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BUSINESS SCHOOL

FINAL THESIS REPORT

**FOREIGNERS AND EMPLOYMENT IN THE PIRKANMAA  
REGION**

**An assessment on tutoring provided by TAMK BBA programme**

**Merike Perendi**

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Supervisor: Kai Hintsanen

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**Author(s):** Merike Perendi  
**Degree Programme(s):** Bachelor in Business Administration  
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**ABSTRACT**

In the close future Finland will face a great shortage in the number of labour. The large middle-aged-class is about to retire and there are not enough Finns to fill-in the vacancies left. There is, already now, an increasing lack of workers in various fields. This causes the challenge of integrating immigrants, who already live in Finland, more efficiently in to the employment markets, and attracting new foreign know-how to Finland. TAMK is doing its own part to improve this situation by encouraging its foreign students to stay in the Finnish employment markets.

Keeping this in mind, this thesis was carried out to study the current situation of the availability and quality of tutoring offered by the BBA degree in TAMK for foreign degree students in seeking employment in the Pirkanmaa region. The main aim was to investigate the satisfaction of current students and of graduates in it, and find means of improvement to it, in order to prepare them better in the future. Furthermore, businesses in the Pirkanmaa region were surveyed to form a picture of the attitude of employees towards foreign job-seekers so that foreigners could know what is expected from them. Recognizing this is assumed to improve one's preparedness and increase employment possibilities.

The research was done by using qualitative and quantitative empirical data. The data was collected in three stages by three surveys to current BBA students, BBA alumni and companies. The head of BBA degree program, Janne Hopeela, was also interviewed to understand the current situation of the tutoring. In addition to the primary data, secondary data was used in this study to give information on the current situation of Finnish employment markets and of means to make one's way there effectively, and show reasons to improve the tutoring of the foreign BBA students.

The results of this thesis speak for the fact that current students are willing to stay in Finland if they find employment. The satisfaction towards the tutoring provided by TAMK averages between poor and satisfactory among current students and alumni. All students would like to get more contacts with local companies, e.g. via cooperation projects in order to help with job-hunting in the future. Most of the companies are interested in cooperation with TAMK, which may offer interesting future prospects to the tutoring programme.

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**Keywords:** foreign labour immigrant tutoring employment markets skills  
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# **1. The starting point**

## **1.1. *The Customer: BBA programme - TAMK***

My own interests in internationalization and in the adaptation in to cultures, especially in to Finnish culture, gave me an idea that I started to develop, to use it as my thesis topic. After few conversations with Janne Hopeela, the head of the BBA degree programme, and modifying the idea in to a form more suitable and specific for the need, BBA programme approved it and welcomed me to write my thesis on this study.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the present quality of tutoring provided by BBA TAMK in seeking employment for its foreign BBA students, what it should be and what could be done to improve it. The main task I was given was to depict the current situation of the tutoring, to improve the good old parts of it and also find new ways and tools to make it more competitive. This all was inspired by a vision to offer foreign BBA students as good employment tutoring as possible, to help them stay working in Finland after their graduation.

The improved tutoring programme would give BBA students a stronger base to adapt themselves better in the Finnish culture and business environment, offer up-to-date facts and information about the employment markets in Pirkanmaa including what international businesses expect from a foreign job-seeker. It would also give foreign students reasons why they should consider staying in Finland to work and what can they gain from it. These factors should lead, or at least encourage, a foreigner to have an interest in staying in the Finnish employment markets.

## **1.2. *The world and employment now***

### **1.2.1. Globalization**

Globalization as a term has come into common usage since the 1980s. It is about a historical process that is the result of human innovation and technological progress that has lead to the increasing integration and interaction of economies and societies around the world, communication, particularly through trade and financial flows. National borders are no longer obstacles in trading goods and services further away. The world has become like a village where distances are no longer so great, a state made possible by technology (IMF, 1.3.2007; Honkala, 2001). Globalization becomes concrete when a still wider diversity of ethnic groups is found from a still smaller region (Forsander et al, 2001;210).

The network development of the global information society has lead to the reaching of global competitiveness. Initially it was about the developing networks of companies, but these days it plays an essential role also in the success of regions and countries. In the last few years Finland has reached top places in several international surveys that have studied the competitiveness of countries. These results conclude that Finland has

been used as an example of a successful information society, based on an open welfare society (Forsander et al, 2004).

### **1.2.2. The demand for foreign employees in Finland**

Like other EU (European Union) countries, Finland, too, is assumed to be facing a shortage of labour in the near future. This will be caused by the aging of the population and the probable growth in the demand for labour. For this reason, a greater immigration of labour is needed. There will be a high number of vacancies once the employees born in 1947-52 start retiring at some stage in the near future. This will affect especially companies in the public sector (Taloussanomat 31.1.2007).

According to Heikki J. Perälä, the director Chamber of Commerce of Helsinki, it will not be long before there is a wide labour shortage, for example, in the Uusimaa region. There are already unfilled vacancies in the area of cleaning and in some other low-paid fields. There will be a shortage of labour in the service sector, commerce and building in the near future. Foreign workers will be needed to ease the shortage, as the Finnish population will not be sufficient (Helsingin Sanomat 6.3.2007). The need for labour has risen so high in some places that exceptional actions have had to be made to help the situation. Salo, a town of 60 000 inhabitants near Turku, has decided to build easy-access rental flats to ease the flow of workers coming and staying there (Taloussanomat 7.3.2007).

The UN has estimated (2000) that 1,5 million immigrants should be received in Europe each year to maintain the working-age population at its current level. To meet this demand for labour, a natural source would be the CEE (Central and eastern European) countries. Nevertheless, this is only one of the possibilities. If, however, a shortage emerges in this work force, there may possibly be a need to recruit labour, mainly from other countries. It may be that more far-reaching active immigration policies will be needed.

The European Integration Consortium has concluded that the number of people from CEE countries would rise in Finland from 12 000 in 1998 to 41 000 in 2010. The expectation is that in 2025-30 the number would be 54 000. However, these numbers are only indicative (Alho 2002).

### **1.2.3. Why to work abroad?**

There are many positive aspects to be considered when evaluating if one should work abroad, or not. It definitely provides one valuable experience for one's future career, one has the opportunity of working in a multicultural environment, learn much from the different aspects of this work, make new friends, maybe learn another language, and what is very valuable too is that one may experience another culture, learn and enjoy it. In any case, it is essential to remember that very likely one will face many challenges during the stay abroad; a different country with its

culture, a new job and people around, and one will learn how to live in a new place (Saviaro & Helaniemi, 2005; 23).

### **1.3. Focus on Finland**

#### **1.3.1. Immigrants in Finland**

Finland is considered to have a more homogenous population than most other European countries (Heikkilä & Peltonen 2002). Even though Finland receives immigrants continually, the number of immigrants for employment reasons is still low. When it comes to highly-educated immigrants, they are even more scarce (Forsander et al, 2004). The share of foreigners in Finnish population was 1,4% in 1996, of whom 19.1% were from the EU countries (OECD in Alho 2002). By the end of the year 2000 the total number of foreign citizens residing in Finland was about 91 000 which is 1,6% of the total population. The total share of immigrants was 1,7% in 2002 (Forsander in Heikkilä&Peltonen 2002). It is believed that the mono-cultural Finland will stay beside the multicultural Finland still for a long time (Paananen in Söderqvist 2005; 52).

#### **1.3.2. Immigrants in the Finnish employment markets**

Finland's success in international studies measuring competitiveness has not increased its attraction as a country of professional competence in the global markets. Compared to other European countries, Finland boasts exceptionally few foreign managers and other experts (Ruckenstein, 2004; 233). Some EU countries may have even ten times more foreign specialists than Finland.

Foreigners have concentrated their numbers in only some specific parts of Finland. This applies especially to the Helsinki region with approximately 60 percent of all immigrants living there (Tilastokeskus in Forsander et al 2004). Their employment, in general, is in the fields of cleaning, bus-driving or the restaurant sector. The separation of different ethnic groups unevenly in the labour market, a phenomenon also called "ethnic segmentation" is not yet strong in Finland (Paananen in Forsander et al 2004). It can be said that Finnish employment markets are becoming internationalized, starting from the field of services. Yet, this outlook does not apply only in Finland, but also in all other countries receiving immigrants; foreign students, refugees, illegal immigrants and so on. Nevertheless, even though the number of foreigners in the lower educational fields is high in most countries, there are also foreigners at the managerial end of the scale (Forsander et al, 2004).

In the last years Nokia has been the main attraction bringing most of the highly educated foreign professionals to Finland. If it is desired to receive this kind foreign know-how in Finland also in the future, businesses and the public sector should see this type of foreigner as a resource.

Companies and organizations that actively enhance their working society more international are more likely to be the ones that also attract more foreign specialists. Foreign employees makes businesses and organizations more attractive also to other foreigners. (Ruckenstein, 2004, 233)

Studies have shown that there are such few foreign employees in Finnish business world and organizations that they are not much noticed by the management. This invisibility of foreigners in the Finnish employment markets reveals that businesses do not exploit the diversity that their multi-cultural employees have to offer. The use of this kind of "Diversity management" is, in any case, still only in its infancy in Finland.

There are some good reasons for Finland still being a country with a small number of foreign specialists. For example, Finland has been an employee-receiving country for just over twenty years now, having previously been a country that basically only sent employees abroad. Women, too, have formed an essential part of the Finnish work force and they are highly-educated. For this reason, and for other economical reasons there has been no need of foreign work force.

The high number of unemployed immigrants in Finland is seen as a problem, but that is not the end of the story. Immigrants are often unemployed when they arrive in Finland but after a short while, only after some years, their position in the labour markets improves. One reason to this is a good general state of labour markets.

There are too few immigrants and especially unemployed immigrants in Finland to ease the situation of labour reserve of Finland. Yet research proves that education and professional skills gained abroad may be of value in the employment markets with the help of education and contacts of labour markets. This means that not only immigrants who have come to Finland for labour reasons but also those with other reasons may become a reserve of know-how to Finnish organizations (Forsander et al, 2004).

### **1.3.3. Why to work in Finland?**

In general, the competitiveness of Finland has been measured to be good in different studies and comparisons. According to results of a study that 27% of foreign professionals living in Finland think that Finland offers globally competitive employment markets and good career prospects. Other reasons to stay are interesting and challenging work tasks in internationally high-level companies, safety, cleanness of surroundings, and the high-tech culture of the society. Also less competitive rhythm of life and working environment have become important reasons to live in Finland (Raunio 2002).

According to Forsander et al (2004) social services do not bring foreign workers to Finland, but they definitely do help them stay in Finland. Also, the comprehensive welfare-state and social influences, such as safety,



influence foreigners, especially families with children, getting on well in Finland (Forsander et al 2004). Even though Finland may not compete in the level of economical incentives, the developed welfare-state remains tying foreigners in to their living surroundings (Forsander et al 2004;156-157).

#### **1.3.4. Foreigners in the eyes of Finnish employees**

Even though the Finnish Ministry of Education has said otherwise, a study made by Söderqvist (2005) addresses the lack of employment of foreign employees for the reason that there is no need for them, and that there are no applicants, in any event. Overall, Finnish companies currently employ only a small number of foreigners. Generally most of these are employed by local administration, rarely in the private sector. Nevertheless, employees have had foreign labour force in many different tasks; also at the managerial level, though they usually start in jobs of lower level. Slightly less than 39% of Finnish employees, according to Söderqvist, do not receive applications from foreigners, even though the turnover of their employees is, on an average, around 4%. Foreigners should apply for employment in companies of all sizes and locations because of the high turnover of employees and the fact that nearly a third have international contacts if not daily, then weekly.

According to Söderqvist (2005) Finnish employees have a very positive attitude towards foreigners who want to find employment in Finland. They are seen as a possibility for the Finnish working life by over 60 percent of Finnish employees. Only one employee in five disagrees with this opinion. Nearly 80% of employers agree that foreigners are not a threat for Finnish work. A multicultural working community is seen to produce more sensitively innovations than a more monocultural. This is the belief of over 60% of employees.

#### **1.3.5. Polytechnical university, foreigners and degrees**

Research results (Söderqvist 2005) show that polychnical universities play a significant role in the internationalizing of regions in Finland. After the English-speaking countries, Finland is the leading country in the world with educational degree programmes offered in English (Maiworm & Wächter in Söderqvist 2005:58). 46% of employees believe that their municipality has internationalized because of the local polytechnical universities. This is believed most by employees from the private sector, of which half of the companies are in the industrials whereas less by the employees from the public sector. Also over a third of employees agree that foreign polytechnical students have helped their companies in internationalization. This kind of thinking is common with employees in the public sector. In other words, employees have positive experiences of foreign students in the light of internationalization.

A Finnish degree is not generally a recruiting criterion for Finnish employees. Only one employee in four agrees to its importance. Yet, it is

seen as a positive quality in a foreign applicant, and furthermore, a foreigner with a Finnish degree is somehow less risky; at least the degree is recognized. Some employees see it as an indicator of the desire to stay in Finland and of the desire to develop oneself and acquire experience in the Finnish way of working life. Nevertheless, there are also employers who do not see a Finnish degree as advantageous in case of foreign applicants.

Getting to know the Finnish culture through the degree is seen valuable as such. It can be assumed that the future would look much brighter for active recruiters, if Finland was added to the group of countries from where foreign graduates would start looking for jobs. It leaves energy to do the work if one has already adjusted in the culture (Söderqvist 2005; 52-57).

### **1.3.6. TAMK – BBA Programme**

Tampereen ammattikorkeakoulu (TAMK) / Tampere Polytechnic – University of Applied Sciences is a university of applied sciences. The focus of TAMK is in trade and industrial. It offers Bachelor level degrees are Business Economics, Technology, and Art and Media. From the 18 degree programmes it offers, there are two, B.Eng in Environmental Engineering and BBA in International Business, taught completely in English (www - TAMK 2007).

The BBA programme has had the basic idea of receiving 1/3 of its students from abroad every year. Nevertheless, the number of foreign degree students may have varied yearly. Some years there have been more foreigners with double-citizenship, some years less, they may have left and some years there have been transfer students from foreign universities. In 2007 the application process was renewed, which may cause a slight differentiation in the numbers of student applications during the first year(s) (Hopeela - interview 2007).

The BBA programme receives degree students from all parts of the world; Asia, North and Latin America, Africa, and Europe.

#### **Employment-related tutoring**

Currently, all orientation that TAMK offers to IB students regarding employment markets is a work placement orientation during the second year of study. This orientation, which is divided into three sets of meetings of approximately three hours, is compulsory for all students, whether a student does his/her work placement abroad or in Finland. During this orientation, students are given a wide package of information how to apply a work placement, how to write an effective CV and so on. By now, the IB students have not been given classes directly about how to orientate oneself towards employment markets. It is taught indirectly in all study subjects by challenging students to self-development and orientation in this area.

A more direct orientation towards a better knowledge of one's development as a job seeker is what the BBA programme is planning for the near future for the students. There is a great interest by the programme to start offering a personal development programme that would take place during the first and the second years. This programme would not overtake the current compulsory workplacement orientation, but would provide more support for the students in self development.

This programme would be offered to the first year students tutoring by two teachers of TAMK, Marita Tuomala and Annikka Koivuniemi. These tutoring meetings are planned to be group meetings where individuals may wake up in the sense of how they can develop themselves during their study years to be competent job seekers in the future. Separate meetings for Finns and foreigners are not planned. This can be seen as a real possibility where foreigners and Finns can learn from each other.

Tuomala and Koivuniemi are currently examining the suitability of a virtual course in career planning for a deeper employment tutoring of the second year students. This virtual course is now only in Finnish, but if it is found effective for the students of BBA programme, an English version of it will be ordered. This virtual course would begin in the fall 2007, if at all possible. For now, students would not get any credits for the course, so this kind of a career planning would be a totally optional to those really interested in planning their career.

### **Foreigners as work placement seekers**

All BBA students, Finns and foreigners, are on the same line in the BBA programme. They are treated in the same way, also in the area of tutoring. There are only from five to fifteen foreigners per each year group, as a result of which they may not be given separate employment tutoring from the Finnish students even if there was a need for it.

As mentioned before, this may be seen as an opportunity for the foreigners to learn from the Finnish students versed in Finnish culture, and for Finnish students to learn about their cultures. Even so, a separate tutoring for foreigners only could offer more specific information and encouragement for the foreigners to help them to find, first of all, a work placement more easily, and also a real job after graduation.

The experiences in the past years prove that it is rather hard for foreign BBA students to find a work placement in Finland. One reason for this is that companies in Finland, especially smaller ones with no international activities, are not easily willing to employ foreigners, even for free. Often, once a foreigner has found a work placement, the job has a little to do with the area of international business, which is a requirement for a suitable work placement for a BBA student. In these cases, students are encouraged to search for a better work placement, for their own good. The responsibility of finding the work placement lies with each BBA student personally. The idea of TAMK not giving ready work placements

is to teach the students how to find a job. Once he/she has found a work placement, he/she can be assumed to have learnt the approach of finding real employment. Nevertheless, if there is a need of personal help in any way in these matters, Marita Tuomala, the work placement director, may be contacted and an appointment made. In other words, there is always help around for the ones who need it (Hopeela - interview 2/2007).

#### **1.4. Selling one's skills**

Various aspects should be taken in to consideration when one is willing to find employment abroad. Marketing of oneself is challenging even in one's home country. The idea of this chapter is to give some basic information, directly and indirectly, on job-hunting and challenge a foreigner to reach the goals he/she might have.

##### **Career planning**

Career planning means continuously composing, setting and reaching goals for the employment future when one has increased the knowledge of oneself. It is about improving oneself, marketing one's skills and increasing the knowledge of employment markets. The base of career planning is in one's values, interests, needs and history of activity. When these are known, one will also know his/her own potential, and what are one's strengths and areas with the need of improvement.

Career planning is becoming more and more important these days. Working life has become more hectic and short-spanned. The global competition is up high and there are less secure jobs. Technology makes working possible even from the distance, for an example. One may sit and wait, drift in the waters of employment, or influence the way by one's actions and row to open harbours of work opportunities. Studies and career tales encourage clearly that one should put an effort in career planning in order to gain more, to be more satisfied with one's career and that way also more satisfied with life itself (Lampikoski 2006; 5-8).

##### **Employment skills**

Skills are our tickets to success. This does not apply only to individuals, but to businesses, and ultimately to the prosperity of whole countries. In this increasingly competitive world, a wide range of skills for the work environment are wanted by employers. For reasons such as the effects of world recession, the impact of *leaner businesses*, including, for example, outsourcing and downsizing, and the efficiency of technology and telecommunications, flexible and adaptable workforce is needed. The work force is expected to be multiskilled and able to fulfil a wide range of roles. The people that have developed a range of skills are the ones who will succeed in their careers, and be sought after by employees.

Everyone has gaps in their skills knowledge. This and the fact that the world is constantly changing and expecting new skills means that every

employee must be prepared to fill their own gaps. Self-developing improves one's career prospects by making him/her more useful and life more rewarding. This kind of "gap filling" can also be called life-long-learning, with one continuing to learn throughout life, not only at work but in social life as well. Employment skills are skills that are built up through studying and through experience in a job. They may be explained also as basic and transferable skills, with the specific skills that are needed for a particular job added (Foster 1998;4-6; 23).

According to Söderqvist (2005) the right attitude to work and motivation are the most important recruiting criteria for Finnish employers. A foreign applicant should possess also other important characters. For example, one should be hard-working, self-acting, have good intercultural skills, and be careful. Also professional skills are a respected characteristic, the importance of which grows with the size of the business. One must have a base of education, but the place where it is gained has no importance as a recruiting criterion. In 1999 professional skill was classified as the most important recruiting criterion (Paananen in Söderqvist 2005; 70) but has evidently decreased slightly in importance.

The ability to speak Finnish is no longer a top recruiting criterion as it was in 1999. Even so, it still is highly expected. The ability to speak Finnish is needed for communication with customers, for integration into the work place, due to the poor language skills of the most immediate management and other colleagues. It is also needed to prevent accidents, and to show that the foreigner has come to Finland to stay. Knowledge of the Finnish way of life and working is seen a great value for a foreign employee. It is seen as a direct factor in a foreigner's reaching results more quickly than if he/she had first to get familiar with all the general practices of a work place. Even though, in general, companies have the same recruiting criteria for Finns and foreigners, nevertheless, the latter have to be able to prove himself/herself more worthy of becoming employed than is the case for the Finn (Söderqvist 2005; 70-71).

### **Means of finding employment opportunities**

The more diverse a job-hunting strategy is, the more effective it is likely to be. There are various means to this end, even if one did not want to use them all. First of all, one may visit the website of the company and organization showing the vacancies and more information on the options that one may have not even thought about, and leave the CV on-line. Direct contact with businesses is also an effective way to show one's interest to an employer. Further, there are job fairs, generally in larger cities, where employers can be met, information received and connections made. These days there are also a large variety of staff recruiting companies, that hire employees for their customers. Once they have the applicant's CV, they may contact him/her whenever there is a need of a suitable employee. Temping is also another option to find employment. Whenever there is a possibility, one should get a temporary job in an interesting company, if a full-time job is not available. Yet, once

the employment period in that company is over, if there is need, one is already known and this way can be chosen to another position (Vogt; <http://content.monster.com/articles/3471/17249/1/home.aspx>).

The most efficient means of finding employment in Finland are currently, according to Söderqvist (2005), the employment office, newspapers, and the Internet including company web sites; in this order of importance. Electronic personnel recruiting has come to stay as an important means of recruiting, and it is used in a variety of ways. Likewise, the news of available jobs goes around by word of mouth, and companies recruit directly from educational establishments, and use direct search. The larger the business, such as industrial employers and the state, the more it uses newspapers as a tool for informing the public of vacancies. Since all businesses are obliged to announce all vacancies to the employment office, the latter is always a good way to get to know about available posts, but also to leave an open application there. This way the office may contact a job seeker if something suitable appears. All these means of finding employment are not only for Finns, but for foreigners as well (Söderqvist 2005).

Networking can be a means to receive that kind of precious information that may be unavailable through official routes. Networks can play an essential role in finding a job. All people around may be part of one's network, such as family, friends, work colleagues, neighbours and so on (Nieminen 2006;13).

## **Creating a CV**

Today, when job searching takes place mainly in the Internet, a perfect CV (curriculum vitae) is more crucial than ever. Formerly a printed document, the CV of this day, is a digital portfolio of one's skills and achievements which may be launched in many forms – Internet, e-mail, and print. It is the ultimate job-search tool that is the key to one's career future. The digital age has made job-hunting more available than it ever has been.

Every job-seeker should put a great deal of effort in one's CV, because it is the hub of one's job-search which communicates the talent, employability, and lifestyle (Jackson 2005; Preface). It includes the basic information of what kind of qualifications and experiences the applicant has. Its function is to open doors to an interview, where the applicant is able to show his/her fitness to the job available (Nieminen 2006; 23). The CV has to be shaped in such a way that it attracts the responses that one wants. This is why every CV should be focused on to meet one's choices to keep him/her out of the mass-market job world, to enable one's self-definition in the market (Jackson 2005; Preface).

The standards for CVs depend on each country. Some country may be very strict on types and information given in the CV. From this one may draw the conclusion that it is important to know what a business expects

from a CV, if possible. These days many companies use their own application form on the Internet, which makes applying easier. Generally, one may include his/her own CV and a cover letter, in which one introduces him/herself and his/her professional skills to the employer, in it. Each CV and cover letter should be tailored for each job applied for (Nieminen 2006;17; 23).

### **Job interview**

Interview is the event that opens doors to employment, or closes them. It is the place to make the final impression. Succeeding in an interview generally depends on various factors. Sometimes succeeding in an interview is more important than one's professional skills to be chosen for a job. This is why one should get well-prepared for it. Thinking of basic issues and practicing the interview situation in advance may become the key to succeed in it.

When the job-seeker is well-prepared for the interview by giving thought to one's interview strategy, which is thinking of one's goals and approach, usually his/her conduct is motivated and confident. Self-knowledge, information on the business, knowledge of interview procedures and practice are the means to a successful interview situation (Nieminen 2006;13-15,37).

Survey results prove that, first of all, foreigners have to have valuable know-how and experience, and secondly, show all their cards in a job interview. In other words, the applicant has to introduce his/her abilities to the interviewer. Because his/her background is not known to the employer, he/she must be able to prove him/herself to be as good as any Finnish applicant, if not even better. When the applicant can prove this, employers are usually willing to employ foreigners (Söderqvist 2005). In general, when applying for a job, one must not only fulfil the academic requirements, the vocational and practical experience specified by the employer. One will increase one's chances if some extra skills can be shown; demonstrating personal transferrable skills and offering additional skills, over and above the basic requirements (Foster 1998; 67).

### **Work placement & experience**

Work placement is not only valuable for giving students the possibility to experience a real working environment in some business, but it may be an effective way of finding employment. It is used as a recruiting tool by the private and public sectors. Work placements give the opportunity to both the student and the company, get to know what each has to offer before signing any contracts. Work placements can be seen as an ideal means to show one's capacity and to find employment. Nevertheless, educational establishments and foreign students have had hard times when trying to find work placements. One reason for this may be that organizations find work placement periods too short for profiting from them (Söderqvist 2005). Another reason, according to Janne Hopeela

(01/2007), is that foreign students are, in general, less active than Finns in searching for good work placements.

## **2. Research**

In order to study the current situation of the availability and quality of tutoring offered by TAMK for foreign BBA students in seeking employment, as well as the possibilities for improvements in the tutoring, three different surveys were made. Two of the three surveys were made in English, one in Finnish. Translations were made by the researcher. All open comments were left in their original form.

The first phase of the study was a survey carried out with some business representatives. The aim of this survey was to study the current situation of foreigners as employees or employment seekers in the employment markets of the Pirkanmaa region, in particular; the recruitment criteria valued by the company management, and the need for foreign employees currently and in the future.

The second survey was made to study how current BBA students find the tutoring provided by TAMK in employment seeking, to understand the existing situation of it. The results were used to show a clear direction regarding possible improvements and give suggestions of different means to reach these improvements.

The third survey was made to get an overview of the satisfaction of foreign BBA alumni on the availability and quality of tutoring offered by TAMK in seeking employment possibilities during their studies. The results and the alumni's open comments give us another perspective in the survey; what it should have been and what it should be in the future, and how current foreign students may improve their possibilities in the Finnish employment markets. The alumni were also asked about their satisfaction with the whole BBA degree gained in TAMK. This question was made to draw an indicative conclusion on the average satisfaction with it and its applicability in their careers.

### **2.1. Research method**

The research was done by using qualitative and quantitative empirical data. The data was quantitative in that the surveys used focused partly on numbers and frequencies, which were analyzed statically. But on the other hand, the data collected was qualitative because it also focused on experiences and meanings. The aim was to study the case in more depth and description.

The data was collected in three stages by three surveys that had partly similar types of questions but were modified for different target groups; current BBA students, BBA alumni and companies. In addition to the primary data, secondary data was used in this study to show this case study in the light of a larger meaning, a wider picture.



## **3. Results**

### **3.1. Companies – the potential employers**

The survey to companies was made at two different recruitment fairs that gathered representatives of a wide range of businesses. The questionnaire was answered by thirteen companies operating in the Pirkanmaa region or other parts of Finland. To get a broader perspective, companies of both location types were included in this study. No further questionnaires were answered by companies because of the very similar results received from these thirteen companies. They give us rather clear view of the current situation in the employment markets of Finland.

Finnish was the language used of this survey. The questions and answers both open and closed were translated by the author into English for evaluation and reporting.

#### **3.1.1. General information on the companies**

In the survey, the categories of the size of a company were divided in nine groups from the category of under ten employees up to a category of over three thousand employees. Of the thirteen companies that took part in the survey a third have between 250 and 499 employees and 23% are slightly larger with 500-999 employees. Also one company with 50-99 employees and one with 100-249 took part in the survey these two each representing approximately 8% of all companies. Companies with the most employees were two companies of 1000-2999 employees and another two companies with over 3000 employees.

Over half of the companies have or have had foreign work trainees. Occasional work trainees are received by some 8% of the companies. 23% of the companies have not had any foreigners to do a work placement in the company. Of the receiving companies, 63% have a tradition of taking up to five trainees per year. One fourth of the companies have from ten to twenty trainees per year and only 12% take more than twenty. Reasons given for not having foreign trainees were their lack of spoken Finnish and the lack of need of trainees not have even Finnish.

#### **3.1.2. Foreigners in the employment markets**

Table 1 reveals the current situation of employed foreigners in the employment markets. Companies of all sizes participating in the survey number foreigners among their employees. There are only two companies, one of 250-499 employees and another one, of 500-999 employees that do not have foreigners on their pay rolls. This means that of these two company size categories, 25% do not currently employ any foreigners. Companies with the largest number of foreign employees, from ten to over a hundred, are two companies of 250-499 employees with up to 49 foreigners, one company of 500-999 employees, one that

has 1000-2999 employees and two companies with over three thousand employees. Only one employer has over a hundred foreigners, a company with over 3000 employees. The table shows that 50% of companies with over 3000 employees have more than one hundred foreign employees.

**Table 1 - Number of employees \* The number of foreign employees currently**  
Crosstabulation

|                     |           |                     | The number of foreign employees currently |       |        |       |       | Total  |
|---------------------|-----------|---------------------|---|-------|--------|-------|-------|--------|
|                     |           |                     | 0   | 1-2   | 3-9    | 10-49 | 100<  |        |
| Number of employees | 50-99     | Count               | 0   | 0     | 1      | 0     | 0     | 1      |
|                     |           | % of number of empl | ,0%                                       | ,0%   | 100,0% | ,0%   | ,0%   | 100,0% |
|                     | 100-249   | Count               | 0   | 0     | 1      | 0     | 0     | 1      |
|                     |           | % of number of empl | ,0%                                       | ,0%   | 100,0% | ,0%   | ,0%   | 100,0% |
|                     | 250-499   | Count               | 1   | 1     | 0      | 2     | 0     | 4      |
|                     |           | % of number of empl | 25,0%                                     | 25,0% | ,0%    | 50,0% | ,0%   | 100,0% |
|                     | 500-999   | Count               | 1   | 1     | 0      | 1     | 0     | 3      |
|                     |           | % of number of empl | 33,3%                                     | 33,3% | ,0%    | 33,3% | ,0%   | 100,0% |
|                     | 1000-2999 | Count               | 0   | 0     | 1      | 1     | 0     | 2      |
|                     |           | % of number of empl | ,0%                                       | ,0%   | 50,0%  | 50,0% | ,0%   | 100,0% |
|                     | 3000<     | Count               | 0   | 0     | 0      | 1     | 1     | 2      |
|                     |           | % of number of empl | ,0%                                       | ,0%   | ,0%    | 50,0% | 50,0% | 100,0% |
| Total               |           | Count               | 2   | 2     | 3      | 5     | 1     | 13     |
|                     |           | % of number of empl | 15,4%                                     | 15,4% | 23,1%  | 38,5% | 7,7%  | 100,0% |

Every year, every company in the survey had at least one or two foreign applicants looking for a job. It can be believed that the larger a company is in terms of the number of employees the greater the number of applications it receives. This is true in this case, but only partly. An interesting point that the table 2 shows us is that the only company in the 50-99 employee bracket still has 10-49 applicants per year whereas one company from each of the next three larger companies receive less applications per year. It could be assumed that a company with more than three thousand employees would get a large number of applications every year, both of them more than hundred applications, but the other company of the largest ones have only 10-49 applicants per year. These results may vary because of the popularity and recognition of the company in the employment markets.

**Table 2 - Number of employees \* Foreign applicants/year Crosstabulation**

| Count               |           | Foreign applicants/year |     |       |      | Total |
|---------------------|-----------|-------------------------|-----|-------|------|-------|
|                     |           | 1-2                     | 3-9 | 10-49 | 100< |       |
| Number of employees | 50-99     | 0                       | 0   | 1     | 0    | 1     |
|                     | 100-249   | 1                       | 0   | 0     | 0    | 1     |
|                     | 250-499   | 1                       | 0   | 1     | 2    | 4     |
|                     | 500-999   | 0                       | 1   | 1     | 1    | 3     |
|                     | 1000-2999 | 0                       | 0   | 2     | 0    | 2     |
|                     | 3000<     | 0                       | 0   | 1     | 1    | 2     |
| Total               |           | 2                       | 1   | 6     | 4    | 13    |

Does the location of the company affect the number of applications received? In the Pirkanmaa region over 45% of the companies have from ten to 49 foreign applicants per year. Over a hundred applications are received by a little over 27% of the companies. Around 27% of the companies have fewer than ten applicants per year. From the companies outside the Pirkanmaa region 50% have from ten to 49 applicants per year whereas the other 50% of the companies receive over a hundred applicants per year.

From these tables, the conclusion may be drawn that within the Pirkanmaa area and outside it, companies have, on average, from ten to over a hundred applicants per year. There are also companies in the Pirkanmaa region that have less than ten applications per year and outside the region there are not so few applicants per year. In any case, as the sample of companies outside the Pirkanmaa region is so small, this result should be taken to be only indicative by nature.

**Table 3 - The company location \* Foreign applicants/year Crosstabulation**

|                      |                  |                               | Foreign applicants/year |      |       |       | Total  |
|----------------------|------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------|------|-------|-------|--------|
|                      |                  |                               | 1-2                     | 3-9  | 10-49 | 100<  |        |
| The company location | Pirkanmaa region | Count                         | 2                       | 1    | 5     | 3     | 11     |
|                      |                  | % within the company location | 18,2%                   | 9,1% | 45,5% | 27,3% | 100,0% |
| Elsewhere            |                  | Count                         | 0                       | 0    | 1     | 1     | 2      |
|                      |                  | % within the company location | ,0%                     | ,0%  | 50,0% | 50,0% | 100,0% |
| Total                |                  | Count                         | 2                       | 1    | 6     | 4     | 13     |
|                      |                  | % within The company location | 15,4%                   | 7,7% | 46,2% | 30,8% | 100,0% |

The number of foreign employees that a company has currently can be seen to have some relation to the number that a company has foreign applicants per year. Table 4 shows that three out of five companies that

have 10-49 foreign employees currently receive yearly 10-49 applications from foreigners and the only company that has more than a hundred foreign employees at the moment has also over hundred applicants from foreigners. In any case, this ratio of foreign employees to the number of applications from foreigners does not apply in all cases. Of the companies that receiving those over a hundred applications, 50% currently have only one or two foreign employee(s) and 25% with up to 49 foreign employees. 50% of companies with no foreign employees at the moment receive one or two applications per year whereas another 50% receives 10-49 applications.

**Table 4** - The number of foreign employees \* The number of foreign applicants/year  
Crosstabulation

| Count                           |       | The number of foreign applicants/year |     |       |      | Total |
|---------------------------------|-------|---------------------------------------|-----|-------|------|-------|
|                                 |       | 1-2                                   | 3-9 | 10-49 | 100< |       |
| The number of foreign employees | 0     | 1                                     | 0   | 1     | 0    | 2     |
|                                 | 1-2   | 0                                     | 0   | 0     | 2    | 2     |
|                                 | 3-9   | 1                                     | 0   | 2     | 0    | 3     |
|                                 | 10-49 | 0                                     | 1   | 3     | 1    | 5     |
|                                 | 100<  | 0                                     | 0   | 0     | 1    | 1     |
| Total                           |       | 2                                     | 1   | 6     | 4    | 13    |

One of the survey questions was "Does the applicant's nationality matter when you employ new people?". The results show that this issue does not have any value in recruiting qualities. Twelve of thirteen answered "No". Only one company answered that it matters. It was explained with the fact that to be employed one must have good Finnish language skills. Because this was the only reason for the employer saying that nationality matters, and otherwise not, it may be assumed that if a foreigner has good skills in Finnish, there are no barriers to employment by this company, either.

### 3.1.3. Future

A study of the results of this survey predicts a rather positive future in the Finnish employment markets for foreign employment seekers. Nearly 77% of the companies believe that their companies will need foreign employees in the future. New markets from abroad are expected and companies know that they will need more specific know-how, language skills, for example. The rest of the companies, a little over 15%, say they may need to employ more foreigners in the future. Only 8% declared that there would be no need for foreign employees in their businesses in the future.

The future outlook of the need for foreign professionals in the Pirkanmaa region is very positive. For approximately 91% of companies, there is a definite or probable need for foreign employees. Only 9% do not have

employment to offer to foreign employment seekers. 100% of companies “Elsewhere” will need foreigners’ know-how.

**Table 5** - The company location \* The need of foreign employees in the future Cross-tabulation

|                      |                      |                                     | The need for foreign employees in the future |      |       | Total  |
|----------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------------|--|------|-------|--------|
|                      |                      |                                     | Yes  | No   | Maybe |        |
| The company location | The Pirkanmaa region | Number                              | 8  | 1    | 2     | 11     |
|                      |                      | % within The company location Count | 72,7%  | 9,1% | 18,2% | 100,0% |
| Elsewhere            |                      | Count                               | 2  | 0    | 0     | 2      |
|                      |                      | % within the company location Count | 100,0%                                       | ,0%  | ,0%   | 100,0% |
| Total                |                      | Count                               | 10   | 1    | 2     | 13     |
|                      |                      | % within The company location       | 76,9%  | 7,7% | 15,4% | 100,0% |

In connection with the question about the need for foreign employees, the company representatives were asked to describe where they would like to get new employees from, if they could choose. Some of the answers were more specific than the others.

*“It doesn’t matter where they are from as long as they know how to use their hands and have skills in metal industry.”*

*“China, Japan, Singapore, USA, Brazil and Dubai”*

*“That they speak European languages, e.g. German, French and Spanish”*

*“English-speaking”*

*“Eastern Central Europe, the Baltic region and Russia”*

*“It doesn’t matter as long as he/she knows English”*

*“Asia”*

*“Russia, South-east Asia”*

*“China, India, Malaysia”*

#### 3.1.4. Recruiting criteria

The company representatives were asked to give values of importance to fifteen recruitment qualities. The results show that generally each criterion received basically votes only in the categories of “Great importance” and “Some importance”. If a criterion received many votes in one of these two categories, it got quite directly nearly all the rest of the votes in the other

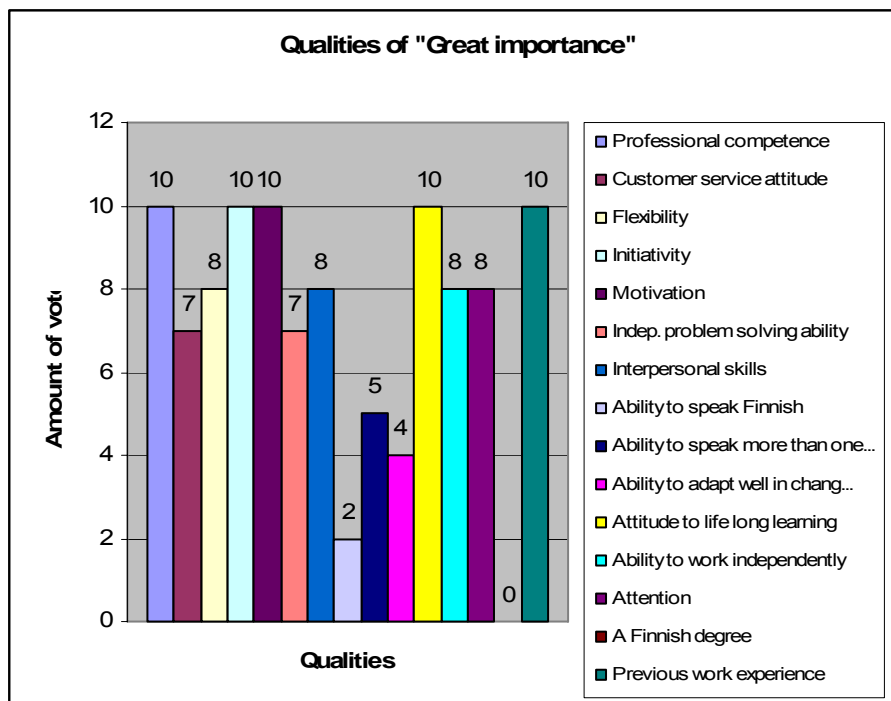
category. Only a few qualities were valued as being of “Minor importance” or of “No importance at all”.

### Qualities of “Great importance” and “Some importance”

On an average, all fifteen qualities seemed to have a very high importance in the eyes of companies. As many as five qualities received the grade “Great importance” by 77%, these being “Professional competence”, “Initiative”, “Motivation”, “Attitude to life-long learning” and “Previous work experience”. Another group, a group of six qualities, were voted as qualities with great importance by 54-62% of the companies.

These results show us that “A Finnish degree” has no “great importance” when recruiting new employees. This characteristic was interestingly the only one left without any votes in this category. Also, surprisingly, the criterion “Ability to speak Finnish” has a great importance only for two companies, not for more. “The ability to adapt well to changes” with 38% of votes and “Ability to speak more than one language” with 31% of votes were found to have less importance than the others.

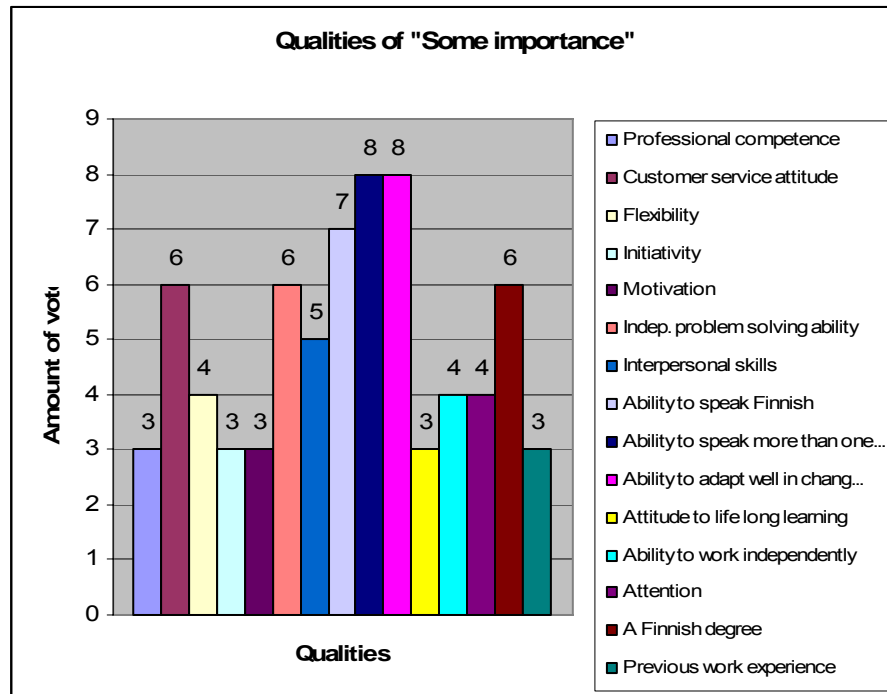
**Figure 1 - Qualities of “Great importance”**



Two qualities: “The ability to adapt well in changes” and “Ability to speak more than one language” that got only five and four votes as with “Great importance” now got both eight votes, meaning 47% in the category of “Some importance”, that was the highest score in this category. The six qualities that got a medium or slightly higher amount of support as “Great importance” also got around the same amount of votes or slightly less as “Some importance”. Those five qualities that were given great importance

by 77% of the answerers, received the rest of each one's value, 33%, as "Some importance".

**Figure 2 - Qualities of "Some importance"**



### Qualities of "Minor importance" and "No importance at all"

As mentioned before, the companies that took part in this survey gave all qualities quite much importance by common consent. In any case, a few qualities did not get much importance by some companies. "A Finnish degree" was chosen by 31% of the respondents as a criterion "Of minor importance" and as much as 23% regarded it as having "No importance at all". Also the "Ability to speak Finnish" was chosen by 31% to have "Minor importance". "Flexibility", "Ability to adapt well in changes", "Ability to work independently" and "Attention" got the support of 8% of companies as a criterion of "Minor importance". Besides the criterion "A Finnish degree" there was no other criterion that had "No importance at all".

#### 3.1.5. Cooperation with Polytechnics

The companies that took part in the survey agree quite unanimously that different kinds of cooperation projects with polytechnic students may lead to good employer-employee connections in the future. 77% of the companies are sure of this with their "Yes" answer, whereas the rest, 23%, believe it may be possible, with an answer "Maybe".

The question "Would you be interested in cooperation with TAMK?" was a question that received more variable answers than probably any other question in this survey. 31% of the companies answered positively and another 31% conveyed interest in this possibility in a "Maybe" form. 38%

of the companies do not think that they would be interested in cooperation with TAMK.

Table 6 shows how companies of different sizes are interested or not in cooperation with TAMK.

**Table 6** - Number of employees' \* Interest in cooperation with TAMK Crosstabulation

Count

|                            |           | Interest in cooperation with TAMK |       |                 | Total |
|----------------------------|-----------|-----------------------------------|-------|-----------------|-------|
|                            |           | Yes                               | Maybe | Do not think so |       |
| <b>Number of employees</b> | 50-99     | 0                                 | 0     | 1               | 1     |
|                            | 100-249   | 1                                 | 0     | 0               | 1     |
|                            | 250-499   | 2                                 | 0     | 2               | 4     |
|                            | 500-999   | 0                                 | 2     | 1               | 3     |
|                            | 1000-2999 | 0                                 | 1     | 1               | 2     |
|                            | 3000<     | 1                                 | 1     | 0               | 2     |
|                            | Total     | 4                                 | 4     | 5               | 13    |

### 3.1.6. A piece of advice

At the end of the survey, the company representatives were asked to give some advice to foreign students looking for employment in the Pirkanmaa region and in Finland generally. Various pieces of good advice were given to encourage current BBA students.

*"It is recommended that one would get face-to-face with us through recruiting events. Your own participation is very important. It is always efficient to get face-to-face with employers. It is really worthwhile to put an effort into learning the Finnish language!"*

*"You should put an effort on finding a good work practical experience placement. It opens doors to jobs. It is hard to find employment directly. - First comes a summer job, then a real job."*

*Those speaking Finnish fluently and showing interest in customer service and sales work are warmly welcome!"*

*Jump into the fray when "It is recommended to apply for jobs bravely. Previous work experience is for good, whatever it is. It is important that your CV is well done."*

*"Learn the Finnish language, because fluency is important in this work. Be active. A personal visit to the company plays a significant role in finding a job (make an appointment)."*

*"One must be ready to continue learning. Self-development and renewing one's general knowledge are important!"*



*"Applications are always welcome! Knowing the Finnish language has an important meaning in the social situations in the work place."*

*"Put an effort into your application. – The content is important, inform your prospective employer of your skills and interests."*

*"One must find out carefully what the employer is looking for; learning Finnish is very important; CV only is not enough – one must be very active and be the one that is looked for."*

*"Proficiency in use of spoken English and activity are important."*

*"Language skills have an important significance, for instance, someone whose mother tongue is English but still cannot spell does not have good chances of getting a job."*

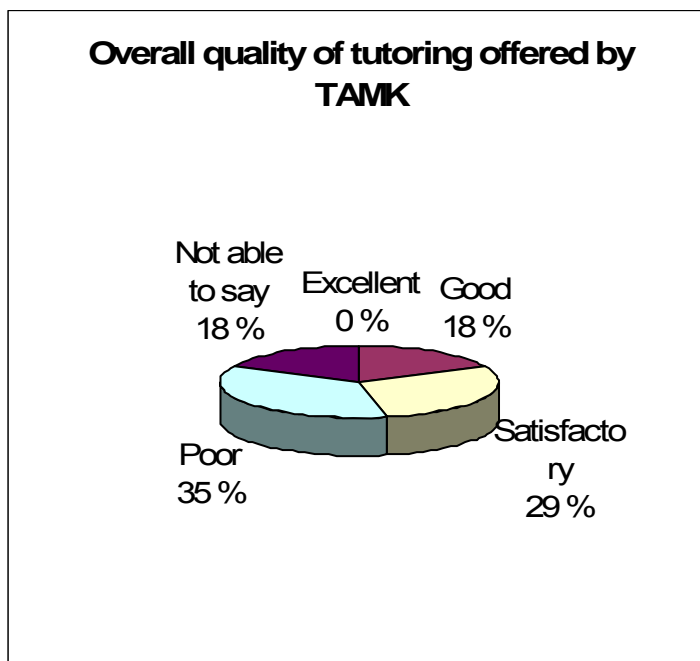
*"Even though our company is a global company skills in spoken Finnish are still important!"*

*"Know the Finnish employment markets and the local culture. This way you will be a more trustworthy applicant."*

### 3.2. Current students

The survey "The availability and quality of tutoring offered by TAMK for foreign BBA students in the area of seeking employment, and how you would like it to be improved" was sent to 44 current students. The survey was answered by 17 students, giving a rate of response of 38,6%.

**Figure 3 - The overall quality of tutoring offered by TAMK**



The results show how the majority is dissatisfied with the tutoring offered by TAMK in the employment-related issues. The question had five answer options on the axis excellent – good – satisfactory – poor – not able to say.

One third of students find it "poor" whereas none chose "excellent" as their opinion. "Satisfactory" was chosen by 29%.

Even so, 18% of the students think that the tutoring is "good". It is

interesting how the students have so different opinions on this issue, even though all of them have the same tutoring and services available.

From the table 5.10 we may see the students' opinion on the quality of tutoring by different study years. Of 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year students 25% think the tutoring is of good quality, whereas only 12,5% of 1st year students, and 0% of the 5<sup>th</sup> and higher say so.

Up to 75% of 3<sup>rd</sup> year students find the tutoring "poor". The group of "5<sup>th</sup> year and higher" also consider it "poor", in other words 100% of votes. But as can be seen from the table, it is the only vote from the group, so that the percentage can not be given much value, as if the group had more people and it was as high.

Surprisingly many students chose the option "Not able to say". One is tempted to ask whether they really know what the level of the tutoring is, or whether they are just careless in answering.

**Table 7** - Student's year of study \* The overall quality of tutoring Crosstabulation

|               |                         |   | The overall quality of tutoring |                  |        |       | Total  |
|---------------|-------------------------|---|---------------------------------|------------------|--------|-------|--------|
|               |                         |   | Good                            | Satisfactor<br>y | Poor   | NAS   |        |
| Year of study | 1st                     | Count   | 1                               | 4                | 2      | 1     | 8      |
|               |                         | % within ?? In which year of study are you... | 12,5%                           | 50,0%            | 25,0%  | 12,5% | 100,0% |
|               | 2nd                     | Count   | 1                               | 1                | 0      | 2     | 4      |
|               |                         | % within?? In which year of study are you...  | 25,0%                           | 25,0%            | ,0%    | 50,0% | 100,0% |
|               | 3rd                     | Count   | 1                               | 0                | 3      | 0     | 4      |
|               |                         | % within?? In which year of study are you...  | 25,0%                           | ,0%              | 75,0%  | ,0%   | 100,0% |
|               | 5 <sup>th</sup> or more | Count   | 0                               | 0                | 1      | 0     | 1      |
|               |                         | % within?? In which year of study are you...  | ,0%                             | ,0%              | 100,0% | ,0%   | 100,0% |
| Total         |                         | Count   | 3                               | 5                | 6      | 3     | 17     |
|               |                         | % within?? In which year of study are you...  | 17,6%                           | 29,4%            | 35,3%  | 17,6% | 100,0% |

### 3.2.1. Is there enough information available on Internet/intranet?

A rather important part of the questionnaire to the current students was the question regarding the availability of information on the Internet/intranet. In conversations and classroom situations it is common to hear complaints on the intranet. But as we may see on the table nearly a third of the students, meaning 5 of 17 think there is enough information available on Internet/intranet.

The majority of the students, say “No, there is not enough information available on Internet/intranet”, whereas a quarter chose “Not able to say”.

In any case, these results show us the opinion of current BBA students about the present situation on the availability to electronic information seen and it is reliable. Even though the sample is not large, these students are the ones that need and use the information available.

**Table 8** - Is there enough information available on Internet/intranet?

|       |                 | Frequency | Percent |
|-------|-----------------|-----------|---------|
| Valid | Yes             | 5         | 29,4    |
|       | No              | 8         | 47,1    |
|       | Not able to say | 4         | 23,5    |
|       | Total           | 17        | 100,0   |

### 3.2.2. Improvements recommended

There was an open text box in the questionnaire for giving comments in one’s own words for those who thought that there was not enough information on Internet/intranet.

*“Still i thikn there is too much finnish on that page and it’s hard to understand it for us, so that we can not find information that easily”*

*“More information for non-finns.”*

First of all, the TAMK intranet sites are lacking in information in English. Some parts of the intranet are in English, but to be able to get a wider range of information from there that is available to Finnish-speaking students, a foreign student should also be able to understand Finnish.

Also the complexity of the pages was mentioned, a matter fixed rather easily. This would not help only the foreign students but also Finnish students.

*“it could be a bit easier to find so...some paths are really complicated. More direct links?!?”*

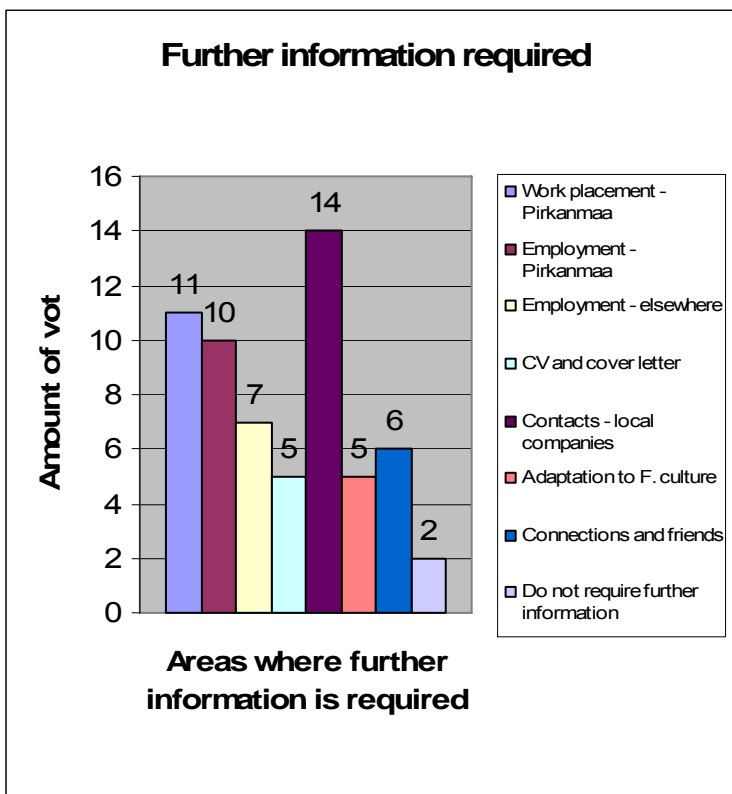
Some good ideas to improve the intranet of TAMK were given by one commenter. This student innovates how some practical information could be offered there.

*“that there would be some contacts, like how to contact the chamber of commerce, how to apply for the job and companies that have had before iternational students for their traineeship.....”*

### 3.2.3. Further information required

One of the major reasons why this survey was made is to find an answer in what areas current BBA students need, and would like to receive, further information in order to have a better starting point to become employed in the Pirkanmaa region, or elsewhere in Finland, during their studies and after their graduation. A question “In which of the following areas would you like TAMK to provide you more information?” gave a wide range of interesting answers. Each student was allowed to choose any option they deemed appropriate. The answers are concentrated in three groups by the similar numbers of votes.

**Figure 4 - Further information required**

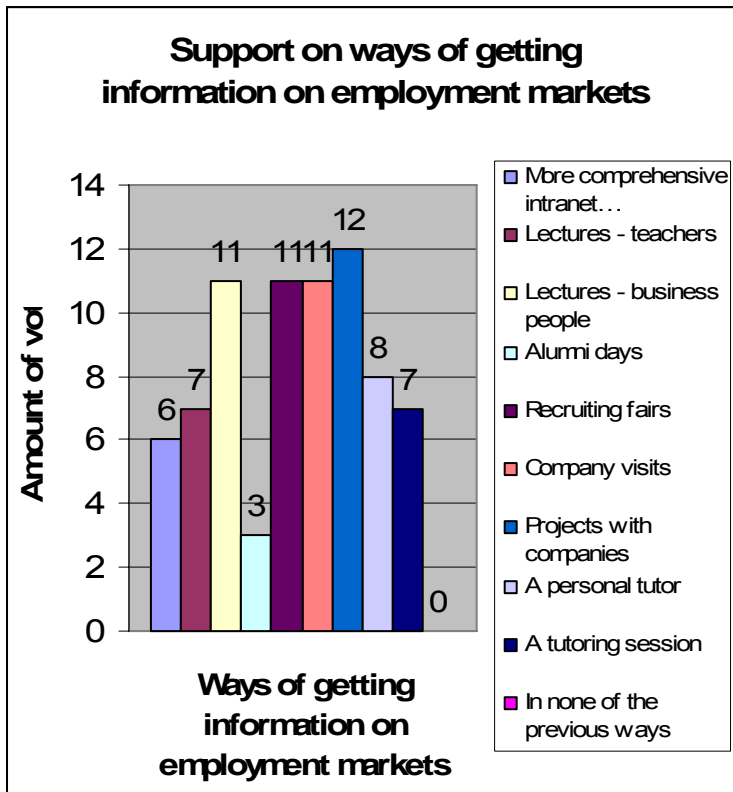


The results show us how, as many as, fourteen students from seventeen want to get more information on “*How to make contacts with local companies during one’s studies*”. This option gained the highest support of 82%. The next option with most votes was “*How to find work placement in the Pirkanmaa region*” which was supported by 65% of the students. With a support of 59%, came the option “*How to find employment in the Pirkanmaa region*”.

The option group that is centralized to have from 5 (29%) to 7 (41%) votes from the 17 students show us that there are quite many students who are interested in these issues, even though more or less the other half of the group of students are not. 41% would like to receive more assistance on “*How to find employment elsewhere*”. The option “*How to write an effective CV and cover letter*” got five votes signifying that even though most of the students have received enough guidance on it; nearly a third of students still wanted even more. Options “*How to make connections and friends with local people*” was supported by one third of students and “*How to adapt to Finnish culture*” by slightly less percentage. The number of students that state that they do not require more information from TAMK is small.

### 3.2.4. Ways of getting information – Support

Figure 5 - Support of ways of getting information on employment markets



Another major question raised by this survey is what could be the ways in which TAMK could provide better assistance in order that foreign students would more easily gain employment in the Pirkanmaa region. Students were allowed to choose any option that they deemed appropriate for their needs in the survey question “In which of the following ways would you like TAMK to assist you in finding future employment”. The question had ten answer options and an open text space for personal comments.

As shown in figure 5 the options “Projects with companies” with twelve (71%) votes, and “Informative lectures by business managers and other professionals”, “Recruiting fairs” and “Company visits” with eleven (65%) votes each one of them make the peak group with the most support. The options that are centralized to have a support of approximately votes of half of the students which is a support of 36% - 47% are the options “More comprehensive intranet/ Internet pages”, “Informative lectures by teachers of TAMK” and “A tutoring session per study year with a teacher to discuss how to enhance your employment opportunities”, and “A native Finn as your personal tutor while you study at TAMK”. 41% of the students find it as a good idea to get more specific information in the employment-related issues from teachers in a personal tutoring session and/or in a lecture situation.

Alumni days as one option to get more information on the employment did not get much support. Only three students of seventeen chose this option which is only 18% of all students.

### 3.2.5. Importance given to recruiting criteria

In one part of the questionnaire students got to imagine the employer’s view of how much importance fifteen qualities are given by Finnish companies when they select their employees. For each criterion the

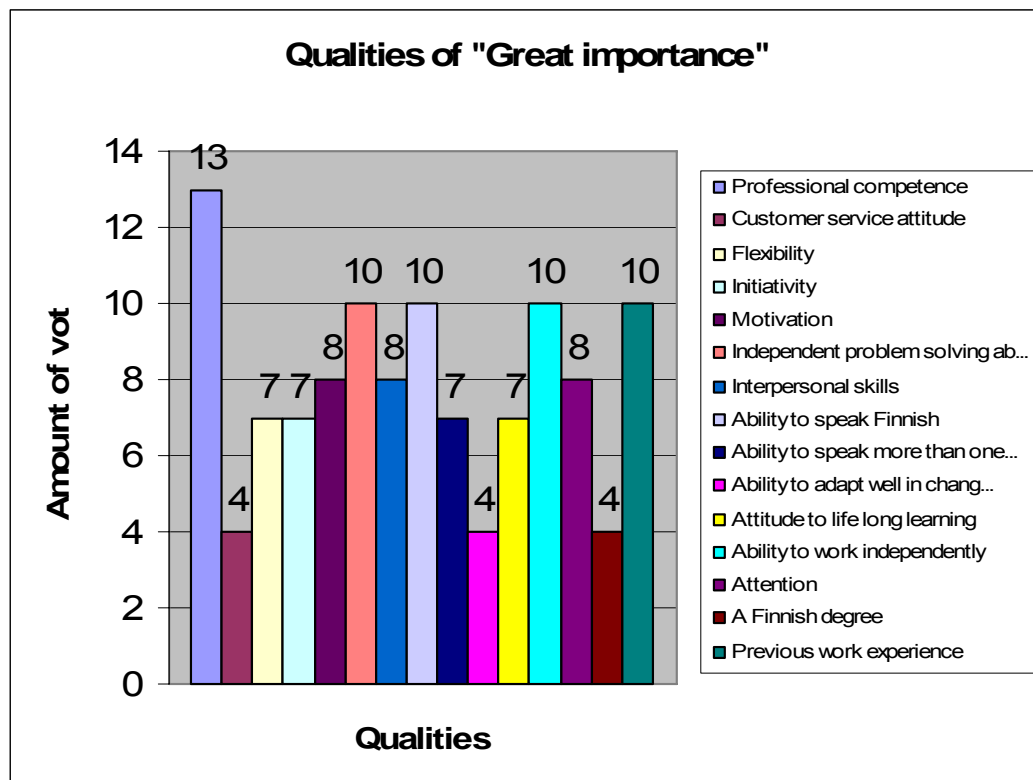
student had to choose one option between “Great importance” – “Some importance” – “Minor importance” – “No importance at all”.

### Qualities of “Great importance”

The figure 6 shows us how many votes of “Great importance” were given to each criterion. As many as 76% of the students believe employers give the criterion “Professional competence” a great importance. “Independent problem solving ability”, “Ability to speak Finnish”, “Ability to work independently” and “Previous work experience” were chosen with the second highest support of 59%.

Half of the qualities were given the support of 41%-47%. “Customer service attitude”, “Ability to adapt well in changes” and “A Finnish degree” were given a “Great importance” by only 24%.

**Figure 6 - Qualities of “Great importance”**

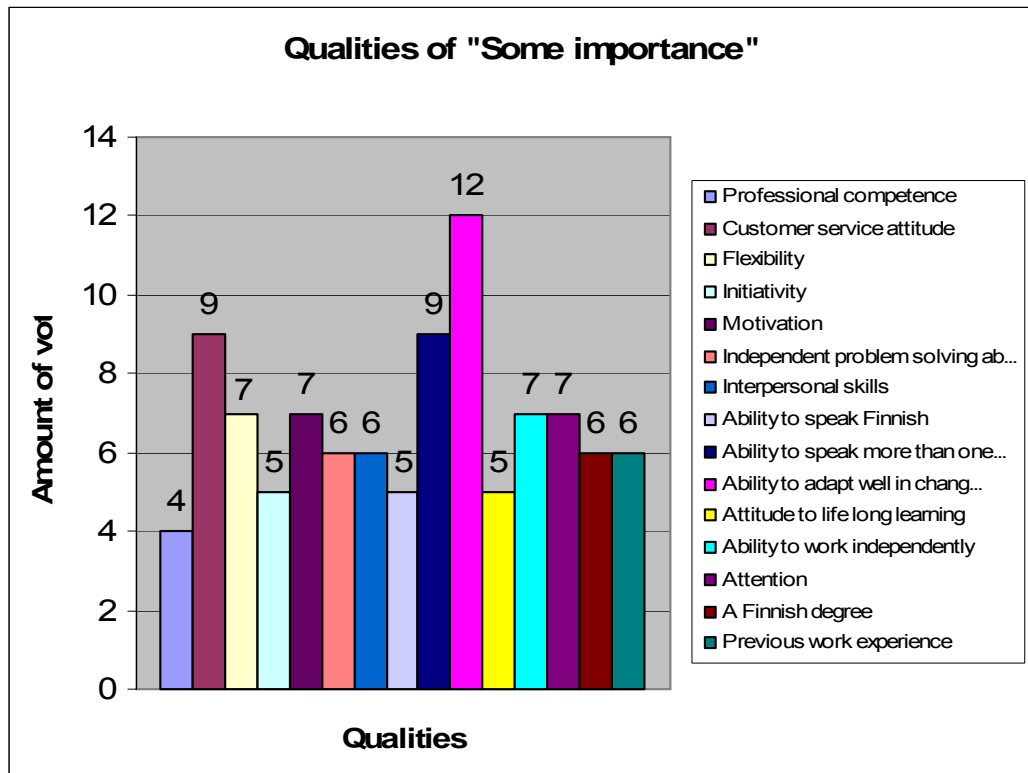


## Qualities of "Some importance"

71% of the students believe that "Ability to adapt well in changes" as a personal criterion of a candidate has neither more nor less than "Some importance" to Finnish employers when new employees are selected. "Customer service attitude" and "Ability to speak more than one language" got also a high support of 53%.

All the rest of the qualities got fairly similar amount of support from 36% to 41%.

**Figure 7 - Qualities of "Some importance"**

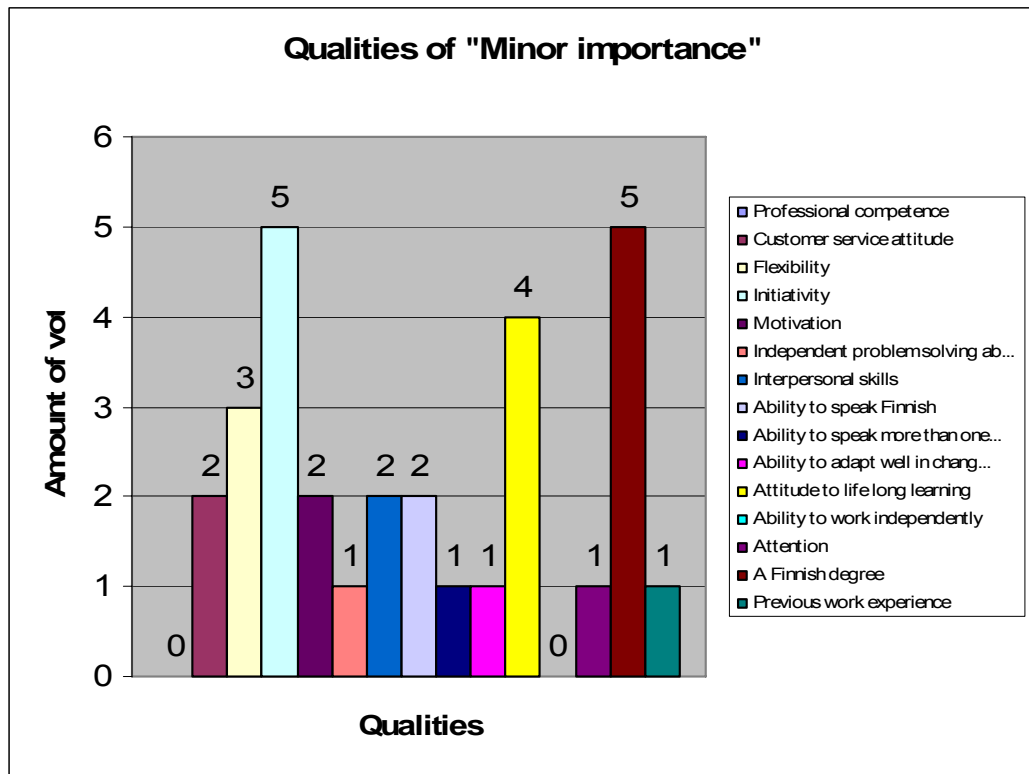


## Qualities of "Minor importance" and "No importance at all"

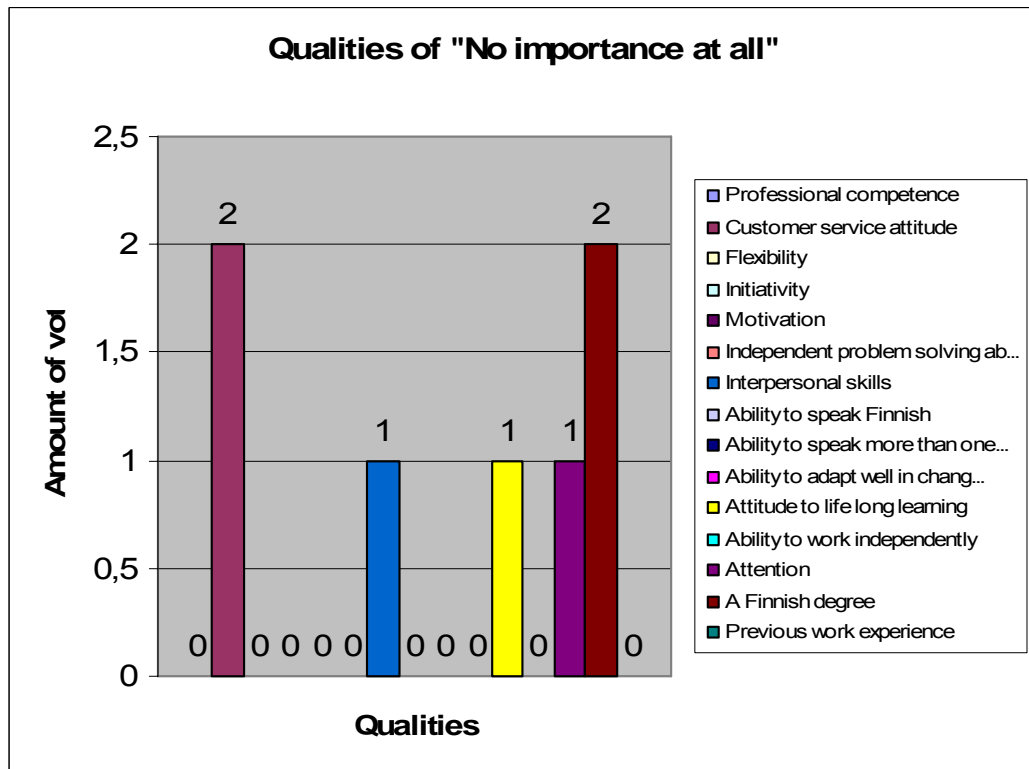
Interesting results are found when studying the qualities with "Minor importance". All seventeen votes were given to "Professional competence" and "Ability to work independently" already in the categories of higher value. This is why their places are empty in the last two categories.

Most of the qualities were seen with "Minor importance" only by 12% of the students or less. This means, of course, that most of the qualities are seen as being more important. In any case, a few qualities are thought to have "Minor importance" in the eyes of employees which are "Attitude to life long learning", "Initiative" and "A Finnish degree".

**Figure 8 - Qualities of "Minor importance"**



**Figure 9 - Qualities of "No importance at all"**





### 3.2.6. Strengths, weaknesses and opportunities as a job seeker

The questionnaire had also a question about one's strengths, weaknesses and opportunities as a job seeker in the area of business administration in the Pirkanmaa region. Only some people took some time to think about this question and to write it down. The answers to this open question probably also reflect thoughts of many other foreign BBA students.

*!Biggest weakness seems to be not being a Finn. Mostly, Finnish companies prefer to hire Finns only. But I would actually see it as my strength that I am a foreigner with an international background."*

*"Strengths: Flexibility, used to working in international environment, good grades, communication skills Weaknesses: not-high-enough level of Finnish Opportunities: Knowledge and language skills about a potentially new destination for the Finnish business; getting employed by a Finnish employer, because of having education received in Finland"*

*"strengths:languages, maturity, responsibility... weaknesses:non-Finn, computing skills... opportunities:not sure."*

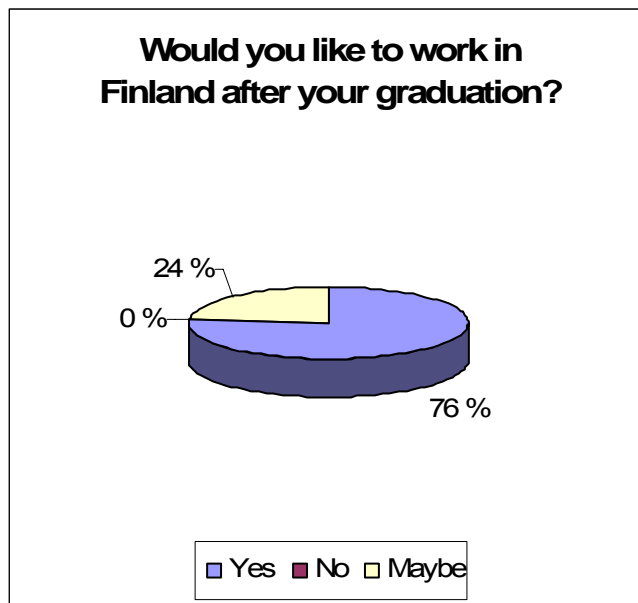
*"My biggest weakness is that I am from a country where there is no such a thing as "summer jobs" so I dont have the experience that many have over me. My strenghts and opportunities is that I speak enlgish fluently, Spanish is my native language and I have intermediate level in french and basics in finnish"*

*"S High responsibility W No work experences O My different education background"*

### 3.2.7. Would you like to work in Finland after your graduation?

The students that took part in the survey filling can be seen very similar to each other in their desires. 76% of the students answered "Yes" when they were asked if they would like to work in Finland after their graduation. None were against this idea with a "No" answer. 24% of the students are not sure about this possibility as the majority and they answered "Maybe".

**Figure 10** - Would you like to work in Finland after your graduation?



This question was followed with an open question “Why? What does it depend on?”. The answers are very rational and they may be reflected to the first part of the question.

*“I always wanted to live here in Finland for the rest of my life”*

*“Where I will find a job”*

*“Where I find a job suitable for me”*

*“Because I like being here.”*

*“Family and age of kids.”*

*“I came to Finland to study my career, since I started it I had in my head I wanted to stay here in Finland. I like the life here, the worklife in general and I like working in an international environment and many companies in Finland offer that. It depends on me finding a job so I can prolong my staying in Finland. If possible, for many years!”*

### **3.3. BBA Alumni**

The third and the last questionnaire was made to BBA alumni, in other words to BBA graduates. The survey was sent to thirteen alumni of whom seven filled in the survey. The answering percentage was 54%. The survey was meant to be sent to a larger alumni group but the lack of contact details did not allow it. With the help of the study secretaries and my own contacts contact details of these seventeen were found.

The sample composed of 43% of females and 57% males. 71% of them are originally from different countries in Europe and the rest, 29%, are

from North America. 71% of the alumni live currently in Finland of whom 14% work in the area of business administration and 42% in other areas. One of five of the 71% lives in Finland but does not work currently. 29% of the alumni live abroad working in the area business administration.

**Table 9** - Do you work in the area of BA? \* Do you live/work in Finland? Crosstabulation

|                            |     |                                     | Do you live/work in Finland?    |  |       | Total  |
|----------------------------|-----|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|-------|--------|
|                            |     |                                     | Yes, I live and work in Finland | Yes, I live but do not work in Finland | No    |        |
| Do work in the area of BA? | Yes | Count                               | 1                               | 0                                      | 2     | 3      |
|                            |     | % within Do work in the area of BA? | 33,3%                           | ,0%                                    | 66,7% | 100,0% |
|                            | No  | Count                               | 3                               | 1                                      | 0     | 4      |
|                            |     | % within Do work in the area of BA? | 75,0%                           | 25,0%                                  | ,0%   | 100,0% |
| Total                      |     | Count                               | 4                               | 1                                      | 2     | 7      |
|                            |     | % within Do work in the area of BA? | 57,1%                           | 14,3%                                  | 28,6% | 100,0% |

25% from the alumni that live and work in Finland are “Very satisfied” and another 25% are “Somewhat satisfied” with their current jobs. Half of the alumni working in Finland are “Somewhat dissatisfied” with their jobs.

Five of seven alumni answered directly “Yes” when they were asked if they planned to stay in Finland after graduation. Reasons to stay were a good job opportunities and family matters.

*“good job market situation”*

*“The challenge to make it as a foreigner abroad and to find the own limits.”*

*“my social environment and girlfriend”*

*“I'm married to a Finnish man.”*

*“I met my wife at school. We got married and decided to stay here because of her career. Luckily I ended up finding something somewhat ok to do for work here.”*

One graduate chose “It was an alternative” as a response and another one declared clearly “No”. On the other hand, reasons for leaving were the difficult language and the lack of opportunities in the employment markets.

*“The job opportunities in Finland are very scarce in Finland for foreigners. The mentality of the Finns is not very open to accept foreigners.”*

*“Language - Finnish is too difficult to master!”*

### 3.3.1. The quality of tutoring offered by TAMK

The survey question about the satisfaction towards the quality of tutoring offered by TAMK in the area of seeking employment during one's studies got an unanimous answer. The majority of the alumni of whom 57% graduated in 2006, 29% in 2005 and 14% before 2005 agreed with a little over 71% that the tutoring was of "Poor" quality. Only some 29% thought it was "Satisfactory", but not "Excellent" or "Good". None of the alumni answered "Not able to say" which means that everyone had a clear opinion on this issue.

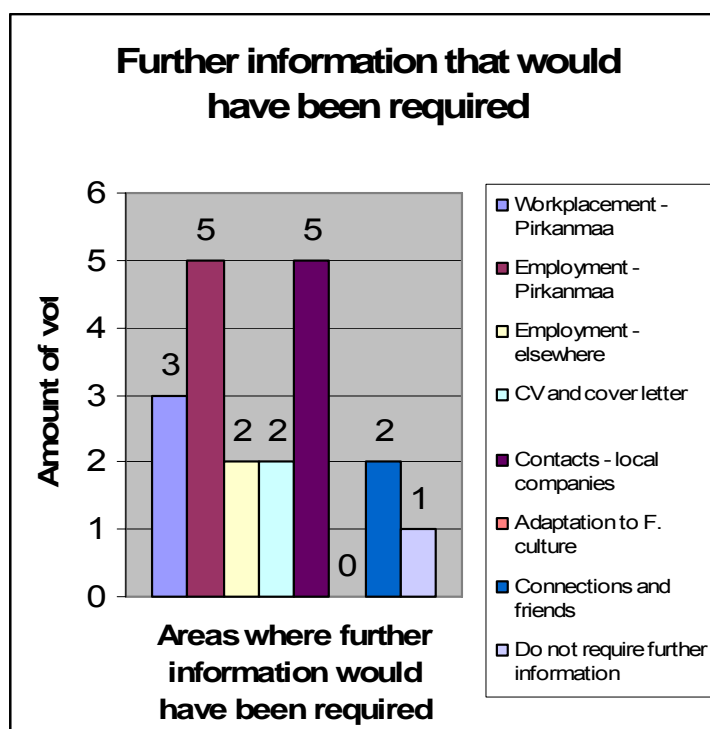
**Table 10** - Year of graduation \* Quality of tutoring at TAMK Crosstabulation

|                    |                             |                             | Quality of tutoring at TAMK |        | Total  |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|--------|--------|
|                    |                             |                             | Satisfactory                | Poor   |        |
| Year of graduation | 2006                        | Count                       | 2                           | 2      | 4      |
|                    |                             | % within Year of graduation | 50,0%                       | 50,0%  | 100,0% |
|                    | 2005                        | Count                       | 0                           | 2      | 2      |
|                    |                             | % within Year of graduation | ,0%                         | 100,0% | 100,0% |
|                    | Before 2005                 | Count                       | 0                           | 1      | 1      |
|                    |                             | % within Year of graduation | ,0%                         | 100,0% | 100,0% |
| Total              | Count                       | 2                           | 5                           | 7      |        |
|                    | % within Year of graduation | 28,6%                       | 71,4%                       | 100,0% |        |

### 3.3.2. The information that would have been required

As the Figure 11 shows, the BBA alumni would have needed to receive more information on the issues "How to find employment in the Pirkanmaa region" and "How to make contacts with local companies during one's studies", both chosen by 71% of the alumni. 43% would have wanted further information also about "How to find work placement in the Pirkanmaa region". More assistance on "How to find employment elsewhere", "How to write an effective CV and cover letter", and "How to make connections and friendships with local people" were chosen by 29% of the group of respondents. No one had needed help in "How to adapt to Finnish culture". Only 14% did not require any further information.

**Figure 11 - Further information that would have been required**



After the question “In which of the following areas would you have liked TAMK to provide more information?” there was an open text space for open comments about issues related to this question. Many good comments were given that show the needs that some alumni had when they still studied at TAMK.

*“Of the 3 options I chose, I would like to emphasize: How to make contacts with local companies during your studies”*

*“As a polytechnic it is expected that connection with the business environment are made during the studies. Nothing of that kind could be found during our programme (bba2000)”*

*“I do not think TAMK should have to help make friendships but maybe more connections to companies etc. would be a big help to someone planning to stay , live, and work in Finland.”*

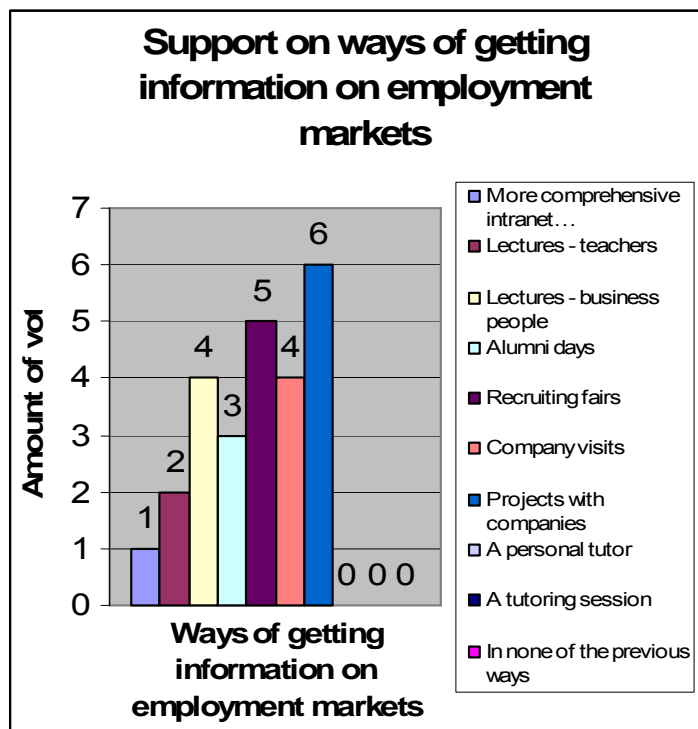
*“In my opinion the TAMK education is rather diversified and offers a wide range of courses. On the other hand I felt quite lost regarding the search of a work placement as the polytechnic education appears to be not what Finnish companies are looking for.”*

### **3.3.3. Ways of getting information - Support**

“Projects with companies” got the highest support of alumni as a way of getting more information on the employment markets in the Pirkanmaa region. It was chosen by 86% of the alumni. A support of more than a half of the alumni got another three suggestions: “Recruiting fairs” by 71%,

and both “Informative lectures given by business managers and other professionals” and “Company visits” by 57% of alumni. “Informative lectures by teachers of TAMK” and “More comprehensive intranet/ Internet pages” did not get much support, only from 14 to 29%. “A native Finn as your personal tutor while you studied at TAMK” nor “A tutoring session per study year with a teacher to discuss how to enhance your employment opportunities” were given any interest as tools to get more information on the employment-related issues. Each answerer agreed at least on some alternative, as no one chose the point “In none of the previous ways. I believe the ways of assistance provided by TAMK were functional”. In other words, 100% of the tutors thought that at least one of the alternatives would have been an efficient way to get prepared better for the future.

**Figure 12 - Support on ways of getting information**



An open comment box after this question produced a few personal comments.

*“I do not think Alumni sharing thier stories helps at all. I have attended those and did not gain anything from that. Those that came had special situations and jobs that were not common or normal to get without good connections. Sure it makes the school look good, but does not really help the average student find employment.”*

*“I regard the finnish language essential for finding a work placement. Thus I recommend the introduction of a minimum grade in the finnish language for foreign students which is based on communication skills rather than on theory. Absolvents need to know which bundle of skills they need to have in order to succeed in Finland.”*

### **3.3.4. The work placement and the career**

Four of seven (57%) alumni did their work placements in Finland. The rest of the alumni that took part in the survey did their work placements in Malaysia, Argentina and the United Kingdom. Of those who made their work placements in Finland 29% said it helped them "(Yes,) directly" to find employment in Finland. One of two of these graduates works in the area of business administration. A work placement in Finland helped "(Yes,) indirectly" 25% of the alumni to get employed and another 25% "(No,) not at all". Of this 29% of alumni who said the work placement helped them does not work currently in the area of business administration.

### **3.3.5. Satisfaction with the BBA degree**

In the category from very satisfied – somewhat satisfied – somewhat dissatisfied – very dissatisfied, 14% of the alumni ranked his/her satisfaction towards the BBA degree gained in TAMK "Very satisfied". This percentage graduated in 2006. From the same graduation year, 50% were "Somewhat satisfied" with their degree and 25% "Somewhat dissatisfied". On the other hand, all graduates from the year 2005 are "Somewhat dissatisfied". 100% of alumni graduated before 2005 are "Somewhat satisfied" with the qualifications received in TAMK. These results show us that alumni are generally reasonably satisfied with the BBA degree. There is no direct relation between satisfaction and the year of graduation.

From the alumni that work currently in the area of business administration 33% are satisfied with the BBA degree studied at TAMK, but the majority, 67%, of them are "Somewhat dissatisfied".

### **3.3.6. A piece of advice**

The alumni were also asked to give some advice to current students that still have the employment seeking of after graduation before them. Perhaps the following advice should be taken into consideration by current students, as the alumni have experienced at least some employment seeking.

*"Just keep looking for jobs and asking from different companies. Make companies aware of the benefits given to them by hiring you."*

*"Finnish (almost) fluently, written and spoken."*

*"move abroad, na sorry shouldn't be so negative. Be active with sending of applications and work on your Personal/business network during your school time. This is helpfull in the future. Other things could be checking branches and companies where you would like to work. Analyse them and you could arrange your own schoolproject for a certain course. Much easier to get in and great future reference. We as foreigner have something to offer the narrow-minded finnish business life and they are*

*going to realize it very soon. If they don't YOU have to make sure the message gets through."*

*"Don't give up, it is very hard to find a job! Try all your connections, that could help. Also the Finnish language is a must!"*

*"Start looking early. Make as many contacts as possible and search, call, and search and call some more. Try to work during your studies in a company that you think could possibly provide you employment after you graduate. Even if its not exactly what you want to do after graduating it still will give you useful contacts for the future. Do not just hang out with the other foreign students at school. Make friends with Finns and you will get ideas and contacts from them. Also learn Finnish! It doesn't get you a job but it sure impresses people and can't hurt."*

## **4. Final Conclusions**

### **4.1. Companies – the potential employers**

#### **Foreign employees and trainees**

Companies that have the largest number of foreign employees currently employ 10-49 of them. These companies have from 250 to over 3000 employees in their place of business. One third of the companies receive over one hundred applications from foreigners per year. Companies of all sizes receive at least from one to two applications per year. In the Pirkanmaa region nearly half of the companies have from ten to 49 foreign applicants yearly and over one hundred applications are received by 27% of the companies.

The number of foreign employees that a company has currently may be seen to have some relation to the number of foreign applicants the company has per year. Three of five companies with 10-49 foreign employees currently receive yearly 10-49 applications from foreigners and the only company that has more than a hundred foreign employees at the moment has also over one hundred applications from foreigners. In any case, this ratio of foreign employees to the number of applications from foreigners has not much application in all cases.

Nationality does not matter when new employees are being recruited. Only for 8% of the companies do Finnish speaking skills rise as a very important issue.

69% of the companies have or have had foreign work trainees. The most common reasons for not having them was their lack of proficiency in Finnish speaking skills. Most of the companies that are used to have trainees have them less than five per year.



## Future

The future in the Finnish employment markets looks positive for foreign employment seekers. Nearly 77% of the companies believe that their companies need foreign employees in the future. A little over 15% of the companies declare that they may need more foreigners to be employed in the future. In the Pirkanmaa region the future outlook of the need of foreign professionals looks also good. Around 91% of companies will definitely or possibly need foreign employees. Only 9% do not have employment to offer to foreign employment seekers. The results show that 100% of companies outside the Pirkanmaa region will need foreigners' know-how.

Employment markets in business administration will offer employment opportunities to a large and variable group of foreigners in the future. The business representatives appointed their wish to get people from Asia and Europe in general, and also from Brazil, The Arab Emirates (Dubai) and Russia. This fact is good news for the TAMK and its students, as most of the current foreign BBA students are from the countries mentioned. So, there is a need for foreigners. Now the foreigners have to make their ways to those businesses.

## Criteria

The companies assigned a value of "Great importance" or "Some importance" to most of the recruitment criteria. If a criterion, for example, received 77% of its votes in the first of these categories, the remaining 23% were assumed to have been given in the second category, or other way around.

There are some qualities that became more prominent, compared to the others, by getting deviant support in the two categories with most importance. First of all "A Finnish degree" was not chosen by any company as being of "Great importance", and it received only 46% of its votes as a value of "Some importance". It was chosen by 31% as "Minor importance", leaving a support of 23% to "No importance at all". This means that a Finnish degree is not an important recruiting criterion of employees in these companies. This outcome sides with the research results of Söderqvist (2005: 47). Employers have understood that not only Finnish degrees are valuable and competitive. In any case, it is certain that it does not harm the chances of a foreigner to get employment in Finland. For 54% of companies, the "Ability to speak Finnish" has "Some importance" as a recruiting criterion, but it has "Great importance" only for 15%. It also has the highest support as a criterion of "Minor importance". From this, we may draw the conclusion that only few of the companies employ only Finnish speakers.

Every foreign student, and why not a Finn too, should study themselves and evaluate their level of the following qualities: Professional competence, customer service attitude, flexibility, initiative, motivation,

independent problem- solving skills, ability to speak more than one language, Attitude to life-long learning, ability to work independently, attention, and previous work experience, A foreign BBA student who wants to become employed in Finland should not remain passive, thinking that they are good enough. We must keep improving our capabilities and learn new ones. By demonstrating our capabilities we may reach higher goals. There is such a high level of competition for jobs that at least foreigners, if not all applicants, should definitely find their core competencies by what they will be noticed by employers. Even though the Finnish language is not such an important criterion, learning it greatly helps in getting a job and in better integrating into Finnish society.

### **Cooperation with TAMK**

62% of the companies of the survey agreed that they have or may have an interest to have cooperation projects with TAMK. This is a good matter as 77% of the companies believe that different kinds of cooperation projects with polytechnic students may grow good employer-employee-connections in the future and the rest 23% think it may be possible. When these results are looked from the base of Söderqvist's research (2005), that companies believe that polytechnical universities have helped their business activities to internationalize, it can be assumed that this kind of cooperation could be very efficient for both parties. This interest of these companies to cooperate with TAMK should be used as a possibility to diversify the courses offered and, most importantly, to help foreign students build as many bridges as possible between them and Finnish companies.

### **4.2. Current students**

One of the results of this survey proves that the tutoring offered by TAMK in the employment-related issues could be of a better quality. 35% of current students voted it "Poor" of quality. 18% agreed that it is of "Good" quality overall and it was said to be "Satisfactory" by 29% of the students. 18% were "Not able to say". Looking at it from the study year perspective, the current 3rd year students are mostly dissatisfied with it.

Also the satisfaction with information available on the Internet/ intranet could have been higher. Nearly half of the current foreign students say there is not enough information online. In any case 47% of the students think there is. According to the comments of some students, there could be still more information available, not only in Finnish but also in English. Another comment gives some ideas on what else the intranet could offer:

*"that there would be some contacts, like how to contact the chamber of commerce, how to apply for the job and companies that have had before international students for their traineeship....."*

## Further information required

Current BBA students are clearly interested in finding employment in the Pirkanmaa region and for that reason would like to receive further information on various topics. This may be seen from the following results: *“How to make contacts with local companies during one’s studies”* got voted by 82% of the students, *“How to find work placement in the Pirkanmaa region”* by 65% and the option *“How to find employment in the Pirkanmaa region”* by 59% of the students.

This peak group of three options with the most support show us how the BBA students are seriously willing to find more and better information on these employment-related issues. These results also speak for the fact that foreign students are interested in finding work placements and further employment in the Pirkanmaa region. They want to be better equipped for the employment markets in the Pirkanmaa region and in the whole Finland.

One reason for the high support of 41% of the students on *“How to find employment elsewhere”* may be that some foreign students do not for instance, have, a system of summer jobs in their countries, as one of the student mentions. This means that there may be many students at TAMK who do not have previous experience of looking for a job. It can be assumed that if TAMK provided information on how to find employment and work placement in the Pirkanmaa region in a way that students would get a better insight into it, they could use this knowledge in seeking all kinds of employment wherever they might be.

Even though the questions *“How to make connections and friends with local people”* supported by 35% and *“How to adapt to Finnish culture”* by 29% do not directly have anything to do with improving their employment situation in the Pirkanmaa region; indirectly they have much to do with it. It is known that connections and friendships do not only help us to enjoy our lives better but also make professional connections and in some cases find employment. When students feel more confident within the Finnish culture, they also end up staying in Finland easier.

Obviously CV and cover letter are already taught rather well in TAMK, as this option was chosen by only 29%, like the option *“How to adapt to Finnish culture”*. On the other hand, it could affect positively foreign students at TAMK if they were told more about Finnish culture and customs, also those who do not have the need to know more about it. This way they could have a better understanding of Finnish people and their surroundings, make easier connections with locals which would lead to better network. This again could ease finding employment.

Two students state that they do not require more information from TAMK. This may be understood that 12% of the students are satisfied with the information that they gain now from TAMK and from elsewhere.

## **Ways of getting information**

TAMK should take into a consideration how to get more information on employment markets to its foreign students and what are the most efficient ways to do it. As the best ways to do this were voted by the students “Projects with companies” by nearly three fourths of all votes, “Informative lectures by business managers and other professionals”, “Recruiting fairs” and “Company visits” all three by majority of students. These popular four ways are seen to be the best ways of getting the extra information needed. Each of them offers direct face-to-face contact with business people, connections and at least some possibilities to show your abilities without being forgotten in the CV piles. These results show how the students want to see, hear and make real contacts with business people.

It can be assumed that the 47% of the students that are interested in having a personal Finnish tutor for the study time are interested in making more contacts with the local students than they have been able for some reasons. This kind of a tutoring relationship could easily help the foreign student to get more involved with other Finnish students and activities, and this way probably make more connections towards employment fields.

“Alumni days” received the lowest support as a way to get information on employment markets. It may be that the concept is not as functional as it could be, in order to be an efficient way to get information.

## **Qualities**

The part of the survey where the students got to imagine the employer’s view of how much importance fifteen qualities are given by Finnish companies when they recruit their employees received a variety of answers. Nearly all fifteen qualities were seen as of “Great importance” or “Some importance”. “Professional competence” got the highest score by 76% as a criterion of “Great importance”.

“Initiative”, “A Finnish degree” and “Attitude to life-long learning” were chosen as the qualities with most support as “Of minor importance”. The category of “No importance at all” was given slightly more support by the students than by the companies. “Customer service attitude” and “A Finnish degree” were seen to have no importance at all by 12% both and “Interpersonal skills”, “Attitude to life-long learning” and “Attention” by 6%.

## **The self valuation as a job seeker**

Current students are aware of their strengths, weaknesses and opportunities as job-seekers. One common view of a weakness is not being a Finn and having no work experience. As the conclusions from the survey questions show, being a non-Finn is actually not such a big weakness. We may be sure that the employment markets have much

more to offer for Finns. It is not the question of being a foreigner, but rather the Finnish-speaking skill of foreigners is not the -main reason for this. Once a foreigner speaks Finnish in this Finnish-speaking country, it is certain that there will be much more opportunities open for him/her. What comes to not having any work experience, students should try to get whatever kind of work to have that experience to help them to find their first good job.

All current BBA students want or could stay to work in Finland after their graduation. Many of them explain their willingness to stay with the fact that they like to be in Finland and that they have always wanted to live in Finland. The staying of those students that could stay in Finland depends on where they find employment.

### **4.3. BBA alumni**

71% of the alumni currently live in Finland of whom 14% work in the area of business administration and 42% in other areas. 25% of the alumni living and working in Finland are "Very satisfied" and another 25% are "Somewhat satisfied" with their current jobs. Half of the alumni working in Finland are "Somewhat dissatisfied" with their jobs. The reasons for staying in Finland to work were family reasons, a good employment market situation, and *"The challenge to make it as a foreigner abroad and to find the own limits."* as one alumnus explains it.

#### **Quality of tutoring**

The majority of the alumni agreed with a little over 71% that the tutoring was of "Poor" quality. Only some 29% thought it was "Satisfactory", but not "Excellent" or "Good". None of the alumni answered "Not able to say" which means that everyone had a clear opinion on this issue.

When we examine the Table 5.18 we may draw some conclusions of this matter. Of the alumni that graduated in 2005 or before that all were dissatisfied with the tutoring. Of the alumni who had graduated in 2006, however, 50% found the tutoring of a satisfactory level. So, it may be that the tutoring has developed in a better direction and to a more satisfying level. In any case, these numbers show that if the tutoring is now the same as it was in the past years, some improvements should be made in order to offer foreign BBA students better preparedness to the Finnish employment markets.

#### **Information that would have been required**

BBA alumni would have needed to receive more information on the issues "how to find employment in the Pirkanmaa region" and "How to make contacts with local companies during one's studies", both chosen by 71% of the alumni. The second suggestion was also mentioned in an open comment as a big help for those that planned to stay, live and work in Finland. 43% would have wanted further information also about "How to find work placement in the Pirkanmaa region". From these results it can

be assumed that if these areas were better informed, alumni would have been more satisfied.

The other information suggestions in the survey were chosen by 29-43% of the alumni. Because these suggestions were not that popular, it may be understood that there are students that would have needed more information on these subjects also. This could have been caused by the absence from the informative lectures or because of a lacking flow of information. No one needed more information on "How to adapt to Finnish culture". 14% did not require any further information.

### **Ways of getting information - Support**

86% of the alumni gave their support to "Projects with companies" as the most efficient way that they could have received information on the employment markets in the Pirkanmaa region. "Recruiting fairs" by 71%, and both "Informative lectures given by business managers and other professionals" and "Company visits" by 57% of alumni were chosen as the next best ways to get information.

These numbers prove that these ways of getting information are seen to be the best ways by alumni, of whom most are already in business life and know what would have helped them to get prepared for the employment markets. These results should be taken into consideration when planning future tutoring programmes in TAMK.

Even though "Alumni days" received the support of 43% of the alumni, one alumnus noted in an open comment that s/he had not gained anything from alumni days; that there were only alumni with special stories in the event, this not helping the average student to find employment. Alumni days may, of course, help many students to get information and to encourage them to new employment ideas, but the organizers should always think how, for example, alumni days would help as many students as possible.

### **Satisfaction with the BBA degree**

These survey results show us that alumni are generally reasonably satisfied with the BBA degree. There is no direct relation between satisfaction and dissatisfaction and the year of graduation.

Of the alumni that work currently in the area of business administration 33% are satisfied with the BBA degree studied at TAMK, but the majority, 67%, of them are "Somewhat dissatisfied".

### **A piece of advice**

The good advice that alumni gave to those current students that are willing to find employment in Finland in the future should be considered and would be good to be put into practice. The alumni emphasize the

importance of learning the Finnish language and making connections and friends with Finnish students, finding one's strengths and getting the message through to the employers, and not giving up easily when applications are rejected. It can be assumed that any foreign student that follows these suggestions will get far.

#### **4.4. *The mutual relation between students, alumni and companies***

All foreign students that study the degree of BBA in TAMK are willing to stay in Finland and find employment. Their opinion on the quality of tutoring offered by TAMK in the employment related issues is "Poor" for 36% and "Satisfactory" by 29%. The students are eager to get much more information about how to make contacts with local companies during the studies, employment markets in the Pirkanmaa region and how to find a work placement in the Pirkanmaa region. Ways to reach this information that got a high support among the students were for example, cooperation projects between TAMK and companies, Informative lectures by business managers and other professionals and Company visits. This should be possible as by the survey results 31% of the companies are interested definitely and another 31% possibly in cooperation with TAMK.

Also BBA alumni agree by 71% of votes that the tutoring offered by TAMK was of "Poor" quality during their studies. Subjects on what most of them (71%) would have wanted to receive more information were "How to find employment in the Pirkanmaa region" and "How to make contacts with local companies during one's studies". The means to receive the information required, that got most voted by 86% of votes was "Projects with companies". Also "Recruiting fairs", "Informative lectures given by business managers and other professionals" and "Company visits" were given the support of more than half of the alumni.

The Internet/ intranet sites are also found to have not enough information by the majority of current students. From this the conclusion may be drawn that the information on intranet should be more available and easier to access to the students in English. They could also be taught more what may be found from there.

Students did not find all recruitment criteria mentioned in the survey as important as companies did and the other way around. Because companies are the ones that decide what they want, students should re-evaluate these criteria in one's mind by studying the opinions of companies, and orientate to be what employers expect from their employees. Foreign employment seekers should be especially conscious of the criteria that companies give a "Great importance". Table 6.1 indicates what criteria were given a "Great importance" by students and companies. The most votes of "Minor importance" were given by the companies to the quality "A Finnish degree" and "Ability to speak Finnish". In the category "No importance at all" companies gave votes only to the quality "A Finnish degree". Good news to foreign employment seekers is

that 31% of the companies give the quality “Ability to speak Finnish” only “Minor importance” and 23% “No importance at all”.

**Table 11** - The relation of the criteria with the highest support as “Great importance”

| Students | Criteria with highest support as "Great importance" | Companies |
|----------|---|-----------|
| x        | Professional competence                             | x         |
|          | Customer service attitude                           |           |
|          | Flexibility   |           |
|          | Initiative  | x         |
|          | Motivation  | x         |
| x        | Independent problem solving ability                 |           |
|          | Interpersonal skills                                |           |
| x        | Ability to speak Finnish                            |           |
|          | Ability to speak more than one language             |           |
|          | Ability to adapt well in changes                    |           |
|          | Attitude to life long learning                      | x         |
| x        | Ability to work independently                       |           |
|          | Attention   |           |
|          | A Finnish degree                                    |           |
| x        | Previous work experience                            | x         |

The satisfaction towards the BBA degree differs. 14% of the alumni graduated in TAMK are “Very satisfied” with it, whereas 43% are “Somewhat satisfied” and another 43% “Somewhat dissatisfied”. From the alumni that work currently in the area of business administration 33% are satisfied with the BBA degree studied at TAMK, but the majority, 67%, of them are “Somewhat dissatisfied”. This matter should be studied better so that it could be improved and that current and future students could be more satisfied with their degrees in the future.

## 5. Recommendations to the Customer

**Ideas that TAMK BBA programme may utilize in developing its tutoring**

### Programme in Self-development

I support strongly that the orientation programme towards a better knowledge of one’s development as a job-seeker that is currently in the planning phase would be run by the BBA programme as soon as possible. This programme would not overtake the current compulsory work placement orientation that take place during the second year, but would provide more support for students in self- development during the first and the second years. The first year students would get tutoring group meetings run by two teachers of TAMK where individuals could wake up in the sense of how they may develop themselves during their study years to be competent job seekers in the future. There would not be separate meetings for Finnish and foreigners. This would be a real possibility where foreigners and Finns may learn from each other. For the second year students there would be a virtual course on a deeper tutoring



on finding one's strengths and getting more prepared for finding employment. At this point students would not get any credits for the course which may change at some stage. This kind of career planning would be totally optional for the students that are seriously interested in planning their career.

A tutoring programme like this would definitely broaden one's insight as a job seeker. The meetings during the first year could include visitors, for example, business managers and other professionals et cetera to bring the message from the real business to students. Discussions between Finnish and foreign students could mutual expand their outlook in the meetings. If this tutoring programme will not be run, something similar should be planned.

## **Networking**

I suggest that TAMK would organize more new and already existing courses in cooperation with local companies. In these courses students would get in touch with existing businesses and would do projects for real purposes. This kind of cooperation already exists but it could be increased in order to get practical studies. At the same time, business managers and others could also get to see the professional skills of students and could find future employees. Foreign BBA students would also hear directly from the employing side what they are expected as foreign job seekers. This would help the foreigners to get prepared better.

TAMK could encourage the student association to organize different activities that would improve its associates' skills in the employment related matters. This kind of activities could be, for example, visits in the "Ensimetri" preliminary course for entrepreneurs and different businesses, where they could learn more about the employment markets and so on. Businesses and other organizations would probably rather receive student associations for a visit than individuals. The foreign students could take part in these events and get activities and contacts that they would not maybe get from the directly school-related studies. Also the alumni association could be encouraged to organize informative lectures and other events where current foreign students could get contacts with, for example, alumni from TAMK that already have built up their careers.

I suggest that if alumni days are held in the future, they would be of a concept where current students could hear many different kinds of stories from alumni and get in personal contact with them. Also business people could be invited there to share their expectations and to give advice on how to get prepared for the employment markets. Foreign BBA students could participate in the planning and why not also running the alumni days, in order to be able to have an influence on what they get from the alumni day. This kind of activity could, likewise, help in making contacts.

## **Information flow**

In general I suggest that all information that is provided by TAMK for its students and personnel in Finnish would also be always in English. There is still a large part of the information only in Finnish which can not be understood by all foreign students. The intranet would be much more efficient for the foreign BBA students if there was an English version of it to choose from. Also all e-mails that are sent to foreign students should be written in English, especially informative e-mails about fairs, meetings, events and so on. The contents of the intranet could be re-organized in order to find information needed easier.

I suggest that the web pages of TAMK could have more information directly without signing-in in the intranet. This information would be available for everyone. This kind of information pages could have more direct and up-to-date information about, for example, building your own CV, how to prepare yourself for an interview, have information on jobs and work placements available, self-evaluations, links and so on.

## **Finnish language studies**

I suggest that more study points could be received for studying Finnish also in other courses outside the TAMK. These study points could be approved as free choice studies or compulsory language studies. I also suggest that more practical Finnish would be taught in the Finnish courses offered by TAMK. Language courses often emphasize grammar, and less important matters. It would be important for foreign BBA degree students to get the daily Finnish vocabulary and grammar into practice that would encourage them for further studies. This was mentioned in the open comment of one alumnus who already has experience in the Finnish employment markets.

## **Orientation and tutoring**

I suggest that during the orientation week BBA programme would hold a special and versatile introductory day to the foreign students about Finnish culture and how to adapt in to it. This event could have an active programme and also a few lectures by teachers, tutors, foreign and Finnish students. The Finnish students could also take part in this programme, if so wanted. The foreigners could be encouraged this way to be active, make contacts and be open minded towards the Finnish way of thinking and doing from the right beginning of their studies at TAMK. In the following year these foreign students could help running the same orientation day for the next foreign degree students to pass on what they have learnt and to think on these issues once again and self develop a little more.

I suggest that the BBA tutors and/or why not also other student, would divide the foreign students in such manner that every foreigner would have a personal tutor. These tutors would be the ones to help the

foreigners adapt to the Finnish way of everyday life and to help them to get contacts with locals in the same way as there is currently the tutoring system to exchange students and trainees (Kinnunen 2006). These tutors would get the normal amount of credits for their tutoring and in addition they could get to know their fellow students better than they might otherwise. This kind of tutoring is not said to work out perfectly always, but it could give interesting friendships and help to understand one another, and in the best case help the foreigner to feel comfortable in Finland and even find employment.

## **Ideas that TAMK BBA programme may utilize in encouraging its foreign students to a deeper cultural integration**

### **Networking**

I suggest that TAMK BBA programme would encourage its foreign students to make as many connections as possible during one's studies. The more connections and friendships a student makes the more possibilities he/she has to get employed during one's studies at TAMK and after graduation. It does not really matter with who one makes them, as long as there are Finnish people among them. It is said not to be easy to make friendships with Finns, but if a foreigner shows them that he/she is interested in making friends, sooner or later they probably become good friends. It is good to remind foreigners that nearly always it has to be them that ask Finns to socialize. One should not stay waiting for Finns to make the first move, nor the second.

There are thousands of ways to make connections in Tampere and to get involved in different kind of activities. There are sport clubs, scout groups, churches, associations and so on that offer ways even for free to spend one's time and to make connections. One never knows who may be the link between him/her and his/her future job. If one wants to find it from Finland, it helps greatly if he/she knows many Finns.

I recommend that foreign students are encouraged to be generally socially very active. One should take part in all kinds of events that are organized for students. If there are recruiting fairs, alumni days, informative lectures by some business people, company visits, and so on, one should be active and visit them to hear, learn, know, and make connections. Whenever there is a possibility, one should go and talk with people, ask their contact information and become someone to them through a conversation. Again, one never knows who the link between he/her and his/her work placement or job. Foreign students can also be encouraged to be the ones to organize events or to gather people to organize them together, even though one is a foreigner. Indeed, an individual knows what one would like to get, so why could he/she also organize it, if someone else does not.

## Language

Foreign students should be encouraged more to learn to speak Finnish, even only the basics. It is a hard language that is not spoken by the people of any other country. In any case, it is possible to learn it. If one learns it, one's chances to get employed in Finland will be many times higher. Foreign students should be reminded to take seriously the Finnish courses offered by TAMK and take other Finnish courses if they have the possibility to do so. One should put into practice every word that he/she has learned and one day he/she will be able to have conversations in it. As the results of this survey show us, if companies do not expect the Finnish-speaking skill, at least they appreciate a foreign job-seeker much more if one has it.

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## 7. Appendices

### APPENDIX A

#### Yritykset rekrytoijina

*Tämän kyselyn avulla pyritään kartoittamaan sitä, mitä yritykset pitävät tärkeänä rekrytoidessaan työntekijöitä ja näkemään, mihin erityisesti ulkomaalaisia työnhakijoita tulisi rohkaista, jotta he työllistyisivät Pirkanmaalla ja Suomessa. Tämän ja kahden muun kyselyn perusteella suunnitellaan TAMKin BBA -koulutusohjelmalle ehdotus ulkomaalaisille opiskelijoille suunnatusta Suomen työelämään valmistavasta tutorointiohjelmasta.*

#### Taustatietoja

##### Paljonko teidän toimipaikassanne on henkilöstöä?

- 1-9
- 10-29
- 30-49
- 50-99
- 100-249
- 250-499
- 500-999
- 1000 tai enemmän

##### Kuinka monta ulkomaalaista on toimipaikassanne tällä hetkellä töissä?

- Ei yhtään
- 1-2
- 3-9
- 10-49
- 50-99
- 100 tai enemmän

##### Montako ulkomaalaista hakee teiltä töitä vuodessa?

- Ei yhtään
- 1-2
- 3-9
- 10-49
- 50-99
- 100 tai enemmän

## Yrityksenne rekrytointikriteerit

Miten tärkeitä ovat seuraavat rekrytointikriteerit yrityksellenne työntekijöitä valittaessa?  
Rastittakaa kunkin kriteerin kohdalla sopiva vaihtoehto arvoasteikolla Erittäin tärkeä –  
Tärkeä – Ei tärkeä – Ei ollenkaan tärkeä.

|  | E.Tärkeä                 | Tärkeä                   | Ei tärkeä                | E.O.T.                   |                          |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Ammattitaito   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          |
| Asiakaspalveluaittius                                | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          |
| Joustavuus   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          |
| Oma-aloitteisuus                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          |
| Motivaatio   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          |
| Itsenäinen ongelmanratkaisutaito                     |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
| Vuorovaikutustaidot                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          |
| Suomen kielen taito                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          |
| Muu kielitaito                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          |
| Sopeutuminen muutoksiin työssä<br>ja työympäristössä | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Halu oppia uutta                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          |
| Itsenäinen työote                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          |
| Huolellisuus   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          |
| Suomalainen tutkinto                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          |
| Aiempi työkokemus                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          |

Onko teille työnhakijan kansallisuudella väliä?

- Kyllä
- Ei

Mikäli vastasitte Kyllä, mikä sen tulisi olla ja miksi?

---

## Kansainvälisyys

Onko teidän yrityksessänne tällä hetkellä, tai ollut aiemmin, ulkomaalaisia työharjoittelijoita?

- Kyllä
- Satunnaisesti
- Ei

Mikäli vastasitte Kyllä: Mikä on heidän määrä/vuosi?

---

Mikäli vastasitte Ei: Mistä syystä?

---



**Onko teidän yrityksessänne tarvetta kansainvälisestä työvoimasta tulevaisuudessa esim. uusien markkina-alueiden myötä?**

- Kyllä
- Mahdollisesti
- En usko
- En osaa sanoa

**Mikäli vastasitte Kyllä: mistäköhän päin?**

---

## **Yhteistyö**

**Voisiko jonkinlainen projektiluontoinen yhteistyö niin suomalaisten kuin ulkomaalaisten korkeakouluopiskelijoiden kanssa luoda hyviä työntekijä-työnantaja –suhteita tulevaisuutta varten?**

- Kyllä
- Mahdollisesti
- En usko
- En osaa sanoa

**Onko teidän yrityksellänne kiinnostusta tehdä tällaista projektiluontoista yhteistyötä TAMKIn kanssa, mistä sekä teidän yrityksenne, että projektien korkeakouluoppilaat voisivat hyötyä?**

- Kyllä
- Mahdollisesti
- En usko
- En osaa sanoa

## **Neuvo**

**Minkälaisen neuvon antaisitte TAMKissa opiskelevalle/opiskelleelle ulkomaalaiselle työnhakijalle, joka haluaa töihin Pirkanmaalla?**

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## **APPENDIX B**

### **The availability and quality of tutoring offered by TAMK**

*This survey is to find out how satisfied you as a foreign BBA student are with the tutoring offered by TAMK in the area of seeking employment, and how you would like it to be improved. The results will be used to improve tutoring and hence help locate employment possibilities and raise awareness of job opportunities in the Pirkanmaa region for foreign BBA students , during the studies at TAMK and after graduation.*

### **General information**

#### **Gender**

- Male
- Female

**In which year of study are you?**

- 1<sup>st</sup>
- 2<sup>nd</sup>
- 3<sup>rd</sup>
- 4<sup>th</sup>
- 5<sup>th</sup> or more

**Where are you from?**

- Europe
- Africa
- Asia
- Oceania
- South & Central America
- North America

**Present**

**What is the overall quality of tutoring offered by TAMK regarding seeking employment?**

- Excellent
- Good
- Satisfactory
- Poor
- Not able to say

**Is there enough information available on TAMK's internet or intranet sites about the studies, work placements, employment opportunities etc?**

- Yes
- No
- Not able to say

**If no, what improvements do you recommend?**

---

---

**In which of the following areas would you like TAMK to provide more information? (Pick any you deem appropriate.)**

- How to find work placement in the Pirkanmaa region
- How to find employment in the Pirkanmaa region
- How to find employment elsewhere
- How to write an effective CV and cover letter
- How to make contacts with local companies during your studies
- How to adapt to Finnish culture
- How to make connections and friendships with local people
- Information on something else? Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

- I do not require further information from TAMK

**In which of the following ways would you like TAMK to assist you in finding future employment? (Pick any you deem appropriate.)**

- More comprehensive intranet/ Internet pages
  - Informative lectures by teachers of TAMK
  - Informative lectures by business managers and other professionals (from the Employment Office, different businesses etc.)
  - Alumni days with graduates sharing their experiences
  - Recruiting fairs
  - Company visits
  - Projects with companies
  - A native Finn as your personal tutor while you studied at TAMK
  - A tutoring session per study year with a teacher to discuss how to enhance your employment opportunities
  - In some other way? Please specify:
- 

In none of the previous ways. I believe the ways of assistance provided by TAMK are functional.

**From the employer's view**

**How much importance do you think the following qualities are given by Finnish companies when they select their employees? (Select best alternative in the category: Great importance – Some importance – Minor importance – No importance at all.)**

|                                       | Great                    | Some                     | Minor                    | NIA                      |                          |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Professional competence               |                          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Customer service attitude             |                          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Flexibility                           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          |
| Initiative                            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          |
| Motivation                            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          |
| Independent problem solving ability   |                          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Interpersonal skills                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          |
| Ability to speak Finnish              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          |
| Ability to speak more than 1 language |                          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Ability to adapt well in changes      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          |
| Attitude to life-long learning        |                          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Ability to work independently         |                          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Attention                             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          |
| A Finnish degree                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                          |
| Previous work experience              |                          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**What are your strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities as a job seeker in the area of business administration in the Pirkanmaa region?**

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## Future

Would you like to work in Finland after your graduation?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

Why? What does it depend on?

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## APPENDIX C

### The availability and quality of tutoring offered by TAMK

*This survey is to find out how satisfied you as a foreign BBA alumnus were during your studies with the tutoring offered by TAMK in the area of seeking employment, and where to your degree has taken you. The results will be used to improve tutoring and hence help locate employment possibilities and raise awareness of job opportunities in the Pirkanmaa region for foreign BBA students.*

### General information

#### Gender

- Male
- Female

#### Where are you from?

- Europe
- Africa
- Asia
- Oceania
- South & Central America
- North America

#### When did you graduate from TAMK?

- 2007
- 2006
- 2005
- Before 2005

#### Do you work currently in the area of your studies?

- Yes
- No

#### Do you live and work in Finland?

- Yes, I live and work in Finland.
- Yes, I live but do not work in Finland.

- Yes, I work but do not live in Finland.
- No.

**How satisfied are you with your current job?**

- Very satisfied
- Somewhat satisfied
- Somewhat dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied
- I do not work currently.

**During your studies at TAMK**

**Did you plan to stay in Finland to work?**

- Yes
- No
- It was an alternative.

**What influenced your staying/leaving, after all?**

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**In what country did you do your work placement?**

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**In case you did your work placement in Finland, has it helped you in finding further employment in Finland?**

- Yes, directly
- Yes, indirectly
- No, can not say so
- No, not at all
- I have not looked for jobs in Finland.

**What was the overall quality of tutoring offered by TAMK regarding seeking employment during your studies?**

- Excellent
- Good
- Satisfactory
- Poor
- Not able to say

**In which of the following areas would you have liked TAMK to provide more information? (Pick any you deem appropriate.)**

- How to find work placement in the Pirkanmaa region
- How to find employment in the Pirkanmaa region
- How to find employment elsewhere
- How to write an effective CV and cover letter
- How to make contacts with local companies during your studies
- How to adapt to Finnish culture
- How to make connections and friendships with local people

Information on something else? Please specify:

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I did not require further information from TAMK

**In which of the following ways would you have liked TAMK to assist you in finding future employment? (Pick any you deem appropriate.)**

- More comprehensive intranet/ Internet pages
- Informative lectures by teachers of TAMK
- Informative lectures by business managers and other professionals (from the Employment Office, different businesses etc.)
- Alumni days with graduates sharing their experiences
- Recruiting fairs
- Company visits
- Projects with companies
- A native Finn as your personal tutor while you studied at TAMK
- A tutoring session per study year with a teacher to discuss how to enhance your employment opportunities
- In some other way? Please specify:

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In none of the previous ways. I believe the ways of assistance provided by TAMK were functional.

## **As a graduate**

**How satisfied are you with your BBA degree gained in TAMK?**

- Very satisfied
- Somewhat satisfied
- Somewhat dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

**What kind of advises, encouragements etc. would you give to a current foreign BBA student, that wants to find employment in Finland?**

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## **APPENDIX D**

### **Interview with Janne Hopeela, the head of BBA programme**

1. Is there a definite tutoring programme that TAMK offers to its IB/ foreign students?
2. What has worked well in the tutoring of foreign students? Where can you see this?
3. What has not worked? Why?
4. Do you have new plans for the programme? If so, what could they be?

5. How much thought is given to the improvement of the tutoring programme by the BBA programme?
6. How would it affect TAMK as a university that provides international degrees if its international graduates would reach high percentages in employment in Pirkanmaa?
7. Is TAMK trying to improve the number of foreign students in the BBA programme?