



”
RICHNESS DOES NOT
STEM FROM THEORY
AND KNOWLEDGE BUT
FROM SKILLS.

Degree Programme Coordinator Daniela Tanhua stresses that international student groups are a source of richness. With Daniela in the photo is Olga Maksimova, a Russian student heading for a work placement period in Vladivostok in the Russian Far East.

Spicy and delicious cultural mix buzzing in Rauma

TEKSTI TEXT: *Jatta Lehtonen* KUVAT PHOTOS: *Veera Korhonen & Jatta Lehtonen*

THERE IS QUITE A CHATTER OF VOICES ON CAMPUS. THE CORRIDORS ARE FILLED WITH THE BUZZ OF VARIOUS ACCENTS THAT SHARE THE COMMON CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE. INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS ARE A FAMILIAR SIGHT AT THE FACULTY OF BUSINESS AND CULTURE AND IN THE STREETS OF RAUMA. THE INTERNATIONAL FLAVOUR COMES COURTESY OF THE ENGLISH-LANGUAGE DEGREE PROGRAMME IN INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS AND MARKETING LOGISTICS (IBML).



In Rauma, internationality is real, not just a lot of fuss about nothing. Finnish-language Degree Programmes in International Business and Business Administration also offer courses in English and groups include international students. In other words, the groups are genuinely international – and so are the challenges, according to **Daniela Tanhua**, IBML Degree Programme Coordinator.

The various needs of international students bring challenges to the cultural mix. “Exchange students seek experiences and sensations. They do not integrate into groups and Finnish culture in the same way as degree students who stay in Finland longer,” Tanhua points out.

An example of this is learning the Finnish language: an exchange student can get by with basic vocabulary, such as how to say ‘thank you’ and order a meal in a restaurant. Degree students are required to achieve a nationally specified level of proficiency in the Finnish language.

According to Tanhua, challenges in tuition are related to nationalities and communication. “Communication is a major challenge. At present, students on the IBML programme represent a total of 11 different nationalities, each one speaking English through their own native language.”

Another challenge for tuition is finding examples. “If you use a European company as an example, let alone a Finnish one, Asian students don’t necessarily have a clue what you are talking about. As a counterbalance, it’s great when students share their own examples.”

“The first year is the most challenging due to culture shock. Not everyone is used to taking responsibility for their own learning and collaborative learning. The scarcity of traditional contact is also a common cause of astonishment.”

Tanhua stresses that, despite the challenges, the daily contact between different cultures is a source of richness. For Finns, this is domestic internationalisation at its best. “What would be the point in studying international business without an international learning environment?”

COMPETITIVE EDGE THROUGH STUDYING IN FINLAND

International degree students can find good work placements in their home countries, but how can this know-how be harnessed to cater for Finnish and Satakunta-based companies?

“Learning the Finnish language would be essential. What could be better for an internationalising Finnish business than, say, a Chinese student scouting out market opportunities in China?”

This autumn, foreign students’ financial difficulties have hit the headlines. Tanhua feels that foreign people get the wrong idea of education provided free of charge.

“They don’t have any idea of the cost of living in Finland. This means that they can easily find themselves in a situation where they have to work to make ends meet. Finding a job is difficult if you can’t speak Finnish. Luckily, most students have the support of their families, which allows them to concentrate fully on their studies.”



Laura Lehtonen has good experiences about studying in Rauma.

STUDIES WERE ABOUT APPLYING LEARNING TO PRACTICE

Laura Lehtonen graduated from the IBML programme three years ago. She currently works for Lundalogik Oy, a company developing and manufacturing CRM systems, and is responsible for sales and consultancy at the newly established Helsinki office.

Laura was drawn to Rauma by the English-language degree programme and, in particular, the teaching method (problem-based learning) in place.

“I wanted something different from my studies, something that stands apart from traditional studies. I found what I was looking for in the IBML degree programme – the studies were about directly applying learning into practice.”

Laura also liked the idea of taking responsibility for her own learning.

“The teaching method teaches problem-solving skills and how to think ‘outside the box’, so to speak. This learning is something that I have now taken with me into working life.”

Laura perceived teamwork to be a particular challenge of the international degree programme. According to Laura, the education has provided good capabilities for working life.

“Your own motivation is key. The more you invest in your studies, the more you get out of them too.”

RAUMALLA PORISEE KANSAINVÄLINEN KOULUTUSKEITOS

Liiketoiminta Rauman ulkomaalaiset vahvistukset ovat tuttu näky niin kampuksella kuin katukuvassa. Kansainvälisyyden suolana on englanninkielinen International Business and Marketing Logistics (IBML)-koulutusohjelma. Opiskelijaryhmät ovat aidosti kansainvälisiä, samoin haasteet,

joista koulutusohjelmavastaava Daniela Tanhua mainitsee mm. kommunikoinnin, tiimityöskentelyn sekä opiskelijoiden erilaiset tarpeet. Hän kuitenkin korostaa, että haasteista huolimatta suurena rikkautena on erilaisten kulttuurien kohtaaminen päivittäin.