Information Literacy Skills for Incoming Exchange Students: Introducing a New Mandatory Course

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Hanken School of Economics

- Campuses in Helsinki and Vaasa
- Languages: Swedish and English
- 5 departments and 1 language centre
- 2,534 students (2,412 BSc and MSc, 122 PhD)
  - Approx. 22% at Vaasa campus
- 122 faculty,
- 107 staff, 12 in the library
- Internationally accredited by EQUIS, AACSB and AMBA
- International rankings in FT and U-Multirank
129 partner universities, 40-50 active in the exchange programme

Helsinki gets about 160 and Vaasa 25 students per year

From approximately 25 different countries

Most students from European countries
  - Germany, France, Austria and the Netherlands with most students

About 25% from Asia
  - China, Taiwan, Thailand, India, South Korea

North America
  - Canada, Mexico and United States

Students on both Bachelor’s and Master’s level
Writing and IL for Hanken students

» Year 1
  » Mandatory course in referencing, formatting and academic communication
  » Information search module integrated into a mandatory course

» Year 2
  » Academic writing courses in Swedish and English

» Year 3
  » Individually written Bachelor’s thesis, information search module for most of the subjects

» Year 4
  » Method’s courses, elective courses in advanced academic communication

» Year 5
  » Individually written Master’s thesis, information search module for some subjects
Reasons behind the new course

Challenges for an exchange student

- Cases of plagiarism
- Group work trouble
- Teachers’ prejudice
- Not enough credits
- Low satisfaction with studies
- Master’s level courses too tough
Purpose of the course for exchange students

» To help the students succeed in their studies at Hanken
  » Make them more confident in writing assignments
  » Prepare them for group assignments

» Prevent plagiarism
  » Make them understand referencing and its importance

» Create a “take away” from their exchange studies
  » Learn about academic writing
  » Become confident in writing with references
Mandatory for all the incoming exchange students

Combines practicalities and introduction to academic studies

Written assignment on a freely chosen topic about Finland

Minimum 350+350 words
Assignment topics autumn 2016

Sauna
Topics spring 2017
Feedback and thoughts

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» No cases of plagiarism since the inception of the course
» Collaboration with group assignments has become better according to the student survey
» Course feedback positive, Orientation course is deemed relevant and useful by most of the students

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» Some students find reference technique boring and unnecessary
» Difficult to keep the contents relevant and interesting for all the levels
Thank you for listening!
Questions? Comments? Feedback?

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