

## **Experts Need IL, IL Needs Experts: Reaching the IL Superhighway the Finnish Way**

**The main aim of the Finnish universities of applied sciences is to educate experts to working life. The education requires close collaboration between students, faculty, library and working life partners.**

One important competence which has to be achieved during the learning process is the ability to critically and effectively deal with information. This means learning information literacy skills. In Finnish universities of applied sciences this is realized in close collaboration of three actors: faculty, libraries and working life partners.

This poster presents how a partnership model in teaching IL has evolved in the Finnish universities of applied sciences. The aim is to create professional expertise by deepening the three-party collaboration by shifting the learning to more authentic environments. Particular attention is given to the three roles defined by law for the universities of applied sciences: **training of professionals** in response to labour market needs, **R&D** which supports instruction and promotes **regional development** in particular.

The poster presents partnership development and collaborative teaching and learning from three different viewpoints. The first case discusses partnership in strategic planning and curriculum design. The second one discusses information literacy in research and development projects. The third case discusses the impact of information literacy from a regional point of view.

### **Partnership in Strategic Planning and Curriculum Design**

The information specialist is an active participant when the pedagogical strategy in the Seinäjoki University of Applied Sciences is drawn up. Teamwork with various specialists increases awareness of the overall picture including pedagogical aims, emphasis and methods. The team is comprised of representatives from administration, teaching staff, and students. In this team it is possible to add the goals of IL into the pedagogical strategy. Later they can be implemented in a realistic and practical way suitable for the organisational aims. Library's role as an active participant had two results. First, there was shared understanding of the roles the actors had in promoting IL; second, the goals became more realistic to put into practice; third, the official strategy illustrates how IL-competences are a well-designed part of the UAS pedagogy and curriculum.

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### **IL in R&D: Learning in Authentic Environments**

A new approach to teaching IL in r&d-projects is to shift the learning environment to the authentic working environment. This benefits all partners. An example of this approach is teaching IL in the health field.

A group of students In Laurea UAS were conducting their field research at a hospital. It was practical to have access to relevant information on the spot while researching. The staff used Finnish health databases as part of their everyday routines, but they hadn't really explored the various possibilities which could expand their routine usage. The portal gave access to e.g. PubMed and Cochrane and various handbooks dealing with health issues.

The information specialist offered a one day IL course at the hospital. The students learnt basic use and the staff updated their knowledge about the databases. Teaching in the hospital environment made it possible to share knowledge about real working life situations and exchange information about the new trends taught to students. This dialogue was very fruitful and led to a discussion about ethical issues and health information. During teaching, the information specialist could also experience the real needs of IL in a public health care environment. As a result, the experiences were used in planning courses at the University of Applied Sciences.

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### **IL in Regional Development: Community of Practice**

The ICT Library project in Turku has studied the different ways in which to improve the possibilities of small and medium-sized enterprises to use information to develop their own operations. Library and information services students have surveyed the SMEs information needs and trained them in electronic information sources and their use. The ICT Library project manager, a professional information specialist, has modelled her own work in information services for the students. The different actors have formed into a small community of practice, where information specialists, students, teachers and working life join forces to advance the information services for the SMEs.

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**For more cases, see <http://ilcases.wordpress.com/>**

### **Few Facts about the Finnish UAS Libraries**

- Rapid library development since the 1990's when the UAS (polytechnic) educational system was implemented in Finland.
- Total of 30 Universities of Applied Sciences with libraries in 80 towns and 200 locations.
- Library personnel total ca 500 people.
- AMKIT Consortium founded in 2001 to coordinate library cooperation among the Universities of Applied Sciences in Finland.
- The main aim of the Finnish universities of applied sciences is to educate experts to working life. With this in mind, they have developed a three-party collaboration model in IL teaching. The model aims to create professional expertise by shifting the learning to more authentic environments. This requires close collaboration between students, faculty, library and working life partners.