of the study unit:

Service efficiency and quality

- o Quality management in service businesses and networks
- o Quality measurements as a management tool
- o Incentivising staff to produce improved quality for customers

Business management

- o Control mechanisms and creating indicators
- o Ensuring measurements become established in the organisation
- o Organising business process monitoring

Process management

- o Processes and their interaction
- o Managing business processes and networks; service companies' stakeholders
- o Forming, managing and steering external and internal network relationships

Chain management and steering

- o Strategic chain management
- o Organising and steering business areas
- o Measuring business areas

- o Continuous business development

Study unit description:

The Process Management study unit (5 cr) discusses service quality management in a growing service business, and familiarises students with the content of strategic business management. Some of the main topics are steering mechanisms that support strategy, indicators, establishing strategies in an organisation, and business process monitoring. Chain management topics include the principles of chain management, organising and steering different business areas, and appropriate measurements.

YRE604 Staff as a Company Resource, 5 cr**The student is able to:**

- o understand the significance of competence development as a factor of competitiveness in a service business
- o understand, internalise and master the main methods of HR development
- o improve their skills in planning and implementing competence management in practice
- o improve their skills in identifying change phenomena and choosing suitable roles in change management

Contents of the study unit:

- Competence management in a service business
 - o HR strategy and HR functions as a part of the organisation's strategy
 - o Success factors and pitfalls of HR functions
 - o Compatibility of strategic management and operational management systems
 - o BSC model as a strategy-oriented control system
 - o Transforming strategic HR challenges into practical actions
 - o Competence management and organisation strategy
- Change and people management
 - o Change drivers and reactions in people's experiences and actions
 - o Communication and interaction in change processes
 - o Increasing resources in change situations
 - o The manager as change agent; roles of a change manager
 - o Problems in change management
- Management tools
 - o Interaction in the workplace
 - o Feedback, motivation
 - o Resource-oriented interaction
 - o Performance reviews
 - o Managing diversity
 - o Challenging situations

Study unit description:

The study unit delves into the significance of HR functions in relation to an organisation's strategies and objectives, from the point of view of the HR department and of actual staff. The content includes identifying change phenomena and choosing suitable roles in managing change.

211 DEVELOPING THE IMPACT OF SERVICE OPERATIONS, 0 cr**Description:**

Students take the elective studies offered in this theme to deepen their competence in service operations in line with their own competence development plans.

YRE801 Partnerships as a Resource, 5 cr**The student is able to:**

- o understand the strategic significance of partnerships and network competence
- o promote networking in their own fields

o analyse and identify strategic partnerships and create networks.

Contents of the study unit:

- o value chains and value networks
- o intrasector cooperation – collaboration between competitors
- o new service production methods in networks

Study unit description:

In terms of service development it is essential to know how to create functioning partnership networks in order to fulfil customers' needs comprehensively, although always making service processes seem cohesive to customers. The study unit looks at diverse networking models, using the latest research data and practical modelling.

00669 English for managers and professionals, 5 cr

The student is able to:

- communicate in international professional environment

Contents of the study unit:

- Written and oral English for business administration and security management

Study unit description:

The course emphasizes language skill in English important for managers and professionals. It develops students' communication skills for varying managerial situations.

YRE804 Service Brand Management, 5 cr

The student is able to:

- know the main concepts of brand management (creation, administration and research)
- know the special characteristics of creating and maintaining service brands
- apply their knowledge to practical business tasks

Contents of the study unit:

- History and schools of thought of brand theory
- Building a service brand
- Profiling and brand positioning
- Brand identity, brand extensions, brand alliances, brand equity and measuring it
- Implementing a brand in a service business
- Strategic brand management

Study unit description:

The course covers the concept of brands and the different schools of thought and main notions related to brands, the principles of brand measurements, and the creation and maintenance of service brands. The main emphasis is on the critical success factors for creating and maintaining service brands.

00819 Growth Entrepreneurship, 10 cr

The student is able to:

- make concrete development plans for business ideas or operations
- analyse a company's global operating field
- commercialise the products and services required to put a business idea into practice
- build a scalable business model
- organise the development of a business
- manage a company

Students are also strongly motivated for entrepreneurship and willing to assume responsibility for managing and developing a financially viable business.

Contents of the study unit:

Students work on developing either a new business idea or existing operations, with the aim of achieving a financial growth trend. The object of development is a genuine business (or business opportunity), not a theoretical exercise. The study unit is shared by all Laurea Master's degree programmes.

Study unit description:

Students are encouraged (but not forced) to work in groups to build their business operations; i.e. several students can work on one business. In addition to guidance from Laurea lecturers, students can make use of Laurea's investment services and other public or private investment or consulting services (such as TEKES programmes or Enterprise Agency advice).

This 10-credit study unit aiming at growth entrepreneurship is designed to fit into students' personal study plans according to their professional aims. With regard to growth entrepreneurship targets, the study unit is organised by Principal Lecturer Vesa Taatila, vesa.taatila@laurea.fi, who also handles enrolments. The content of the necessary expertise in the field is provided in the students' Master's degree programmes. The study unit continues through the academic year.

YRE100 THESIS, 0 cr**Description:**

The aim of the thesis is to develop the students' ability to apply research data, to use selected methods for analysing and solving workplace problems and to carry out demanding specialist tasks independently.

The student will be able to:

- get an in-depth view of the field in question, of its position in the labour market and its social significance
- develop skills in independent information gathering
- develop skills in following, specifying and critically evaluating developments in the sector's research data and professional practices
- develop skills in independently producing and applying information

Content:

The thesis process progresses as a collaboration between the author of the thesis, its commissioner, the development platform and the tutor. Students complete their theses on the development platform and the work is guided through workshops and personal tutoring.

Learning process:

The development platform is the development, learning and interaction environment in which the thesis is completed. The development platform creates encounters between multidisciplinary competence, developers, businesses and projects (and possibly users). Aims of the development platform:

- facilitate networking between students and between operators from different sectors
- promote new ideas, the finding of new perspectives and the identification of new partners, with the aim of placing the student and his/her business at the forefront of national innovation activities in the field of the thesis
- strengthen the transfer of the knowledge and competence developed in the development platform's groups to the hospitality management sector
- strengthen the transfer of competence in the hospitality management sector to the development platform's groups

The development platform comprises:

- o a number of groups (innovation forums) from various sectors, which operate independently; typical forms of operation are seminars, coffee mornings and other forms of interaction aimed at sharing knowledge and ideas
- o educational institutions' processes, which facilitate/support the students' entry into the groups, bring the groups together in the platform, coordinate the operation of the platform and its relations with the groups, guide the students to the groups that are relevant to their theses, tutor/coach/support the students in their theses, and monitor the joining of groups that are relevant to the students' theses.

Students are directed to join groups that are relevant to their theses at the beginning of their studies

00415 Thesis, 30 cr