

Student Guidance— Objectives, Practices and Challenges

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Jyväskylän Lyseon lukio

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Yliopistonkatu 13

- Upper secondary school for boys, 1 Oct 1858
- The first matriculation examination graduates, 1865
- Jyväskylän Lyseo also for girls, 1973
- Current student body roughly 650
- 45 teachers, three guidance counsellors
- IB Programme since 2001

A UNESCO School

- Partner schools in Hungary, Estonia, Germany and Burkina Faso
- International projects in, e.g., Spain, Italy, Switzerland and France
- International Club
- Vibrant student exchange activities
- Student excursion to Burkina Faso in Dec 2005
- Student excursions to France and Spain during the 06–07 school year

General Upper Secondary School

- Extensive electivity; roughly 200 courses
- Humanities and sociological subjects
- Language A: English, French, Swedish, German or Russian
- B2 and B3 languages: German, French, Russian, Latin and Spanish
- Mathematics and science
- Art and physical education
- Diplomas: drama, art, music, physical education, dance



- International Baccalaureate Diploma
- Instruction in English
- The first year is a preparatory pre-IB year
- 25 students/year
- Admission criteria: good marks and an entrance examination

Cooperation with other educational institutions

- Upper secondary school courses at other upper secondary schools
- Courses and entire study periods at vocational institutions
- Combined general and vocational upper secondary qualifications (4 yrs)
- Polytechnic and university courses

Student guidance at Jyväskylän Lyseon lukio

Objectives of student guidance

- To guide students towards finding their individual strengths and ways of learning
- To guide and support students in developing abilities with respect to life planning and life management
- Students are able to both plan their upper secondary studies and make choices in an appropriate manner, always mindful of their plans for further education.

- **Students are familiar with the central educational opportunities offered by upper secondary vocational institutes, polytechnics and universities.**
- **Students know the essential application guides and other sources of information pertaining to higher education and career choices.**
- **Students are able to use information available in information networks independently as a tool to find further education opportunities.**

- Students have the necessary facilities to apply for further education in Finland or abroad immediately following their upper secondary studies.
- Students are able to assess their skills and abilities realistically in finding their vocational orientation and making career choices.
- Students have acquired knowledge about **working life, industries and entrepreneurship.**

Individual guidance

- Changes in the levels of proficiency selected in various subjects (e.g., long → short syllabus in mathematics)
- Deviations from the norm in the duration of studies (3 → 2, 2.5, 3.5 or 4 years)
- Difficulty of studies
- Poor motivation
- Dropping out of upper secondary school
- School burnout
- Mental illness and substance abuse
- Problems at home and with friends

Student guidance class sessions

- Distributed throughout the duration of studies
- During the first and second periods of the first school year:
 - Studies at upper secondary school
 - “Classless” upper secondary school and electivity
 - compiling personal study plans
 - making course choices
 - Joint upper secondary studies of the City of Jyväskylä, i.e., “Jyväskylän yhteinen lukio” (language courses, etc.)
 - Matriculation examination

Division of labour in guidance provision

Guidance counsellor:

- Students' study programmes
- Guidance and counselling concerning further education and career planning

Group instructor:

- Monitoring the progress of studies
- Changes in selected courses per each study period

Subject teacher:

- Guidance and counselling pertaining to the subject in question

Education, work and future (OP1)

The objectives of the common (compulsory) student guidance course

- Support for upper secondary studies
- Information about the matriculation examination
- Introductions to jobs and further education
- Visits to educational institutions in the area
- Visiting lecturers in class

Central content:

- the structure of studies and developing one's own study skills
- self-knowledge
- recognizing one's own behaviours and strengths
- knowledge of working life
- matriculation examination
- career choices and further study options
- applying for further education
- transition to working life

Studies, working life and career choices (OP2)

- **Enhances students' knowledge of working life and industries**
- **Clarifies students' plans for further education**
- **Visits to workplaces and educational institutions**
- **Small-group and individual guidance to support students' personal further education plans**

Guidance counsellors in the student welfare team

Objectives:

- Dealing with the problems of individual students
- Increasing the well-being of the school community

Members:

- Headmasters, guidance counsellors, school nurse, psychology teacher
- The guidance counsellor as chairperson

The team meets once every study period (every 6 weeks).

The many roles of the guidance counsellor

- Contact person to external instances (other schools, businesses, social services, the labour force bureau)
- Trainer, teacher
- Organizer
- Publicist, marketing coordinator
- Planner, developer, predictor
- Researcher
- Social worker
- An adult support person, good listener, mother figure...

The challenges of student guidance

- Students' learning difficulties
- Immigrant students
- Gifted and talented students
- The psychological well-being of over-achieving students
- Students with mood disorders and substance abuse problems
- Preventing social exclusion

Personal challenges for the guidance counsellor

- Learning new guidance and counselling procedures
- Continuous updating of knowledge concerning education and the world of work
- Mastering the use of new communication tools
- Distancing oneself from the difficult life situations of students
- Preserving one's own psychological resources throughout the school year
- The ethical principles of guidance and counselling

The best things about my work as guidance counsellor

- The sense that the work matters to an individual student
- The opportunity to develop the Finnish school system through my work
- The diversity and independence of the work
- Continuous personal development and growth
- The opportunity for international cooperation
- Teamwork (our school has 3 guidance counsellors)
- A supportive workplace community

..... and

...motivated and delightful young students

”Carpe diem!”