

In this presentation I will discuss the internship and especially the international internship in the School of Engineering and Technology, at Jyväskylä Polytechnic. Jyväskylä is a city in Central Finland with about 80 000 inhabitants. In Jyväskylä Polytechnic there are about 7000 students and about 1300 of them study in the School of Engineering and Technology and they qualify as engineers, with a Bachelor's degree, in four years.

An internship is an essential and important part of the Polytechnic degree. The minimum duration of the internship is 30 ECTS Credits, which means about five months' practical training and which is one eighth of the whole study programme. The internship takes place during the fourth or fifth semester of studies depending on the degree programme. Students can do their internship in Finland or abroad. The internship and international internship are considered in the same way. During the internship every student does normal work in a company and mill and he or she has also to do a learning task connected with studies. Students have to report on their internships both orally and in writing. Student guidance that a teacher tutor does has a big influence on a successful internship.

Last year about 30 students did international internships. All the time the number of students who are interested to do an international internship is on the increase. One reason for this phenomenon is that our teacher tutors and those students who have already done international internships encourage students to choose this magnificent alternative. Another reason is that many big companies in Finland, e.g. Nokia, Metso, UPM-Kymmene are international and they want to employ new internationally oriented engineers with good language skills. Finnish students have good English language skills. Because there are many international internship placements for our students in Europe, e.g. Germany, Austria, France, it is good if they improve also German or French language skills. This improvement is easy to do because the Language Centre of Jyväskylä Polytechnic offers courses in several languages and levels every semester. Nowadays many students are interested to do their internship in the USA, Canada, Australia, China, etc. In planning the degree programmes more and more the fact that graduates should have skills to bring internationalisation into the working life should be taken into account.

Now in our school there are about 20 international students who study international engineering courses and who want to do their international internship in Finland. Because we want that the number of incoming students will increase we have to find good marketing methods that help international students find us and find out our international engineering courses and their possibilities to do an international internship in Finland. Good cooperation with other polytechnics, universities and companies in Finland and abroad is necessary and useful when we are developing international internship system for incoming and outgoing students. The cooperation could be e.g. student exchange, searching for suitable companies or acting as an intermediary between international students and companies.