

LAUREA UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

Degree Programme in Social Services (Laurea Tikkurila, sote), SSV13KN

Learning concept at Laurea

Universities of applied sciences have three tasks set by law: research and development, regional development, and pedagogy. The effective integration of these three tasks has been seen as one of the keys to the successful completion of Laurea's statutory duties. The aim for Laurea is to produce competent graduates who become research-oriented developers of their work and their fields. A further aim is to develop and renew labour market competence through research and to produce innovations that make use of multidisciplinary competence to have an impact on our surroundings.

Laurea's learning concept is embodied in the Learning by Developing model, which has been rewarded by the Finnish Higher Education Evaluation Council. The objective of learning is competence, which is visible as new ways and means of working, and which allows for renewal of the labour market and the field. Learning by Developing takes place in workplace-oriented projects in which students, lecturers, workplace experts and customers work together to develop innovative solutions.

Students are seen as partners who, as their competence develops, are able to take on increasing responsibility and make use of their creativity to complete research and development tasks. Students acquire competence in learning environments comprising diverse workshops and labs. Professional competence is constructed out of the integrated combination of empirical data, a deep understanding of it, and skills in doing and handling situations. Working together to build knowledge-based skills leads to competence that allows students to manage diverse situations in the constantly changing world of work.

Learning at Laurea progresses through an orientation of skills. Scientific data is significant as a tool. Learning directs students to process knowledge and to select ethically significant knowledge that can be utilised and applied in development projects that correspond to their degrees. Laurea places importance on ensuring that students grow into skilled experts who can renew the labour market. Workplace-oriented development projects as learning environments allow for genuine learning, the construction of partnership networks, the application of meaningful experiences and the development of creativity and research orientation. In the work-oriented development projects, individuals and the target community develop their competence together. In addition, they generate new knowledge for developing and reforming the labour market.

Learning environments

The aim of the learning environment is to facilitate the achievement of learning outcomes while supporting the generation and development of new competence. Laurea's learning environments utilise internal and external networks and are in constant interaction with the workplace. Regional influence increases through communities and the networks that they form. Students use projects to learn the basics of networking, social skills and communication with experts in the field. Students grow into developers by carrying out development tasks and by interacting in competence networks.

Practical applications of learning environments include initiatives and projects that form innovation environments for the community, as well as various operating spaces designed for learning and development, competence hubs and development labs.

The student's role and responsibility in learning

In Laurea's work-oriented research and development projects, the concept of partnership implies cooperation between teachers, experts from the labour market and students. The cooperation is based on responsible commitment to the development project. Studying at Laurea requires critical thinking, problem-solving skills, self-directiveness, a proactive attitude and cooperation skills from students. The studies place a focus on an independent attitude. In development projects, all participants are seen as learners, because the projects aim to produce change and generate something new. Partnership also means mutual respect and appreciation for diverse skills. The progress of the development project requires sharing competence and building new competence out of different areas of expertise. Students participate as partners who build their competence by obtaining new tools and by taking part in various research and development initiatives.

The teacher's role at Laurea

The teacher's role in development projects can be described as that of an expert, a participant and a pedagogical leader. The teacher cannot transfer competence to students but guides the student's learning process. Depending on their roles, Laurea's teachers are both researchers and developers, influencers in regional development, and pedagogues. Teachers who work as researchers publish reports that demonstrate the effectiveness of development projects as reformers and developers of competence in the labour market. As a developer, a teacher is responsible for ensuring the progress of a development project.

Structure of the curriculum

Laurea's curricula are based on themes and study units. A theme refers to a wider competence area that typically requires that a student master several study units within the subject area. The contents of the themes and study units cover the core vocational competence in the field. Annual themes form an umbrella for studies from the perspective of increased professional growth. The curriculum contains the nationally defined generic competences (see Table 1) as part of the objectives set for the themes or study units. Mastering the generic competences ensures vocational education that meets the requirements set for the level to be obtained at universities of applied sciences, and mastering the themes builds competence needed in working life.

Table 1. National generic Competences (Arene 2010)

Generic competences	Description of the competence, bachelor level
LEARNING COMPETENCE	• is able to self-evaluate and develop one's competence and learning style orientation • is able to retrieve and analyze information and evaluate it critically • is capable of taking responsibility for collaborative learning and sharing knowledge in teams
ETHICAL COMPETENCE	• is able to take responsibility for one's own actions and for the consequences of these actions • is able to work according to the ethical principles of the subject field • is able to take other people into account in one's actions • is able to apply the principles of equality • is able to apply the principles of sustainable development • is capable of social influencing using one's know-how and based on ethical values
WORKING COMMUNITY COMPETENCE	• is able to operate as a member of a work community • is able to operate in communicative and interactive situations in working life • is able to utilize information and communications technology in one's subject field • knows the working life in one's subject field and is able to create personal contacts in working life and to operate in professional networks • is capable of decision making in unpredicted situations • is able to apply the principles of organizational management and leadership in working life and has abilities for supervision tasks • possesses entrepreneurial skills
INNOVATION COMPETENCE	

	• is able to conduct research, development and innovation projects applying the existing knowledge and methods of the field • is able to work in projects • is capable of creative problem solving and development of working methods • is able to find customer-oriented, sustainable and profitable solutions
INTERNATIONALIZATION COMPETENCE	• possesses communicative competence necessary for one's work and for professional development in the subject field • is able to operate in a multicultural environment • takes into account the effects of and opportunities for internationalization development in one's own field

Competence evaluation

Competence evaluation is based on the objectives described in the curriculum. These objectives define the requirements that students have to meet to achieve their degree titles. Competence evaluation shows how well the set objectives have been met. On the one hand, competence is seen as knowledge, skills and values, and on the other hand, as experience. Evaluation through development projects looks at an individual's and the project community's learning, the progress and significance of different processes, and the results achieved. Study units are evaluated on a numerical scale of 0 to 5 or on a pass/fail (H/O) basis. The evaluations apply criteria developed for evaluating the competence of students at the beginning of their studies and at graduation (see Table 2). The evaluation criteria for each study unit are given in the study unit's syllabus.

Table 2. Evaluation criteria for initial stage and graduation stage students

BACHELOR'S DEGREE	INITIAL STAGE STUDENTS	GRADUATION STAGE STUDENTS
EXCELLENT grade 5 Students are able to:	• Apply professional concepts expertly. • Comply with occupational safety instructions responsibly and independently. • Justify activities using research knowledge. • Work independently and take initiatives in line with objectives. Operations are often flexible, systematic, development-oriented, creative and active. • Select the appropriate techniques and models for activities, and justify the choices. • Act in customer-oriented ways and according to the situation. • Promote group activities. • Able to critically apply ethical principles in the subject field in one's conduct and tasks.	• Apply professional concepts expertly and extensively, and manage the big picture. • Develop occupational safety of their operating environment. • Develop operating methods by comparing, combining and selecting research knowledge. • Work independently and innovatively in line with objectives. Activities are mostly creative, focused on developing the workplace and distinctly professional. • Select, combine and develop appropriate techniques and models for activities. • Take initiatives and act responsibly in customer relations, and understand the meaning of customer relationships for the big picture. • Develop and renew activities of

		multidisciplinary teams. • Critically apply ethical principles in the subject field in complex and unanticipated situations.
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BACHELOR'S DEGREE	INITIAL STAGE STUDENTS	GRADUATION STAGE STUDENTS
GOOD grade 3 Students are able to:	• Apply professional concepts systematically. • Apply occupational safety instructions in their activities. • Justify, compare and analyse their activities using general guidelines. • Able to cope independently in different tasks in each operating environment. • Apply acquired techniques and models diversely. • Act professionally in customer situations. • Work in a group in line with objectives. • Justify their activities in accordance with ethical principles.	• Apply professional concepts expertly. • Take care of occupational safety for themselves and the work community, and perceive development objects. • Select methods of operation in accordance with research knowledge and guidelines. • Work systematically and critically in line with objectives in complex situations. Operations are often flexible, systematic, creative and active. • Select the appropriate techniques and models for activities, and justify the choices. • Prioritise and maintain customer relationships. • Promote group activities. • Critically apply ethical principles in the subject field in one's conduct and tasks.

BACHELOR'S DEGREE	INITIAL STAGE STUDENTS	GRADUATION STAGE STUDENTS
SATISFACTORY grade 1 Students are able to:	• Apply most important/individual and appropriate professional concepts, and indicate their familiarity with the knowledge base. • Act safely, although activities are often schematic/ experimental/ fumbling/ self-involved. • Comply with rules and instructions, and justify their activities using provided instructions. • Act appropriately under guidance. • Use acquired techniques and models. • Take customers into account in their actions. • Act as group members. • Act in accordance with ethical	• Apply professional concepts systematically. • Comply with occupational safety instructions responsibly and independently. • Justify and analyse their activities using general guidelines and in accordance with evidence-based information. • Act professionally and responsibly in unanticipated customer and problem situations. • Work independently in different tasks in each operating environment. • Apply acquired techniques and models diversely • Act in customer-oriented ways

	principles.	and according to the situation, and understand customer needs. • Work in a group in line with objectives. • Act and justify their activities in accordance with ethical principles.
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Degree programme's quality evaluation and development

The quality of Laurea's operations is monitored and developed with the quality assurance system (picture 1.). The aim of the quality assurance system is e.g. to extensively guarantee the quality of education and of other activities, systematically produce quality-related data for the development of the operations and to promote recognition of insufficient quality.

Processes have been described as support for Laurea's basic operations. The core process is the Learning by Developing process, its implementation is supported by the Education process, the Strategy and Management process and the HR process.

Strategy Implementation Plan, where the critical success factors and their indicators have been defined, functions as a tool for monitoring and evaluating operations. Central indicators for a degree programme's quality assurance are e.g. progress of studies, learning through research and development, dropout rate, completion of studies and development of competence in graduating students. The results according to the indicators are discussed annually and based on them the appropriate measures for the development of operations are defined.

Besides the data related to critical success factor indicators, Laurea also collects other feedback and evaluation data in order to develop the quality of a degree programme. The degree programme specific curriculum is evaluated annually. In addition to personnel also students and working life representatives take part in the evaluation.

Students' most important channel of evaluating and developing operations is the student feedback system. Student feedback system includes feedback questionnaires that measure the quality of education, student's professional growth and student wellbeing as well as immediate feedback. Collecting feedback data, its systematic processing with students and personnel as well as versatile exploitation of the data enable continuous quality development in education.

Students are actively involved in different development teams both on Laurea and local unit levels. Consultation meetings between student union LAUREAMKO and the steering group are organised regularly. The aim of the meetings is to take into account the students' points of view in the development of the operations. The consultation meetings are held both on Laurea and local unit levels. Student members participate also in Laurea's internal audits which are organised once an academic year. Through the internal audits students contribute to the quality development of education and other operations.



Laureas curriculum as a part of the European Higher Education Area

Finnish higher education institutions have reformed their curricula in accordance with the creation of the European Higher Education Area, i.e., the Bologna Process. The EU's strategic objectives regarding education also guide education in Finland. The Bologna Process covers a total 46 of countries, including some outside the EU. The aim of the Bologna Process is to establish a consistent, compatible and attractive Higher Education Area in Europe by 2010.

To promote the adoption of internationally understandable, comparable degrees, the process has created a system based on two main cycles: undergraduate (Bachelor level) and graduate (Master level). Finland has adapted its degree structure to align it with this European objective. In universities of applied sciences, the two-cycle degree is implemented in a way that students obtain a first-cycle (Bachelor's) degree, after which they have the opportunity to obtain a Master's degree. The requirement for access to Master's training is an undergraduate degree plus three years' work experience. The long-term objective is that approximately 20 per cent of Bachelor's graduates will take a Master's degree.

Finnish universities of applied sciences adopted ECTS (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System) credits in 2005. In the ECTS, one academic year equals 60 credits. The ECTS is a student-centric system. It is based on the student workload needed to achieve the targets set for each degree programme.

The curricula describe the learning outcomes and competence. From the point of view of promoting international mobility, curricula must be internationally understandable. The aim of standardising the structures and learning targets of degrees is to improve the conditions for mobility within and between higher education institutions during the studies, and also in the workplace after graduation. In terms of the recognition and comparability of degrees taken in different countries, it is important to link learning targets to concrete competence requirements and definitions in the labour market.

Laurea's competence-based curriculum takes into account the demands of the Common European Framework. Studies are accumulated in the form of credits, and study units form larger modules. Competence is defined in terms of the students' learning outcomes. Currently resources are being directed towards further enhancing the ability of the curriculum implementations to generate new competence and innovations for Laurea's operating environment.

Sources:

The Bologna Process

<http://www.minedu.fi/OPM/Koulutus/artikkelit/bologna/index.html>

Global challenges and sustainable development in the curricula

The activities of the higher education institutions are based on responsibility, sustainable development and understanding and appreciating diversity within the higher education community.

A suggested measure of the Strategy for the Internationalisation of Higher Education Institutions is that the higher education institutions will increase education and research cooperation based on national and international networking in order to contribute to the attainment of the goals of the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development 2005-2014. Laurea's curricula will be developed according to the Strategy for the Internationalisation of Higher Education Institutions 2009-2015. Out of Laurea values sense of community and social responsibility represent these perspectives most clearly. Moreover, ethical competence of the generic competences of university of applied sciences degrees also means the ability to apply the principles of sustainable development in one's own work. Functioning in the globalising world requires the higher education institutions to critically consider the ethicality of their operational principles.

The goal is that all Finnish degree programmes have at least 30 cr. of studies in foreign language in their curricula. The local units proceed towards this goal gradually. In some degree programmes the goal has already been reached. The goal is also to produce competence that enables participating in solving global problems and building activities on an ethically sustainable foundation.

Source: <http://www.minedu.fi/export/sites/default/OPM/Julkaisut/2009/liitteet/opm23.pdf?lang=fi>

Operating environment

The social services operating environment is characterised by constant change. Globalisation, changes in the economy and industry, and technological advances are reflected in the lives of individuals, families and communities. Some of the main challenges faced by the social services are the aging of the population, multiculturalism and increasing socioeconomic differences. On the other hand, internationalisation opens new opportunities for networking, diverse good practices and dynamic markets and employment in the social services.. The welfare service structure is shifting from being system- and sector-focused to providing customer-oriented, networked services. The significance of immediate communities and private services is growing in welfare production. Welfare technology will continue to open new doors, although interpersonal work is also increasing in importance. Service innovations are required in order to respond to the challenges faced by the welfare sector, and they can partly be attained through development of welfare entrepreneurship.

Laurea's area of operation, the Helsinki Metropolitan Area, is highly dynamic. The area is characterised by population growth, strong economic and technological development, internationalisation and multiculturalism. The lifestyles of people in Uusimaa region vary from typical urban cultures to rural small community cultures. The aging of the population will be the single biggest challenge faced by welfare services in Uusimaa in coming years. Other challenges are related to supporting the everyday lives of families with children living in widely different conditions, to various social problems and to factors that cause social marginalisation, such as unemployment, homelessness, addiction and mental health problems and crime.

Bachelors of Social Services graduating from the Degree Programme in Social Services find employment in a wide variety of positions in social services, including early childhood education, child welfare, and work with the disabled, the elderly, substance abusers or mental health patients. Some of the most common titles are social welfare workers, counsellors, senior counsellors, kindergarten teachers, family workers or project managers. Bachelors of Social Services can assume various positions requiring expertise in planning, implementing, evaluating, coordinating and developing work. Entrepreneurial welfare services (work in charities or private service providers) are increasingly gaining ground. As the service structure changes, more people are expected to work as social service entrepreneurs. Students can also acquire international competence during the degree, which broadens and diversifies their field of expertise.

Expertise

The aim of the Degree Programme in Social Services is to train experts in social services. This means providing

training in issues related to education, rehabilitation, prevention and the maintenance of abilities, from the points of view of relationships between people, social situations and the society as a whole. The value base of social services is founded in respect for people and social justice. Bachelors of Social Services are experts in everyday life, supporters of ordinary people in various situations and problems that they encounter.

The field of social services and health care consists of working with people. Skills in interpersonal work, interaction, empathy, responsibility, individual and group management, and holistic encounters with people form the core of competence in the field. Social services also emphasise the societal nature of problems, resources and support. The operating environments of the sector are built on the basis of social policy decisions and global development. Bachelors of Social Services must be prepared to work in the public, private and third sectors alike, understanding their global nature. The relationships of an expert in social services with the society are twofold. On the one hand, Bachelors of Social Services are executors of social policy decisions, providing guidance to customers in the use of welfare services. On the other hand, their core competence includes providing social influence and supporting citizens through social change processes.

The Degree Programme in Social Services trains experts for the broad field of social services, whose different areas require different specialist expertise. Challenges and opportunities related to population, legislative, technological and methodological developments create a need for specialist skills. The main areas of specialisation are related to the aging population, supporting children and families, marginalisation, social rehabilitation, multiculturalism, internationalisation and increasing participation.

Competence in diverse social service methods and a deep understanding of the social viewpoint form an essential part of expertise in social services. Work with customers living in different conditions and with changing social situations emphasises the need for a research-oriented and developmental approach instead of one where ready-made solutions are adopted; also needed is a constant self-evaluation of one's own work and learning, i.e. reflective professionalism. Social efficiency requirements and a focus on citizens' rights and the effectiveness of social service work have brought about an emphasis on evaluating services and work methods, on quality and on leadership.

Competences

The competence of a Bachelor of Social Services is based on social and behavioural science theory. The main methodological foundations are related to social work, social pedagogy, and a creative and functional orientation. The core competences of a graduate are:

- ethical competence in social services
- competence in customer work
- systems competence in social services
- social analysis skills
- reflective development and management competence
- community competence and social engagement
- multiculturalism and internationalisation skills
- creative and functional competence

Creative Functions Specialisation Option

The Creative Functions specialisation option involves a social pedagogy and functional approach to work. Promoting subjectivity and empowerment forms the core of social pedagogy and creative functions. The focus is on reinforcing the persona, the internally guided subject, who can make choices based on genuine needs and feel relevant. Interest in social pedagogy is focused on change. Creative methods as a part of the principles and models of social pedagogy give opportunities for building dialogue, concretely specifying phenomena and making them visible. Students of the specialisation option acquire tools for recognising their own and their customers' resources. Creative functions can be used to reinforce the resources of individuals and whole communities. Participatory job orientation also deepens understanding of the societal level and how it can be influenced.

Everyday-based social pedagogy works with customers to identify solutions and paths that connect the customers to their own lives, so that they perceive themselves as active players, influencers, decision-makers and responsibility-takers in their lives. The duty of the society in this process is to offer individuals the opportunity to participate in the community, the society and their operations, and to provide individuals with a mirror in which to assess their own actions. The basic idea behind professional orientation is that creative resources exist within the individual and the environment, and can be utilised consciously.

Initiating and supporting the customer's growth process implies that the social worker must be in touch with his or her own creative opportunities. Therefore the task for education is to provide social workers with the necessary tools for working with themselves, which will allow them to support customers in identifying their resources. Students with a social pedagogy approach grow during their studies into experts who are self-directed, research-oriented and skilled in development and team work, who will as future professionals help and support service users and members of society to become fully empowered citizens.

The Creative Functions specialisation option (130 cr) consists of the following study units:

- Becoming a Social Service Professional 10 cr
- Interaction in Customer Work 10 cr
- Producing Welfare 10 cr
- Methodical Customer Work 10 cr
- Teamwork and Group Work 5 cr
- Responsible Leadership in a Work Community 10 cr
- Creativity as a Support for Participation - optional advanced studies 30 cr (15 + 15):
 - Participatory Drama 10 cr + Psychosocial Drama 5 cr
 - Participatory Figurative Expression 10 cr + Community Art and the Therapeutic Nature of Images 5 cr
 - Applied Fitness and Dance 10 cr + Special Methods in Fitness and Dance 5 cr
 - Participatory Music 10 cr + Therapeutic Use of Music 5 cr
- Work Placements 30 cr (Customer Work Practice 15 cr + Professional Methods Practice 15 cr)
- Thesis 15 cr

Professional Growth and Annual Themes

Education in social services is founded on a conception of humanity that emphasises development opportunities, activity and resources. Learning situations promote active information processing and focus on a creative, experiential and interactive approach. The starting points for learning lie in reflecting on forms of interaction and experience and critically examining one's own experiences and information structures built during life. Throughout their studies, students are encouraged to adopt a research-oriented and developmental approach, to increase their ethical awareness and to assume critical ethical reasoning and responsibility.

The social expertise growth process is supported by the professional growth path. The professional growth path is intended to support the progress of studies and the development of the students' identity as operators in social services. The professional growth path progresses through four stages defined in Laurea's Pedagogical Strategy. The four stages of professional growth are:

- Initiation of professional growth
- Development of core competences in the field
- Development of in-depth competence
- Development and renewal of employment sector

The professional growth path is completed using tutoring by teachers and small-group guidance, i.e. tutor group meetings; it begins at the beginning of studies and ends on graduation. The initial stage of the studies supports the students' adoption of their roles and identities as students and social service operators. Students are supported in assuming responsibility for their learning and working in groups, and they receive skills in assessing their own learning and growth. As they progress in their studies, they are encouraged to adopt the identity of a social service operator and a research- and development-oriented approach to work. Students receive skills in ethical debates and in evaluating their own actions. Towards the end of their studies, students deepen their workplace skills and their adoption of the role of an employee in readiness for working life. They receive skills in working with others and promoting their own and others' occupational welfare. Mentoring is included in the sense that the students have a workplace mentor or, conversely, they mentor a younger student. In their graduation tutorials, students go over their professional growth process through self-evaluation.

From the students' point of view, the professional growth path is linked to the following study units:

- Becoming a Social Service Professional
- Professional Work Methods Practice
- Responsible Leadership in a Work Community
- Career and Graduation Talk

Description of the Degree Programme

Competence development

Students start by looking at the learning methods needed at the university of applied sciences and become familiar with the multidisciplinary framework of the social service sector. This stage stresses the importance of self-evaluation, of defining one's self-image, and of improving customer interaction skills. Students learn the ethical principles of social services and adopt a customer-oriented and respectful way of working. As their studies progress, the students begin to focus increasingly on work, processes and methods in social services. They evaluate their activities in relation to the general practices and methods of the sector. Questions of equality in welfare service provision are addressed. The later stage of studies emphasises social awareness. Students look at their own activities and the work they carry out in the workplace in relation to social trends and values. An investigative approach and skills in developing work methods are particularly important in later studies.

Learning by Developing

The principle of studies at Laurea is that staff and students work together in Finnish and international research and development activities. This means that during their studies, students take part in genuine research and development projects, acquiring competence in creating and fulfilling innovative solutions for workplace development. This integrates R&D&I closely into teaching. In Learning by Developing, the expertise of workplace representatives, teachers and students is combined to form collective expertise that can optimally generate new knowledge. This also links students and staff closely to regional engagement and allows students to build international and national networks of relations.

Development projects and workshops allow individual and social learning, the generation of new learning data, as well as the production of innovations in the form of new products, operating models and work cultures. Students acquire methods in R&D and project work, and learn how to operate in development projects throughout their training. Guidance and self-evaluation are used to support the personal, ethical and professional growth needed for the field. International operations form an important part of the degree programme.

Multiculturalism and internationality as a part of the studies

In their studies, the students become familiar with the multicultural nature of the social services sector, and have opportunities for developing their international competence right from the start. Multicultural and international questions are linked naturally to all study units, and from year 2 onwards students are invited to take part in international exchanges for studying or completing work placements. Laurea Tikkurila's international projects, English-language study units, extensive language study opportunities, International Week, visiting lecturers and international exchange students support the students' internationalisation at home and globalisation competence.

Welfare entrepreneurship as a part of the studies

Welfare entrepreneurship competence forms a part of the entrepreneurship path that is woven into the core competence of the field. The aim is to produce knowledge of entrepreneurial service providers such as small businesses, charities and associations as a part of welfare services. The aim is also to increase awareness of and positive attitudes towards entrepreneurship and to create understanding of how to set up a business. An entrepreneurial approach can imply either starting one's own business or internal entrepreneurship while working for someone else, or promoting social entrepreneurship or the employment of the disabled. Increasing demand for welfare services opens doors for new companies being set up in the field. Entrepreneurship studies allow students to come up with, plan and develop welfare service business ideas and innovations, and to work in the campus incubator.

Structure of the curriculum

The Degree Programme in Social Services comprises 210 credits (cr), including 20 cr in compulsory basic studies. There are 125 cr in shared compulsory professional studies. Optional professional studies include optional advanced themes (45 cr). Elective studies make up 20 cr. In addition the degree programme includes practical work to foster competence (45 cr) and a thesis (15 cr). Students can use the optional advanced themes, the optional and elective studies as well as various kinds of projects to build their own learning paths to career development.

During the degree, students focus their competence on one of the following specialisations:

- Supporting the Well-Being of Children and Families

- Creativity to Support Participation
- Marginalisation and Participation
- Supporting the Well-Being of Senior Citizens and the Elderly

Students must complete 45 credits in one of the advanced themes.

The degree includes 45 credits in practical work to further professional development. There are three work placements during the degree:

- Customer Work Practice (15 cr) is included in the Encountering the Customer theme, and is generally completed in the first year.
- Professional Work Methods Practice (15 cr) is included in the optional advanced themes, and is generally completed in the second year
- Professional and Service Innovation Development Practice (15 cr) is included in the Managing and Developing Work in Social Services theme, and is generally completed in the third year.

Graduates of the degree can become qualified kindergarten teachers (Act 272, Section 7 and Decree 608/2005 on the qualification requirements for social service professionals) by completing 60 credits of studies in early childhood education and social pedagogy. (Attachment: Decision of the Managing Director 31/2007, including a list of the required studies for the qualification.)

Elective studies (20 cr) can be used to deepen or broaden the students' competence. Students may complete elective studies from their own or from external degree programme selections. Elective studies can be used to acquired competence related to welfare entrepreneurship by taking related study units or starting up a business using the pre-incubator services. Particularly suitable as elective studies are the study units Developing Service Innovations, Service Innovations in Business Development, Innoplaza and Student Tutoring, as well as elective and preparatory language studies. Elective studies from external degree programmes can be either whole themes or individual study units. Students can also complete elective studies from other advanced themes in the Degree Programme in Social Services.

The degree includes 15 credits in a thesis. The thesis process is organised in collaboration with the other degree programmes at the unit, which means that students can participate in multidisciplinary projects and work processes. During the thesis process, students grow professionally towards expertise, acquiring a research-oriented and developmental approach. The thesis and the development studies chosen in the final year are related in content to the optional advanced themes and linked to the research and development directions of the unit.

Thanks to the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) process, students can have their existing competence recognised as a part of their studies. The RPL process is applied from the start of the studies, always taking into account the competence requirements of the social services sector.

		1. year	2. year	3. year	4. year
OP	STUDIES	30	60	60	60
V014	FOUNDATIONS OF WORK IN SOCIAL SERVICES				
V0077	Becoming a Social Service Professional	10			
V015	ENCOUNTERING THE CUSTOMER				
01282	Interaction in Customer Work	10			
V0044	Diverse and Multicultural Customer Relationships	10			
V0078	Methodical Customer Work				10
V0046	Customer Work Practice		15		
V0047	Svenska inom socialbranschen		5		
00634	Oral skills in Swedish		0		
00635	Written skills in Swedish		0		
V016	WELFARE SERVICES AND SOCIAL INFLUENCE				
V0048	Changes in the Welfare Society		5		
V0079	Producing Welfare		10		
01280	Social Influence and Social Ethics			10	
V018	CREATIVITY TO SUPPORT PARTICIPATION				
V0054	Participatory Drama		10		
V0055	Psychosocial Drama		5		
V0056	Figurative Expression		10		
V0057	Community Art and the Therapeutic Nature of Images		5		
V0058	Applied Fitness and Dance		10		
V0059	Special Methods in Fitness and Dance		5		
V0060	Participatory Music		10		
V0061	Therapeutic Use of Music		5		
V0062	Professional Work Methods Practice, Creativity to Support Participation			15	
V021	MANAGING AND DEVELOPING WORK IN SOCIAL SERVICES				
V0070	Research and Development		5		
V0071	Research and Development Methods			5	
V0080	Teamwork and Group Work		5		
V0073	English in Social Services I				5
V0081	Responsible Leadership in a Work Community			10	
V0075	Thesis				15
V0076	Professional and Service Innovation Development Practice				15
V022	ELECTIVE STUDIES				
00202	Initial Test in English Skills	0			
00203	Initial Test in Swedish Skills	0			
00493	Finnish as Second Language-Initial test	0			
00194	Preparatory Studies in English	3			
00195	Preparatory Studies in Swedish	3			
00388	Preparatory Studies in Finnish (as Mother tongue)	3			

00522	Preparatory Studies in Finnish	3			
00636	Written skills in Finnish	0			
00637	Oral skills in Finnish	0			
00797	Introduction to worklife English				3
00798	Introduction to worklife English				5
00799	Introduction to worklife Swedish				3
00800	Introduction to worklife Swedish				5
		30	60	60	60

V014 FOUNDATIONS OF WORK IN SOCIAL SERVICES, 10 cr

Description:

Students acquire the learning skills needed for studies at a university of applied sciences, and become familiar with the foundations of work in social services.

The student will be able to:

- formulate a personal study plan including international studies, using the main study tools and techniques and studying in different learning environment
- see their own studies in the light of the core competence in social services and health care and of social expertise

Content:

The theme covers the basic aspects of and skills related to studying at higher education level, and familiarises students with the correctional services operating environment using diverse methods. The professional growth path begins with work in small teams.

Learning process:

The theme consists of basic studies completed at the beginning of the degree and takes place at the stage of initiation of professional growth. Students develop their professional identities in social services and assume the role of student.

V0077 Becoming a Social Service Professional, 10 cr

The student is able to:

- evaluate the starting points for their own learning
- understand the significance of evaluating learning
- comprehend the changing operating environment of social services and define social service expertise
- discern the values and ethical principles that direct work in social services
- communicate verbally and in writing in work and everyday situations, and produce written reports using IT applications
- take possession of their own creativity and learning in a group
- understand the opportunities of creative and functional methods to support their professional development, as well as the principles behind the ideology of socio-cultural inspiration

Professional growth path and annual theme:

Students will be able to:

- take responsibility for their learning and for assuming the role of student
- evaluate their learning and their professional growth process

Contents of the study unit:

- creativity and art-like operating methods within the context of socio-cultural inspiration
- the group as a learning environment
- skills in learning to learn: self-evaluation, investigative learning, learning by developing
- IT competence and information gathering
- written and verbal communication
- social expertise, professional development and personal career planning
- values and ethical principles in social services
- welfare entrepreneurship in the social services and student participation in pre-incubator activities

Professional growth path and annual theme:

- learning self-assessment
- studying at a university of applied sciences and in Laurea's LbD model

Study unit description:

This study unit forms a basis for a group process that lasts 3.5 years. Students look at themselves as learners and creative actors, and as group members. They become familiar with the field of social work through action, field trips and written assignments. They begin working on their portfolios, which will structure their professional growth and career planning processes throughout their studies.

Professional growth path and annual theme:

The professional growth path is intended to support the progress of studies and the development of the students' identity as operators in social services. The study unit begins at the beginning of the studies and ends on graduation. The annual professional growth theme is Initiation of Professional Growth and it is linked in the first year to the Becoming a Social Service Professional study unit. The professional growth unit is completed using tutoring and small-group guidance, i.e. tutor group meetings.

V015 ENCOUNTERING THE CUSTOMER, 50 cr

Description:

Students know how to encounter and provide guidance to various customers and customer groups, always respecting customers and following the ethical principles of social services.

The student will be able to:

- identify customers' different life situations and resources, and create professional interaction relationships
- assess and apply various theoretical approaches and methods when working with customers
- support and guide diverse customers and customer groups (including families) at various stages of growth and development and in different circumstances

Content:

Students acquire basic skills in customer work within social services. Theoretical and practical learning begins through the development of interaction skills. Later they learn about interacting with customers by using various guidance and empowerment methods. They reinforce and deepen their knowledge of operating environments in social services.

Learning process:

In terms of professional growth, the theme is situated towards the beginning of the process, where the students' professional development is apparent as the growth of ethical awareness, a consideration of values and an increase in professional interaction and customer work skills with regard to individuals and groups.

01282 Interaction in Customer Work, 10 cr

The student is able to:

- examine and investigate themselves as humans, participants in interaction and handlers of encounters
- construct and create customer-oriented interaction situations based on empathetic understanding
- itemise their personal values and beliefs in their interactions and customer work
- understand the possibilities of creative and experiential methods in interaction and customer work
- understand the structural factors and processes of group dynamics

Contents of the study unit:

- the human life cycle and its various stages of development and turning points
- humans as psychological, social, physical and sexual beings
- principles of interaction and encountering skills
- multisensory encounters in interaction, using various functional languages (drama, music, movement, dance, images)
- group phenomena and principles of working in a group

Study unit description:

Students examine and investigate their own interaction and encountering skills, as well as the beliefs and values that lie behind them. The study unit covers humans and their various stages of development. Topics are approached in an experiential manner through workshop teaching. Students are expected to commit to working individually and in groups, and to be able to assess their own thought and action models critically. Workshops provide an introduction to the opportunities of using various creative methods (music, images, drama, movement and dance) in social work.

V0044 Diverse and Multicultural Customer Relationships, 10 cr

The student is able to:

- understand the diversity of the clientele of social services
- discern factors affecting growth and development in customer work
- take into account the significance of different cultures and internationality in social work

Contents of the study unit:

- human growth and development and special needs for support
- social problems and risks in various customer groups
- multiculturalism and antiracism

Study unit description:

Students continue to focus on encountering the customer, particularly with a view to multiculturalism and diversity. There is an emphasis on creating a personal relationship with the issues and themes under consideration, through experience and theory. Students become familiar with the diverse and multicultural social services environment through assignments and knowledge-sharing. During Laurea Tikkurila's International Week (first week of March), students complete a one-week work placement.

V0078 Methodical Customer Work, 10 cr**The student is able to:**

- make use of various theoretical and methodical approaches when acting in customer situations with individuals and groups
- select, use and evaluate various methods of customer work in a systematic and target-oriented way
- support and guide various kinds of customers and customer groups at different stages of growth and development, and in various circumstances
- understand the opportunities and limits of acting in a crisis for a social work professional participating in a multidisciplinary team
- utilise therapeutic creative methods in their social service customer work
- distinguish between therapeutic activities and therapy

Contents of the study unit:

- basis of customer work in research and knowledge
- theoretical approaches and methods of customer work in social services
- methodicalness and methodological principles of social work
- introduction to crisis management
- introduction to art, motion, dance and music therapy, and possibilities of using drama as a form of therapy

Study unit description:

The study unit covers the concepts, aims and tasks of social work in the community and looks in depth at the theoretical and methodological principles of social services and social work. Through a combination of theory and practice (work placements + employers) and assignments, students learn to use various work forms and methods in social services, and to identify, clarify and evaluate their own work methods and abilities. Students become familiar with the forms of therapeutic creative activities and crisis management as a part of social work.

V0046 Customer Work Practice, 15 cr**The student is able to:**

- discern the basic task and environment of an organisation
- encounter and guide various kinds of customers and customer groups in line with the basic tasks of social work and using a customer-oriented approach
- participate actively and responsibly in a work community
- explain their professional learning objectives and flexibly revise them in line with their learning process
- evaluate their professional growth, their strengths and their needs for improvement in customer work
- act in accordance with the ethical principles of social services

Contents of the study unit:

- learning basic customer work skills in practice through a job placement

Study unit description:

The customer work placement is completed in a social service work environment where students can participate in customer work. The focus is on the students setting their own targets and evaluating their competence, as well as trying out customer work in practice.

V0047 Svenska inom socialbranschen, 5 cr

The student is able to:

- use oral and written Swedish in their work environment
- participate in a community of experts, effectively using acquired communication skills
- communicate on the topics of their fields of expertise using various channels apply information found in foreign-language sources
- understand what social services competence and practices are like in the other Nordic countries

Contents of the study unit:

- customer-oriented written and verbal communication
- most important social work terminology
- job searching; introducing oneself and one's educational background and work experience
- familiarisation with social services competence in the Nordic region

Study unit description:

During the study unit, students attain at least skill level B1.2 in the Swedish language as defined in the Common European Framework. They also pass the civil service language proficiency certificate in oral and written Swedish with a Good or Satisfactory grade.

00634 Oral skills in Swedish, 0 cr

Study unit description:

This study unit is for evaluating oral skills in Swedish.

00635 Written skills in Swedish, 0 cr

Study unit description:

This study unit is for evaluating written skills in Swedish.

V016 WELFARE SERVICES AND SOCIAL INFLUENCE, 25 cr

Description:

Students become familiar with the Finnish social security and welfare service system. They learn to understand the multifaceted nature of welfare and various different ways of implementing welfare policy and producing welfare. Students learn to work in service management, networks and multidisciplinary partnerships or projects.

The student will be able to:

- recognise changes at the community or societal level
- understand the Finnish social security system as a whole and know the main legislation and structures applicable to services
- direct various customer groups in using services and benefits
- work, using various methods, to reinforce the status of certain communities and citizens in society
- recognise welfare entrepreneurship as a part of welfare service provision
- work in multidisciplinary groups and networks
- apply the methods and work processes of structural social work and relate them to the social and socio-ethical frameworks
- discern social policy changes in the EU's integration movements and the challenges of globalisation for the social security system and for customer work

Content:

Central to the theme is the recognition of globalisation and changes in the welfare society, and the effects these changes have had on demand and supply of welfare services. The theme looks at the basic principles of social policy, and at social change from the point of view of citizens' communities and the society. Students use different methods to improve citizens' well-being. The theme provides basic knowledge of social services and law, and of entrepreneurial welfare services in the form of charities, associations and private enterprise. Also important are networking, multidisciplinary cooperation and a critical look at professional ethics in social services.

Learning process:

The theme takes place at the stage of professional growth where students develop and deepen their core competence in the field. Their use of their own functional abilities develops in various projects and networks. Students improve their ethical awareness and social responsibility, and become aware of the significance of social processes and structures. They become more knowledgeable on the laws of globalisation and increase their competence in welfare systems and services.

V0048 Changes in the Welfare Society, 5 cr**The student is able to:**

- examine social changes from the points of view of welfare and social work
- outline the development policies of the Finnish social service system
- predict the effects of internationalisation on their field

Contents of the study unit:

- well-being, economics and social policy
- the Finnish society and its changes as the framework for social work
- the social service system and its changes in the national and international context
- social science research and work in social services

Study unit description:

Central to the study unit is the recognition of globalisation and changes in the welfare society, and the effects these changes have had on demand and supply of welfare services. The unit looks at the basic principles of social policy, and at social change from the point of view of citizens, communities and the society.

V0079 Producing Welfare, 10 cr**The student is able to:**

- discern the general principles of legislation and administration related to social work, and of the welfare provision service system and its operation
- discern development challenges related to producing welfare on a regional, national and international level
- identify and name ethical questions related to producing welfare
- recognise the creative resources of communities and their possibilities for promoting the well-being of individuals in a community, using the methods of socio-cultural inspiration
- explain the concepts of community, communality and community work

Contents of the study unit:

- value base of the welfare society and ethical issues behind welfare services
- general legislation regulating the social service system and its services
- administrative principles and models for service provision
- service development challenges, innovation and welfare technology
- principles of entrepreneurial practices and starting points for welfare entrepreneurship
- socio-cultural inspiration in a community
- creative and functional methods in guiding individuals, groups and communities

Study unit description:

Students become familiar with the provision of welfare services, and the related legislation and administration procedures. They receive skills in using the methods of socio-cultural inspiration in diverse communities through various projects completed during the study unit. Projects are completed according to the principles of

entrepreneurship.

01280 Social Influence and Social Ethics, 10 cr

The student is able to:

- discern social and global changes
- analyse social and global structures and processes that cause and maintain deprivation, and learn how to change them
- take into account sustainable development in their work and act in accordance to its principles
- initiate value debates and be activators in various organisations and networks
- identify some of the ethical issues related to social development and the diversity of welfare services
- promote the fulfilment of equality ideals in social work
- promote social responsibility

Contents of the study unit:

- civic action and information services
- social, regional and community work
- formation of social problems and structural social work, and their global dimensions
- social and political influence
- social ethics, ethical theories and approaches
- justice as a moral and ethical phenomenon

Study unit description:

The study unit covers opportunities for acting as an opinion leader in various interest groups and mastering various influencing methods and tools. Students receive skills in promoting the fulfilment of equality and social responsibility through social work.

V018 CREATIVITY TO SUPPORT PARTICIPATION, 30 cr

Description:

Students learn to understand the significance of creativity and creative activity in promoting the well-being of individuals, communities and the society, and know how to foster the value of creativity as a support for human growth and participation. The theme supports creative and participatory learning.

The student will be able to:

- apply various forms of expression and utilise them in their own creative processes as a part of their professional development and customer work
- understand and utilise the dimensions of creativity as a form of being, a method of thinking, a multisensory language, a method of influence and a research tools
- act and engage as a socio-cultural inspirer in projects that increase communities' well-being, in partnership with others
- research and develop emotional and social capital at the societal level, using art-like functions

Content:

Students complete two 15-credit modules out of four alternatives. This theme focuses on the opportunities and limitations of creativity in individuals, groups, communities and societies within the framework of social services. The theme deepens the students' understanding of human multisensory forms of being and ways of working professionally. In the module, students adopt the role of socio-cultural inspirers through theory and practice. Competence gained in the theme relates to applying the language of drama, movement, images and music to work in the field; to investigating one's own role and expression in challenging situations; to making difficult and important issues evident in customer work; to strengthening customer participation; and to developing new opportunities and solutions through interaction between artistic activity and social expertise. Some of the topics in the theme are participation, empowerment and marginalisation in a community, cultural identity and functionality as a part of community work.

Learning process:

In terms of professional growth, the thesis is related to deepening professional competence. The students increase their ethical awareness and adoption of different perspectives in their work, and develop their ability to acquire,

process and critically evaluate information. They learn to assume responsibility for a group's learning and for the sharing of learned knowledge.

V0054 Participatory Drama, 10 cr

The student is able to:

- use their skills in activities related to drama, movement, images and music to support their professional competence, and as rehabilitating tools and work resources
- plan, lead and evaluate group processes that utilise dramatic methods
- apply the language of drama and theatre as one way of investigating and bringing up various important or difficult issues in a community
- act as inspirers of drama and social work, developers of the method and opinion leaders in the field of social expertise

Contents of the study unit:

- methods of drama and theatre, and the art of creation in social work
- developing one's own form of expression
- trends and methods of drama in social work
- tasks of a leader and inspirer in drama
- dramatization

Study unit description:

The study unit covers social service phenomena, customer relationships and challenges using the methods of drama, and looks at the various types of drama. Competence gained in the theme relates to responsibly applying the language of drama to work in the field; to investigating one's own role and expression in challenging situations; and to making difficult and important issues evident in customer work. The main emphasis is on experiential learning and on committing to group processes.

V0055 Psychosocial Drama, 5 cr

The student is able to:

- know some of the main techniques and theories behind psychosocial drama
- understand the possibilities of psychosocial drama in social work
- understand the therapeutic dimension of drama
- work responsibly at the meeting point between social work and dramatic activity

Contents of the study unit:

- theory and main concepts of psychosocial drama
- main techniques
- sociometry and ethical questions
- psychodrama as therapy

Study unit description:

The study unit covers social service phenomena, customer relationships and challenges using the methods of drama, and looks at the various types of drama. Competence gained in the theme relates to responsibly applying the language of drama to work in the field; to investigating one's own role and expression in challenging situations; and to making difficult and important issues evident in customer work. The main emphasis is on experiential learning and on committing to group processes.

V0056 Figurative Expression, 10 cr

The student is able to:

- utilise their skills in figurative activity as a support for professional competence and as a rehabilitating tool and resource for work
- plan, direct and evaluate group processes that use creative methods
- be developers of art-like functions and social work methods, and opinion leaders in the field of expertise
- recognise and influence the conditions and contexts of creativity in order to develop the creative community and

the creative welfare society

Contents of the study unit:

- methods of imagery and the art of creation in social work
- developing one's own expression
- tasks of a visual expression tutor
- significance of visual experiences in promoting the well-being of individuals, communities and the society
- ways of seeing and being seen

Study unit description:

Students deepen their knowledge of the possibilities of visual expression in social work, through theory and practice. They seek their own figurative forms of expression by doing and observing, and discover the possibilities and limits of using images in customer work. They learn to lead the figurative process and understand the significance of planning, setting targets and reflection in working with individuals, groups and communities.

V0057 Community Art and the Therapeutic Nature of Images, 5 cr

The student is able to:

- encounter persons with special needs who have a long-term illness, disability or other physical, psychological or social impairment
- lead and apply figurative activities and assist persons with special needs
- apply the therapeutic and rehabilitating dimension of imagery
- apply the language of images as alternative ways of investigating and pointing out various important and difficult issues in a community

Contents of the study unit:

- community art and environmental art
- therapeutic dimension of figurative activities

Study unit description:

Students attend workshops to obtain personal experiences of the therapeutic possibilities of imagery. They deepen their understanding through literature and writing. They carry out small-scale projects in work environments and ventures in the field, obtaining skills in working as figurative activity tutors who listen to the community's needs.

V0058 Applied Fitness and Dance, 10 cr

The student is able to:

- use their skills in activities related to fitness and movement to support their professional competence, and as rehabilitating tools and work resources
- plan, manage and evaluate group processes that make use of fitness and motion methods
- create and develop their understanding of fitness and dance and their opportunities and special methods, based on existing knowledge
- act as inspirers and developers of fitness, dance and social work methods, and as opinion leaders in the field of social expertise

Contents of the study unit:

- methods of fitness and skills in doing in social work
- significance of physical experiences and movement in promoting the well-being and health of individuals, communities and the society
- communal nature and social capital of fitness and dance
- outdoors and on the sidelines: environmental art, hiking, being outdoors, adventure

Study unit description:

Students become familiar with the process of combining social work with fitness and dance, and its opportunities and limitations. The emphasis is particularly on increasing customer participation and interaction, and on developing new possibilities and solutions within fitness activities and social expertise. The main focus is on experiential learning and committing to group processes.

V0059 Special Methods in Fitness and Dance, 5 cr

The student is able to:

- understand a person's holistic being, the links between mind and body and the needs for, obstacles against and ways of supporting joining the community
- encounter persons with special needs who have a long-term illness, disability or other physical, psychological or social impairment
- guide, adapt movements to and assist persons with special needs
- apply the therapeutic and rehabilitating dimension of fitness and dance

Contents of the study unit:

- socio-emotional and fitness-related special needs, their appearance and background factors, assessing challenges and providing support
- aids and their use in fitness and motion
- Sherborne's interactive motion, psychomotor functions and other special methods
- methods of motion and dance therapy

Study unit description:

Students become familiar with the process of combining social work with fitness and dance, and its opportunities and limitations. The emphasis is particularly on increasing customer participation and interaction, and on developing new possibilities and solutions within fitness activities and social expertise. The main focus is on experiential learning and committing to group processes.

V0060 Participatory Music, 10 cr

The student is able to:

- use their skills in activities related to music to support their professional competence, and as rehabilitating tools and work resources
- plan, manage and evaluate group processes that make use of fitness and motion methods
- use music in customer work, supporting the actions of individuals and groups
- act as developers of music functions and opinion leaders in the field of social expertise
- influence the conditions and contexts of creativity in order to develop creative communities and a creative welfare society

Contents of the study unit:

- significance and role of music in social work and the welfare society
- developing one's own musical expression
- leading musical activity
- methods and elements of music and their uses in social work

Study unit description:

Students become practically acquainted with the work methods and elements of music from the perspective of education and rehabilitation, and examine and develop their own work in practice and theory. They develop their roles as tutors and their abilities in planning, leading and evaluating musical activity. Through experience and theory, they deepen their understanding of the opportunities for using music in social work. They practice this in various customer work projects.

V0061 Therapeutic Use of Music, 5 cr

The student is able to:

- apply and use music therapeutically to support customers' well-being
- utilise their own musical resources in customer work and to support their own occupational health
- understand the meaning of music therapy and its possibilities in health promotion

Contents of the study unit:

- therapeutic dimension of music
- music as a phenomenon

- therapeutic possibilities of music in customer work
- methods of music therapy
- music as a resource

Study unit description:

Students become familiar with the therapeutic possibilities of music through experience, practical examples and theory. They find out about diverse methods of music therapy and consider the significance of music for various customer groups, and for the well-being of individuals and groups. The topic is approached through workshops, lectures and written assignments.

V0062 Professional Work Methods Practice, Creativity to Support Participation, 15 cr

The student is able to:

- act according to professional work methods and evaluate these in relation to an organisation's main task
- analyse practical professional operations and work situations, providing theoretical justifications
- build empathetic relationships based on interaction
- identify situations of ethical choices and find solutions as members of a work community, with customers and through partnership networks
- evaluate themselves as growing professionals in relation to the methods of the field and the challenges of customer work
- improve their international and multicultural competence in national and international operating environments
- Special objectives of the work placement in the theme:
- utilise creative functions in customer work
- build interactive relationships using creative functions, in a target-oriented way

Professional growth path and annual theme:

Students will be able to:

- identify the significance of teams as a part of learning and share their knowledge in teams
- know the requirements for professional competence in social services

Contents of the study unit:

- customer work methods
- practising the adoption of a research-oriented approach

Professional growth path and annual theme:

- professional growth and the professional identity

Study unit description:

Professional methods practice can be carried out in any professional operating environment that is suited to the optional theme, in line with the students' own objectives and specialisations. Students can also increase their international and multicultural competence related to the theme by completing the work placement abroad. To qualify as a kindergarten teacher, students must complete their second or third placement in a day care centre.

Professional growth path and annual theme:

The professional growth theme is Development of Core Competences in the Field, and it is linked to the Professional Work Methods Practice in year two. The professional growth unit is completed using tutoring and small-group guidance, i.e. tutor group meetings.

Previous studies:

Customer Work Practice

10 credits of optional advanced studies, or equivalent knowledge.

Customer Work Practice and at least 10 credits of optional advanced studies, or equivalent knowledge.

V021 MANAGING AND DEVELOPING WORK IN SOCIAL SERVICES, 60 cr

The student will be able to:

- use and apply the methods of research and development
- develop the workplace with a basis in research, producing new solutions in the form of products, operating models

or working cultures

- work as responsible members, leaders and developers of work communities and networks
- work in a target-oriented way in teams
- discern the operations of multicultural and international work communities and networks

Content:

The theme emphasises learning of research and development methods and participation in a work community. Leadership and teamwork are essential parts of the theme.

The theme includes a thesis, which forms part of Laurea's research and development work. It deepens the students' professional development and serves the employment market and regional development, also creating foundations for international cooperation. The thesis is used to develop work and common practices, and can produce significant innovations. It emphasises interaction with the labour market, and an investigative and developmental approach. Thesis reports are based around describing object-oriented activities and their results, as well as on theoretical and research-based analyses. Theses contain new descriptive and explanatory information on the labour market. Students are encouraged to link their theses to multicultural and international projects. The study unit involves the completion of a maturity test. In it, students must demonstrate mastery of the subject and good writing skills.

Learning process:

The theme takes place at the stage of professional growth at which students strengthen their skills in developing and renewing their work environment. It focuses on enhancing development and leadership skills and on deepening professional competence. The theme is linked to the advanced theme chosen by each student and to the research and development alignment of the unit.

V0070 Research and Development, 5 cr

The student is able to:

- understand the significance of research and development in social services
- recognise the ethical dimensions of research and development
- form an understanding of the research and development process
- find and apply international research in deepening their competence

Contents of the study unit:

- development work and the research-oriented approach to social services
- project work, its methods and evaluation
- philosophy and ethics of science
- research and development process, information gathering and scientific writing
- thesis process and practices

Study unit description:

Students familiarise themselves with the principles of research-oriented and developmental work and with the principles and ethical dimensions of R&D in social services. They look at the principles of research and project work. They also become familiar with the thesis process.

V0071 Research and Development Methods, 5 cr

The student is able to:

- plan a research setting, select suitable research methods and carry out a small-scale research process
- produce and analyse qualitative research materials
- carry out questionnaire-based surveys and analyse quantitative data using simple statistical methods

Contents of the study unit:

- research methodology
- qualitative research methods
- quantitative research methods

Study unit description:

The main purpose of the study unit is to familiarise students with research methods and provide them with the ability

apply these to their own thesis. Students learn to use research methods and familiarise themselves with producing qualitative and quantitative data and analysing it.

V0080 Teamwork and Group Work, 5 cr

The student is able to:

- understand target-oriented group activities as a whole and see themselves as part of the group process
- analyse and develop their own activities as responsible group and team members
- examine and apply group dynamics and its basic legal aspects in leading a team
- lead experiential groups

Contents of the study unit:

- group strength and creativity
- forms of power and leadership in group processes
- leading experiential and functional groups

Study unit description:

The study unit covers phenomena related to group work and deepens group work competence. The study group forms an experiential learning environment for investigating groups, group dynamics and related phenomena. Students receive experience of participating in groups and teams and learn to analyse the significance of their own and others' activities. Students deepen their competence as group leaders.

V0073 English in Social Services I, 5 cr

The student is able to:

- communicate in English in a workplace and a multicultural environment
 - work effectively in a community of experts, effectively using communication methods
 - communicate on the themes of their area of expertise using various channels
 - use information acquired from foreign-language sources
- understand what social services competence and practices are like on a global level

Contents of the study unit:

- professional verbal and written communications
- main terminology in social work
- job searching; introducing oneself and one's educational background and work experience
- familiarisation with social services in different countries as a part of the International Week

Study unit description:

The competence gained in the study unit is that of an opinion leader who can use different communication methods. The framework for competence development is formed by organisations that use Finnish and English as their working languages. Students attain at least skill level B.2 as defined in the Common European Framework.

V0081 Responsible Leadership in a Work Community, 10 cr

The student is able to:

- act responsibly and in a target-oriented way in working in or leading an organisation
- participate as members or leaders of the work community, and promote its welfare as well as their own
- identify an organisation's ethical values and work accordingly in multicultural communities, and critically evaluate their own and an organisation's actions
- use the tools and methods of applied R&D and creative methods in an organisation's development and quality work
- apply labour legislation to practical situations at work
- understand the basic principles of the financial management of organisations
- assess their own skills as employees and entrepreneurial characteristics
- develop as professionals and responsible members of a work community

Professional growth path and annual theme:

Students will be able to:

- work responsibly in the role of employees, taking responsibility for their own and for the community's well-being

Contents of the study unit:

- organisational culture and values
- strategic management, organisational development and quality work
- HR management and well-being at work
- self-management, employee skills
- mentoring
- financial administration, labour legislation, contracts and health and safety

Professional growth path and annual theme:

- career planning
- mentoring
- the profession of the Bachelor of Social Services, and work in social services

Study unit description:

The competence gained in this study unit relates to participating in a work community and to the mastery and responsible use of the main management tools in diverse workplace situations. Competence is based on an understanding of the major issues in the operating structures, targets and profitability of work groups and organisations. The perspective is ethical responsibility in being an employee or a manager. The study unit covers the possibilities of mentoring as a support for professional growth.

Professional growth path and annual theme:

The annual professional growth theme is Deepening Competence and it is linked in the third year to the Responsible Leadership in a Work Community study unit. The professional growth unit is completed using tutoring and small-group guidance, i.e. tutor group meetings.

V0075 Thesis, 15 cr**The student is able to:**

- make well-grounded development proposals related to the employment market
- conceptualise workplace phenomena based on empirical data
- use suitable research and development methods for generating new knowledge
- collaborate responsibly in national or international development projects with employers and other partners
- critically evaluate their own actions and decisions
- manage things as wholes and present things logically and with justifications

Contents of the study unit:

- familiarisation with the thesis process and development project, coming up with a subject
- thesis plan describing the background and objectives of the thesis, main data from previous research on the subject, the research and development methods used as well as the implementation plan,
- carrying out the work for the thesis
- reporting and publishing the thesis
- maturity test)

Study unit description:

Theses form part of Laurea's research and development work. They help students to grow professionally and are linked to the employment sector and to regional development. Theses are used to develop work and common practices, and can produce significant innovations in Finland and internationally.

The thesis is based on a real-life development challenge. It emphasises interaction with the labour market, and an investigative and developmental approach. Thesis reports focus on describing target-oriented activities and their results, and on theoretical and research-based analysis. Theses contain new descriptive, explanatory and investigative information on the labour market, as well as new know-how produced for the workplace.

The study unit comprises making a thesis plan and then carrying out, reporting on and assessing the thesis work. Theses are carried out in Laurea projects. The study unit involves the shared thesis tutoring processes of the unit. The study unit involves the completion of a maturity test. In it, students demonstrate mastery of the subject and good language skills.

Professional growth path and annual theme:

The professional growth theme is Workplace Development and Renewal and it is scheduled for the end of the study period, just prior to graduation and the transfer to working life. At this time, students conduct dialogues, based on their self-assessments, regarding professional growth and the transfer to the employee's role. The professional growth unit is completed using tutoring and small-group guidance, i.e. tutor group meetings. Mentoring is included in the sense that the students have a workplace mentor or, conversely, they mentor a younger student.

Previous studies:

- x Research and Development 5 cr
- x Research and Development Methods 5 cr

V0076 Professional and Service Innovation Development Practice, 15 cr**The student is able to:**

- define and analyse the main areas of development and quality from the regional perspectives of the labour market
- cooperate and network with partners in line with development objectives
- apply the tools and methods of R&D
- evaluate and consider professional competence and development objectives in accordance with the operating environment and topical social challenges
- evaluate their own professional ethics and the ethical principles of the profession and the field
- improve their international and multicultural competence in national and international operating environments
- discern the principles and opportunities of the operations of a public, non-governmental or private organisation, from the perspective of welfare entrepreneurship
- evaluate their own development efforts as a part of welfare service provision and their possibilities for turning these efforts into an entrepreneurial service

Contents of the study unit:

- carrying out development work
- developing responsible professionalism and developing as a workplace/project participant

Study unit description:

Suitable places for practising professional skills and service innovation are Laurea projects, various social service ventures and projects, and organisations that allow the students to participate in development work and carry out their own projects. Students can also increase their international and multicultural competence related to the theme by completing the work placement abroad.

V022 ELECTIVE STUDIES, 20 cr**Description:**

The purpose of elective studies is to deepen or broaden competence in social services, and to allow for prior learning to be recognised as a part of the degree.

Content:

The theme is made up of study units chosen by the student from Laurea's language studies, Laurea's shared studies or another degree programme's curriculum. Students can select study units from the optional advanced themes in Social Services, whose contents change annually. Any studies completed at another institution (university of applied sciences, university, Online University of Applied Sciences, foreign institution), that cannot be recognised for the degree programme but that the student wishes to include in the degree, should be classified under this theme. Thanks to the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) process, students can have their previous work experience in social services recognised as a part of their studies by demonstrating their competence.

Learning process:

The theme takes place at the stage of professional growth at which students deepen their competence and learn to develop and renew their work environment. Their competence develops in line with their personal targets.

00202 Initial Test in English Skills, 0 cr

Study unit description:

At the beginning of their studies, all students who have English and/or Swedish qualifications on prior certificates required for studies at Laurea, or who have received previous instruction in English and/or Swedish take initial tests in these languages. The initial tests are the same for all fields of study and may only be taken once. Students who transfer between degrees within Laurea do not have to retake the test. The test is used to check the students' starting level before language studies begin. Students who fail the test must take preparatory studies in the language at the start of their studies. Having passed the preparatory studies, students obtain credits for inclusion in elective studies.

00203 Initial Test in Swedish Skills, 0 cr**Study unit description:**

At the beginning of their studies, all students who have English and/or Swedish qualifications on prior certificates required for studies at Laurea, or who have received previous instruction in English and/or Swedish take initial tests in these languages. The initial tests are the same for all fields of study and may only be taken once. Students who transfer between degrees within Laurea do not have to retake the test. The test is used to check the students' starting level before language studies begin. Students who fail the test must take preparatory studies in the language at the start of their studies. Having passed the preparatory studies, students obtain credits for inclusion in elective studies.

00493 Finnish as Second Language-Initial test, 0 cr**Study unit description:**

Suomenkielisissä koulutusohjelmissa opiskelevat maahanmuuttajataustaiset opiskelijat suorittavat suomen kielen lähtötasotestin.

00194 Preparatory Studies in English, 3 cr**The student is able to:**

- master basic English vocabulary and grammar
- use various methods for improving their language skills

Contents of the study unit:

- main structures of the English language
- basic English vocabulary

Study unit description:

Students improve their skills in communicating in English as preparation for completing actual studies in the language.

00195 Preparatory Studies in Swedish, 3 cr**The student is able to:**

- master basic Swedish vocabulary and grammar
- use various methods for improving their language skills

Contents of the study unit:

- main structures of the Swedish language
- basic Swedish vocabulary

Study unit description:

Students improve their skills in communicating in Swedish as preparation for completing actual studies in the language.

00388 Preparatory Studies in Finnish (as Mother tongue), 3 cr

The student is able to:

- compose varied factual and functional texts
- make use of different writer's tools and grammar aid
- take on the communicative responses of team work

Contents of the study unit:

- creating a personal communicative profile
- using dictionaries and other tools for language aid
- providing the student for oral and written challenges of study time

Study unit description:

Students improve their skills in speech communication and writing in order to be able to successfully complete their studies in Laurea.

00522 Preparatory Studies in Finnish, 3 cr

Study unit description:

Students who fail an initial test must take preparatory studies in the language at the start of their studies. The preparatory studies count as credits for elective studies, if the student's language skills are not sufficient and s/he has been guided to complete these studies.

00636 Written skills in Finnish, 0 cr

00637 Oral skills in Finnish, 0 cr

00797 Introduction to worklife English, 3 cr

The student is able to:

- recognize some of the main principles of communication in English in vocational and multicultural contexts
- recognize the different means of effective communication in vocational contexts
- get acquainted with professional literature and other vocational sources in English

Contents of the study unit:

- everyday situations
- discussions about everyday subjects
- oral and written vocational communication
- terminology of Social Services
- basic grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation

Study unit description:

The course provides an introduction to English in working life.

Previous studies:

Previous knowledge of English is required at level A1-A2, as defined in the Common European Framework. This course suits for exchange students with basic English language skills, and it is also offered for Finnish students with learning disabilities or lack of recent previous studies in English.

00798 Introduction to worklife English, 5 cr

Study unit description:

Introduction to worklife English is a course specially designed for students who want to improve their basic English skills by attending classes, discussion groups or conferences. It is also suitable for students with more challenging learning difficulties or for such students, who have previously studied the language on a very basic level.

00799 Introduction to worklife Swedish, 3 cr**The student is able to:**

- recognize some of the main principles of communication in Swedish in vocational and multicultural contexts
- recognize the different means of effective communication in vocational contexts
- get acquainted with professional literature and other vocational sources in Swedish

Contents of the study unit:

- everyday situations
- discussions about everyday subjects
- oral and written vocational communication
- terminology of Social Services

basic grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation

Study unit description:

The course provides an introduction to Swedish for working life.

Previous studies:

Previous knowledge of Swedish is required at level A1-A2, as defined in the Common European Framework. This course is offered for Finnish students with learning disabilities or lack of recent previous studies in Swedish.

00800 Introduction to worklife Swedish, 5 cr**Study unit description:**

Työelämäruotsiin tutustuminen on tarkoitettu erityisesti niille opiskelijoille, jotka haluavat parantaa ruotsin kielen alkeistaitoaan osallistumalla kielen opetukseen, keskusteluryhmiin tai luennoille. Kurssi sopii myös sellaisille opiskelijoille, joilla on todettu vakavampia luki- tai oppimisvaikeuksia samoin kuin sellaisille opiskelijoille, joiden kielen opiskelusta alkeistasolla on kulunut kauan aikaa.