

LAUREA UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

Degree Programme in Business Management, in English (Laurea Otaniemi, Ilo), HBG13SN

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

Laurea Business Ventures is located in the Active Life Village in Espoo, in the high-innovation environment of Otaniemi. Located in Otaniemi are 13 public organisations involved with innovation, as well as the Finnish headquarters of more than 100 large companies and numerous SMEs.

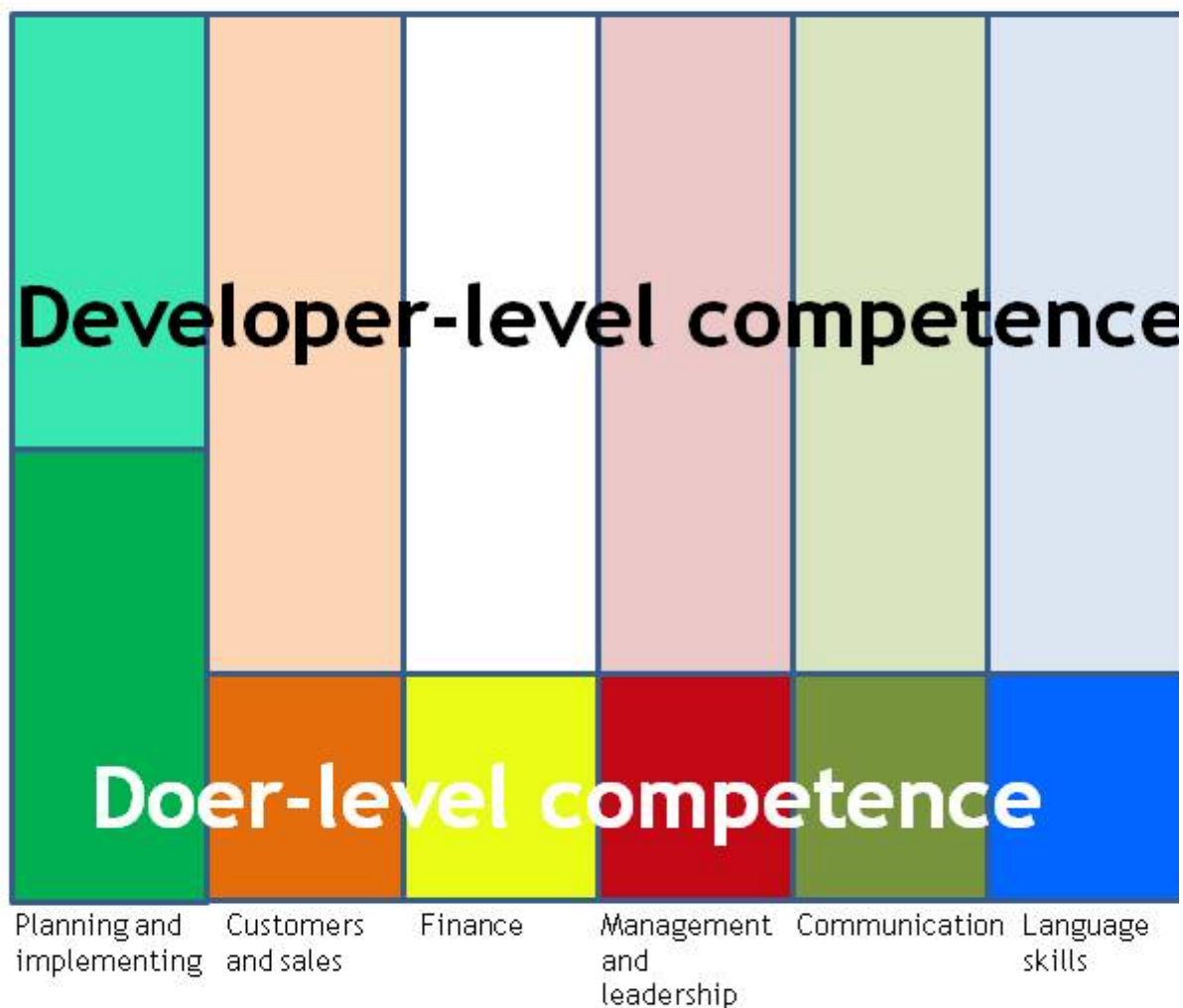
LBV works in close cooperation with its network of partners, with the aim of developing business activities and expertise regionally.

LBV is also an active member of international innovation networks. The aim of such partnerships is to raise business knowledge to a global level and to bring top-level international business expertise to Otaniemi.

Competences

LBV aims to ensure that during their study period, students will receive an overview of the main competence areas for business operations. The following business areas form the main competences in the curriculum:

- Planning and implementing business activities
- Customer relationships and sales
- Finance
- Management and leadership
- Communication
- Language skills



Students must achieve the “doer” level in each of these competence areas, which will be demonstrated through development projects (worth 70 ECTS credits altogether). In addition to this compulsory requirement, students will build their personal study plans by taking more advanced projects in the abovementioned competence areas or by taking elective studies that suit their learning objectives. The degree consists of 210 credits in total.

Description of the Degree Programme

Laurea Business Ventures (LBV), situated in Laurea's Otaniemi unit, is a business development unit that aims to turn students into experts in business operations and business development or entrepreneurs. Students are offered

a unique opportunity to learn entrepreneurial skills and create new ventures.

In Laurea Business Ventures students can develop and execute their potential business ideas as well as the business activities of collaboration companies in practical projects.

Every student chooses their own projects and plans their studies individually. In this way students are able to achieve a unique understanding of the business world.

Curriculum: Laurea Business Ventures

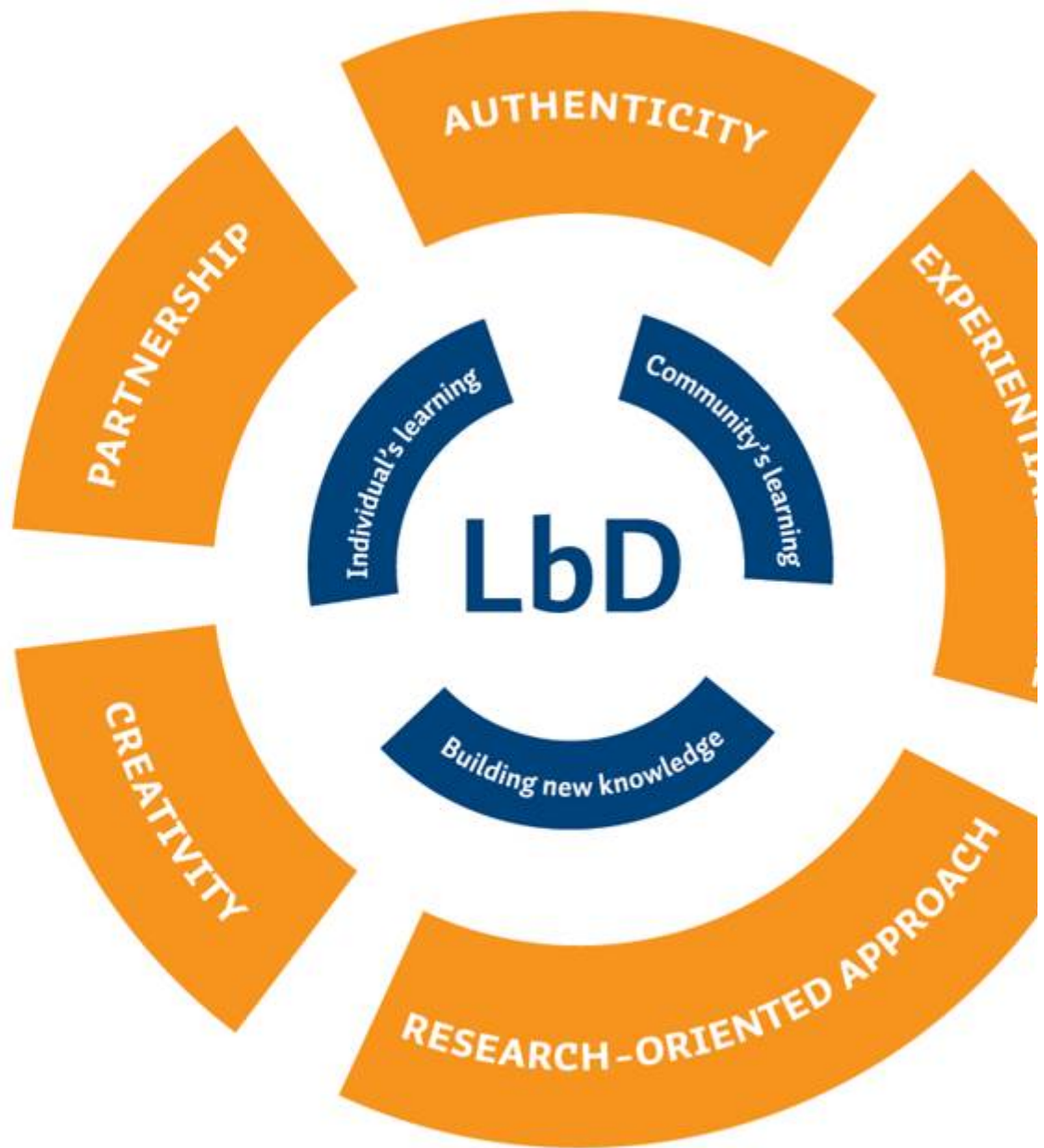
Values and Promises of the Curriculum

The main value of LBV is the development of its students' knowledge, skills and motivation. LBV supports students in progressing in their chosen direction and in developing into experts in the field of business.

The amount of compulsory studies has been minimized while ensuring students receive a good overview of all the main aspects of business operations. Students can then focus their non-compulsory studies on whichever area of competence is most important for them. Studies can involve the competences defined by the LBV curriculum, as well as elements offered by other Laurea units or other higher education institutions in the region.

The LBV curriculum allows for learning at the times and in the order chosen by the students. Students can for instance progress to the developer level in one area of competence before tackling others; conversely, they can increase their competence evenly across all areas.

LBV uses a competence based core curriculum. Studies consist of working life projects which are executed according to Learning by Developing model.



The five cornerstones of LbD are reflected in the LBV curriculum as follows:

Partnership is made visible through shared activities. Students support the projects and learning of others by providing peer support in steering groups. More experienced students provide assistance to younger students, while experts in specific fields assist their colleagues. Laurea staff members take on the role of partners by providing guidance, advice, questions and support for learning. It is also important for students to collaborate with representatives of the surrounding labour market, who participate in projects in the capacity of partners and senior

colleagues.

Experiencing is made visible through independent activities. Students complete all their studies in genuine projects, assuming responsibility for their own work. This allows them to experience the pros and cons of diverse operating models while learning to be responsible for their choices and actions. Sharing experiences with diverse partners fosters the development of cooperation skills and supports the transfer of working life values between participants.

Authenticity is made visible through genuine projects. All LBV studies are completed in genuine business development projects. Working in genuine environments allows students to share tacit knowledge and form a strong network with people who learn to trust their competence.

Creativity is made visible through continuous development. Students are constantly involved in creating new, improved, efficient work methods. All projects are aimed at achieving development in operations, which forces students to increase their own competence. The LBV model promotes the creativity of operations in the whole region, as well as the development of creative solutions.

Research orientation is made visible through knowledge-based decision-making. In order to choose the best solution for each situation and to allow for continuous development, students have to acquire a sufficient knowledge base before taking action. This is the main motivation for acquiring existing knowledge and generating new knowledge using diverse research methods.

Structure of the curriculum

Completion of Studies

Laurea Business Ventures studies are completed in practical business development projects. Genuine business projects are often multidisciplinary in nature. This means that students can acquire competence in diverse fields through a single project. The development of each competence area is assessed independently based on the given requirements for that competence area.

At the beginning of each development project, the participating students create a project plan with the help of their mentor, defining

- what competence each student will strive to develop in the project,
- how competence will be developed,
- how many credits each student expects to gain through the project, and
- how competence development and the achievement of credits are to be demonstrated.

At the end of the project or at agreed intervals, the students' competence and the work completed in the project are evaluated according to the project plan.

Competence development is evaluated using higher education criteria, i.e. a mastery of the theory, concepts and application of the chosen competences in practical development projects should be demonstrated. Students build a portfolio out of these development projects during the study period to give evidence of their concrete development work and their learning.

Credits

The number of credits attained in projects depends on the work completed, and is always agreed between the student and the mentor. Usually one credit is seen as encompassing approximately 27 hours of work by the student. However, all work completed as part of LBV studies also includes planning, guidance and reporting, so one credit is considered to be equivalent to around 20 hours of project work. Therefore five credits are equivalent to 135 hours of work, of which 100 hours consist of actual project work.

Competence Areas

Planning and implementing business activities

At the doer level, students are able to:

- create and present a business plan, including also self-evaluation of the student's own entrepreneurial skills, and funding and profitability calculations
- create and use basic business analyses related company, its competitors, networks and operating environment
- utilise business legislation related to business idea
- understand and take into account how social responsibility impacts businesses
- acquire and process data in a research-oriented fashion and critically evaluate information

At the developer level, students are able to:

- plan and carry out surveys and analyse their outcomes in a reliable way
- carry out business operations in practice
- create a strategy process for an organisation
- improve a company's business activities based on the organisation's strategy and taking into account the changes in the operational environment
- plan and manage an organisation's growth and development
- develop operations in ways that are financially, socially and environmentally sustainable

Customer Relationships and sales

At the doer level, students are able to:

- sell and manage customer service situations profitably
- are able to act in a customer-orientated way and develop customer relationships as part of the organisation's marketing
- take into account marketing legislation
- set targets for customer work and formulate a customer strategy suited to different target groups
- use the main marketing concepts professionally

At the developer level, students are able to

- plan and manage sales activities
- develop customer relations management
- predict, evaluate and utilise changes in customer and market values
- plan and implement organisation's marketing activities
- use professionally and widely the main marketing concepts and manage the marketing concept as a whole

Finance

At the doer level, students are able to:

- interpret the financial statements of companies from different sectors, recognising the main factors affecting profitability and liquidity
- calculate the main key figures in financial statements
- make investment calculations
- know the principles of cost accounting and different pricing models
- interpret the main principles of financial and taxation planning

- make diverse business budgeting and investment calculations

At the developer level, students are able to:

- carry out a company's bookkeeping
- utilise the main principles of financial and taxation planning
- utilise key figures from financial statements in decision-making
- apply the main legislation related to financial administration
- calculate and utilise diverse financial key figures
- use accounting information as an aid to decision-making
- make financial and taxation plans for companies
- use the main financial instruments

Management and leadership

At the doer level, students are able to:

- plan and manage own projects and work
- apply work legislation and collective labour agreements
- recruit, develop and reward staff

At the developer level, students are able to:

- act and develop oneself as a manager
- work as a project manager
- analyse and measure an organisation's activities and atmosphere
- develop the organisation's and their own self-management methods and tools
- managing change in an organization

Communication

At the doer level, students are able to:

- plan and implement internal and external communications
- participate in various oral business communication situations
- create diverse business documents, memos, reports, presentation materials and other texts
- use diverse up-to-date communication channels and tools
- communicate in a multicultural environment

At the developer level, students are able to:

- develop an organization's internal and external communications
- carry out the communications for a development project
- plan and implement an organisation's marketing communication strategy
- plan and implement an organisation's communication strategy

Language skills

Language studies at Laurea Business Ventures aim for the development of optimal written and oral fluency in the desired languages. As compulsory language studies, students must demonstrate in practical projects that they meet the doer level competence requirements for communication in both English and either Swedish (for students whose first language is Finnish) or Finnish (for students whose first language is not Finnish), meaning that in each of these languages they are able to:

At the doer level, students are able to:

- work in basic communication situations in their own fields

- utilise basic vocabulary and phrases used in the field and in basic situations requiring oral and written communication (company and product presentations, telling about their own education and work duties, writing general business letters, meeting documents and other basic written letters used in the field)
- understand the basic structure of the language and use it reasonably fluently in conventional and/or familiar situations
- communicate appropriately in certain situations
- utilise material that uses field-specific language in their work
- understand the various requirements of formal and informal communication situations
- understand the basic communication differences between cultures
- communicate at the required university graduate level

At the developer level, students are able to:

- apply learned language skills creatively and communicate using themes from their own field of expertise fluently in new and diverse situations
- utilise language-based materials diversely at work, taking into account both their own professional development and the development of the working community
- develop an aptitude in handling diverse linguistic structures
- analyze the structure and vocabulary of the language, and use the results of such analyses to strengthen their communication skills
- work as an employee in a multicultural work community and develop their communication, taking into account the multiculturalism
- modify their own communication strategies as appropriate to certain situations

Students must complete at least five credits in both of these languages. Language studies are completed in the same way as other studies, i.e. as a part of projects that have been planned and agreed in advance.

In addition to the compulsory language studies, students may choose any of the language studies offered at Laurea.

Job placements

Laurea Business Ventures students can complete the compulsory 30 credits of job placement (placements) in business development projects, their own companies' development projects or by completing practical tasks in different organisations. Placements can be carried out in one or two stages, as defined in the personal study plan.

The aim of job placement is that students learn to:

- evaluate their professional competence and the demands of the workplace
- develop their business competence in practical work exercises
- analyse and reflect on their work in a work community
- develop the operations of a target organisation, as members of a community of experts

The outcomes of the compulsory placement are recorded on the degree certificate.

Thesis

All Laurea degree programmes include a thesis that accounts for 15 credits. Through the thesis, students of LBV individually demonstrate their ability and expertise in demanding business development projects, and report on the development project professionally. The thesis can be related to the existing or planned innovation, development or research activities of an organisation.

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 work practices, and can produce widely applicable innovations.

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.

Theses are always presented publicly. LBV theses are commonly presented to other students during the thesis days of Otaniemi unit. The thesis can also be presented during public events, for example in customer presentations or open seminars.

The study unit involves the completion of a maturity test, in which students demonstrate mastery of the subject and good language skills.

Laurea's thesis instructions must be followed throughout the process of production and evaluation of the thesis. During the thesis process, students should demonstrate a command of level 6 of the EQF competence requirements.

The goal of the thesis is that students will be able to:

- present well-grounded work development proposals
 - conceptualise the phenomena of the workplace with a basis in research data
 - use appropriate research and development methods for generating new data
 - participate in development projects, working responsibly in a team with employers and other partners
 - evaluate their own work and solutions critically
 - manage the big picture, presenting their ideas logically and with justifications
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- familiarization with the thesis and development project process, and 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 and an implementation plan
 - carrying out the work for the thesis
 - reporting on and publishing the thesis
 - maturity test

Content of the thesis process

Learning objectives of the thesis

Quality assurance process

The implementation of the LBV curriculum is followed and developed with the help of LBV's quality assurance system. The LBV quality assurance system is based on the general quality assurance system of Laurea. According to this system, quality of work is ensured through the constant development cycle of Plan – Do – Check – Act.

Plan – The basis of operations planning

The development and implementation of the LBV curriculum is guided by the values and strategic outlook of Laurea, as well as the pedagogical, R&D and regional development strategies. Additionally, the development of the curriculum is based on LBV's own operational concept, vision and strategy.

Do – Description of the operational process

The implementation of the LBV curriculum is guided by the operational processes. Before each project idea can be approved, the project's named mentor will check that the project facilitates learning in accordance with the competence areas of the curriculum. Before starting a project, each student must produce a personal learning plan, where they give details of any new competences they wish to acquire through the project. During the project, the mentor will monitor whether the project is proceeding according to the plan, to ensure that the competence areas addressed are in accordance with the curriculum. Also, the implementation of the curriculum is guided by the general operation processes of Laurea Otaniemi.

Check – Monitoring and evaluation of operations

The curriculum of LBV is developed with the help of various measures, including the feedback of LBV's interest groups. At the end of each project, feedback is given by the students who took part in the project, the client and the mentor. Feedback is stored for the purpose of future development of the curriculum. Staff are able at any time to upload written suggestions for improvement into the electronic workspace of LBV. Additionally, feedback is collected with the help of the Inka system according to the general operational processes of Laurea Otaniemi. The operations of LBV are also monitored with the help of the local unit level quantitative measures, the results of which are used for the development of the curriculum.

Act – development of activities

The LBV curriculum is developed once a year, on the LBV development day. Development is based on the feedback and measures described in the Check-phase, which are examined at the beginning of the development day. The LBV development manager, lecturers, principle lecturers and other staff take part in the development process. All changes to be made to the curriculum are recorded in a memo, and the development manager takes responsibility for implementing these changes.

Implementation guide

Operations in Laurea Business Ventures are guided by the curriculum and guides and document templates in SoleHOPS or the internet working space of LBV. Personal study planning, project planning, actual project work, feedbacks and evaluations of the projects are documented according to them.

		1. year	2. year	3. year	4. year
OP	STUDIES	60	60	60	30
G078	PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTING BUSINESS ACTIVITIES				
G079	CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIPS AND SALES				
G080	FINANCE				
G081	MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP				
G082	COMMUNICATION				
G047	LANGUAGE SKILLS				
00521	Initial Test in Finnish	0			
00506	Initial Test in Swedish	0			
00569	Initial test in English	0			
00831	Swedish	5			
00635	Written skills in Swedish	0			
00634	Oral skills in Swedish	0			
00832	English	5			
G0260	Basic Finnish 1	5			
G0236	Basic Finnish 2		5		
G0261	Intermediate Finnish			5	
00305	Basic Finnish	5			
00310	Intermediate Finnish	5			
00352	Advanced Finnish	5			
G048	JOB PLACEMENTS				
G049	THESIS				
G050	ELECTIVE STUDIES				
00523	Preperatory Studies in Finnish	3			
00507	Preparatory Studies in Swedish	3			
00436	Preparatory Studies in English	3			
		60	60	60	30

G078 PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTING BUSINESS ACTIVITIES, 20 cr

Description:

The aim is to facilitate students' development into experts in business operations and business development, with a specific focus on planning and implementing business activities.

The student will be able to:

At the doer level, students are able to:

- create and present a business plan, including also self-evaluation of the student's own entrepreneurial skills, and funding and profitability calculations
- create and use basic business analyses related company, its competitors, networks and operating environment
- utilise business legislation related to business idea
- understand and take into account how social responsibility impacts businesses
- acquire and process data in a research-oriented fashion and critically evaluate information

At the developer level, students are able to:

- plan and carry out surveys and analyse their outcomes in a reliable way
- carry out business operations in practice
- create a strategy process for an organisation
- improve a company's business activities based on the organisation's strategy and taking into account the changes in the operational environment
- plan and manage an organisation's growth and development
- develop operations in ways that are financially, socially and environmentally sustainable

G079 CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIPS AND SALES, 10 cr

Description:

The aim is to facilitate students' development into experts in business operations and business development, with a specific focus on sales and customer relationships.

The student will be able to:

At the doer level, students are able to:

- sell and manage customer service situations profitably
- are able to act in a customer-orientated way and develop customer relationships as part of the organisation's marketing
- take into account marketing legislation
- set targets for customer work and formulate a customer strategy suited to different target groups
- use the main marketing concepts professionally

At the developer level, students are able to

- plan and manage sales activities
- develop customer relations management
- predict, evaluate and utilise changes in customer and market values
- plan and implement organisation's marketing activities
- use professionally and widely the main marketing concepts and manage the marketing concept as a whole

G080 FINANCE, 10 cr

Description:

The aim is to facilitate students' development into experts in business operations and business development, with a specific focus on finance.

The student will be able to:

At the doer level, students are able to:

- interpret the financial statements of companies from different sectors, recognising the main factors affecting profitability and liquidity
- calculate the main key figures in financial statements
- make investment calculations
- know the principles of cost accounting and different pricing models
- interpret the main principles of financial and taxation planning
- make diverse business budgeting and investment calculations

At the developer level, students are able to:

- carry out a company's bookkeeping
- utilise the main principles of financial and taxation planning
- utilise key figures from financial statements in decision-making
- apply the main legislation related to financial administration
- calculate and utilise diverse financial key figures
- use accounting information as an aid to decision-making
- make financial and taxation plans for companies
- use the main financial instruments

G081 MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP, 10 cr

Description:

The aim is to facilitate students' development into experts in business operations and business development, with a specific focus on management and leadership.

The student will be able to:

At the doer level, students are able to:

- plan and manage own projects and work
- apply work legislation and collective labour agreements
- recruit, develop and reward staff

At the developer level, students are able to:

- act and develop oneself as a manager
- work as a project manager
- analyse and measure an organisation's activities and atmosphere
- develop the organisation's and their own self-management methods and tools
- managing change in an organisation

G082 COMMUNICATION, 10 cr

Description:

The aim is to facilitate students' development into experts in business operations and business development, with a specific focus on communication.

The student will be able to:

At the doer level, students are able to:

- plan and implement internal and external communications
- participate in various oral business communication situations
- create diverse business documents, memos, reports, presentation materials and other texts
- use diverse up-to-date communication channels and tools
- communicate in a multicultural environment

At the developer level, students are able to:

- develop an organization's internal and external communications
- carry out the communications for a development project
- plan and implement an organisation's marketing communication strategy
- plan and implement an organisation's communication strategy

G047 LANGUAGE SKILLS, 10 cr

Description:

The aim is to facilitate students' development into experts in business operations and business development, with a specific focus on language skills.

The student will be able to:

Language studies at Laurea Business Ventures aim for the development of optimal written and oral fluency in the desired languages. As compulsory language studies, students must demonstrate in practical projects that they meet the doer level competence requirements for communication in both English and either Swedish (for students whose first language is Finnish) or Finnish (for students whose first language is not Finnish), meaning that in each of these languages they are able to:

- use diverse up-to-date communication channels and tools
- participate in diverse oral business communication situations (reporting, negotiations, meetings, speeches, conversations, presentations...)
- create diverse business documents, memos, reports, presentation materials and other written texts
- observe the requirements and customs of different cultural factors affecting their work

Students must complete at least five credits in both of these languages. Language studies are completed in the same way as other studies, i.e. as a part of projects that have been planned and agreed in advance.

In addition to the compulsory language studies, students may choose any of the language studies offered at Laurea.

00521 Initial Test in Finnish, 0 cr

00506 Initial Test in Swedish, 0 cr

The student is able to:

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.

Study unit description:

At the beginning of their studies, all students who have Swedish qualifications on prior certificates required for studies at Laurea take initial test in Swedish, with the exception of those whose mother tongue or language of education is Swedish.

00569 Initial test in English, 0 cr

The student is able to:

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. 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

Previous studies:

The initial Swedish and English tests for all new students will take place in the beginning of studies.

00831 Swedish, 5 cr

The student is able to:

- use diverse up-to-date communication channels and tools in Swedish
- participate in diverse verbal business communication situations (reporting, negotiations, meetings, speeches, conversations, presentations...) in Swedish
- create diverse business documents, memos, reports, presentation materials and other texts in Swedish
- observe the requirements and customs of different cultural factors affecting their work

Contents of the study unit:

Students must demonstrate, in practical projects, that they meet the doer level competence requirements for communication in Swedish.

Study unit description:

Language studies are completed in the same way as other studies, i.e. as a part of projects that have been planned and agreed in advance.

Previous studies:

Upper secondary school-level competence.

00635 Written skills in Swedish, 0 cr

Study unit description:

This study unit is for evaluating written skills in Swedish.

00634 Oral skills in Swedish, 0 cr

Study unit description:

This study unit is for evaluating oral skills in Swedish.

00832 English, 5 cr

The student is able to:

- use diverse up-to-date communication channels and tools in English
- participate in diverse verbal business communication situations (reporting, negotiations, meetings, speechconversations, presentations...) in English
- create diverse business documents, memos, reports, presentation materials and other texts in English
- observe the requirements and customs of different cultural factors affecting their work

Contents of the study unit:

Students must demonstrate, in practical projects, that they meet the doer level competence requirements for communication in both Swedish and English.

Study unit description:

Language studies are completed in the same way as other studies, i.e. as a part of projects that have been planned and agreed in advance.

Previous studies:

Upper secondary school-level competence.

G0260 Basic Finnish 1, 5 cr

The student is able to:

learn the main principles of the Finnish language and some main things of Finnish culture, understand and use the most common expressions in Finnish in everyday situations

Contents of the study unit:

How to communicate in everyday situations?
How to discuss everyday subjects related ourselves?
How to recognise basic grammar & vocabulary and practise pronunciation?
How to learn to speak, understand and write Finnish?

Study unit description:

The study unit provides an introduction to Finnish language and culture. Students will reach level A1 in accordance with the Common European Framework.

Previous studies:

No previous knowledge of Finnish.

G0236 Basic Finnish 2, 5 cr**The student is able to:**

- Communicate in simple situations and routine tasks
- Write simple texts
- Understand the meaning of messages and Finnish speech related to various subjects

Contents of the study unit:

How can everyday situations be managed using Finnish language?
How can you use correct grammar in written and oral communication?

Study unit description:

Deepening the knowledge of the basics of the Finnish language and culture in order to reach level A2 in accordance with the Common European Framework

Previous studies:

Basic level of Finnish language 5 CR.

G0261 Intermediate Finnish, 5 cr**The student is able to:**

communicate in more formal situations,
develop her/his Finnish skills for work-related purposes

Contents of the study unit:

How can my Finnish vocabulary and grammar related to studying and working life be developed?

Study unit description:

The course will develop the students' Finnish language skills for professional purposes in order to reach level B1 according to the Common European Framework

Previous studies:

Intermediate level of Finnish language

00305 Basic Finnish, 5 cr

The student is able to:

- learn the main principles of the Finnish language
- understand and use the most common expressions in Finnish in everyday situations

Contents of the study unit:

- everyday situations (e.g. requesting and giving information, travelling by public transport, using a post office)
- discussions about everyday subjects (oneself, family, living conditions, etc.)
- basic grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation

Study unit description:

The course provides an introduction to the Finnish language. Students will reach level A1 in accordance with the Common European Framework.

00310 Intermediate Finnish, 5 cr

The student is able to:

- communicate in simple situations and routine tasks
- write simple texts
- understand the main points in messages and Finnish speech at normal speed about familiar subjects.

Contents of the study unit:

- everyday life, work, studying, daily and weekly routines
- everyday situations (shopping for food & clothes, going to a restaurant, etc.)
- grammar (e.g. past tense, local cases, question words, words describing time)

Study unit description:

Students will deepen their knowledge of the basics of the Finnish language and culture in order to reach level A2 in accordance with the Common European Framework.

00352 Advanced Finnish, 5 cr

The student is able to:

- communicate in more formal situations
- develop her/his Finnish skills for work-related purposes

Contents of the study unit:

- vocabulary relating to studying and working life
- grammar (all tenses, adjective comparison etc.)

Study unit description:

The course will develop the students' Finnish language skills for professional purposes in order to reach level B1 according to the Common European Framework.

Previous studies:

The course mainly concentrates on developing communication skills (speaking and understanding Finnish). Grading is based on an oral exam, a written exam, and attendance and activeness during teaching.

G048 JOB PLACEMENTS, 30 cr

Description:

The aim is to facilitate students' development into experts in business operations and business development.

The student will be able to:

Laurea Business Ventures students can complete the compulsory 30 credits of job placement (placements) in business development projects, their own companies' development projects or by completing practical tasks in different organisations. Placements can be carried out in one or two stages, as defined in the personal study plan. The aim of job placement is that students learn to:

- evaluate their professional competence and the demands of the workplace
- develop their business competence in practical work exercises
- analyse and reflect on their work in a work community
- develop the operations of a target organisation, as members of a community of experts

Content:

Laurea Business Ventures students can complete the compulsory 30 credits of job placement (placements) in business development projects, their own companies' development projects or by completing practical tasks in different organisations. Placements can be carried out in one or two stages, as defined in the personal study plan.

G049 THESIS, 15 cr

Description:

The aim is to develop and prove student's readiness to apply her or his knowledge and skills at practical tasks of an expert relative to vocational studies.

The student will be able to:

- present well-grounded work development proposals
- conceptualise the phenomena of the workplace with a basis in research data
- use appropriate research and development methods for generating new data
- participate in development projects, working responsibly in a team with employers and other partners
- evaluate their own work and solutions critically
- manage the big picture, presenting their ideas logically and with justifications

Content:

All Laurea degree programmes include a thesis that accounts for 15 credits. Through the thesis, students of LBV individually demonstrate their ability and expertise in demanding business development projects, and report on the development project professionally. The thesis can be related to the existing or planned innovation, development or research activities of an organisation.

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 work practices, and can produce widely applicable innovations.

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.

Theses are always presented publicly. LBV theses are commonly presented to all students during LBV project days. The thesis can also be presented during public events, for example in customer presentations or open seminars. The study unit involves the completion of a maturity test, in which students demonstrate mastery of the subject and good language skills.

Laurea's thesis instructions must be followed throughout the process of production and evaluation of the thesis. During the thesis process, students should demonstrate a command of level 6 of the EQF competence requirements

Learning process:

- familiarisation with the thesis and development project process, and 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 and an implementation plan
- carrying out the work for the thesis
- reporting on and publishing the thesis
- maturity test

G050 ELECTIVE STUDIES, 0 cr

Description:

The theme offers students an opportunity to supplement their personal learning plan by participating in courses and project work within their own institutes, as well as in other fields and other institutions of higher education.

00523 Preparatory Studies in Finnish, 3 cr

00507 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

00436 Preparatory Studies in English, 3 cr

The student is able to:

- learn and practice the English grammar
- learn and practice business English vocabulary
- learn and practice various methods in language learning to improve the language skills

Contents of the study unit:

- revision of basic grammar rules
- building up business vocabulary
- text analyses
- reports and summaries
- interpretation of data
- graphic presentations
- presentation skills
- arguing for and against
- acting as an opponent

Study unit description:

The student will practice the communication skills, both oral and written, needed during the studies. The student will be able to participate efficiently in tuition from the very beginning of the studies.