

SKILLFUL TUTOR

Exercise book for student tutors



Skillful tutor – Exercise book for student tutors

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Introduction

Hello, new tutor! Congratulations for deciding to become a great tutor at your university! You will gain experience on instructing groups, teamwork, working life skills and helping others. You will also help new students feel welcome and safe in their new environment and become part of the student community.

This exercise book contains important lessons about tutoring. As its name suggests, it introduces various exercises and helps you plan and report your activities and build your identity as a tutor. The book also includes checklists and important background information to support you in your tutoring. At the end of the book, we have left some empty pages for your notes along the way.

This exercise book was published by the KUPLA project of EHYT ry and Nyyti ry (2018-2020). The project was designed to support the well-being and studying capacity of university students, promote substance abuse prevention in university communities and foster communal and accessible studying culture. The exercise book is based on tutor training content developed during the project.

The purpose of the book is to challenge you as a tutor to think a little bolder in your key position to shape or even transform student communities and culture.

EXERCISE 💍

You can start by writing down what you believe are the most important duties of a tutor.

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- *

At the end of your tutorship, review what you have written. Do you still agree with the things you wrote? From your experience, would you add something that might have surprised you in the beginning?

Have a great journey! Helsinki, January 2020

KUPLA project team

TUTOR = Peer instructor for new students.

FRESHER = Student in the first year at university.

MOTIVES AND POSSIBILITIES OF TUTORING

In this section, you will learn to identify your motives and understand the importance of tutors as student culture influencers.



MOTIVES AND POSSIBILITIES OF TUTORING

We recommend starting your tutorship by reflecting on why you decided to become a tutor. Was it because you wanted to help and instruct others, learn new things or benefit from this experience in the future? Or were you impressed by your own tutors and, therefore, inspired to become one yourself?

You will learn to identify your motives and understand the importance of tutors as student culture influencers.

TUTORING TEACHES WORKING LIFE SKILLS

Tutoring offers the chance to learn teamwork and working life skills. People's motives for becoming a tutor may vary greatly. According to a survey conducted in the Ohjauksen ja työelämätaitojen kehittäminen korkea-asteella ('Development of guidance and working life skills in higher education') project (ESF 2008–2011), tutors are motivated by the following:

- I wanted to get to know new students in my area.
- Tutoring is nice.
- I wanted to find new friends.
- I wanted to learn new things.
- I heard positive feedback from previous tutors.

The survey also showed that the tutors had learned

- presentation skills
- interaction skills
- group instruction skills
- organisational skills
- planning
- managing a wider project
- knowledge specific to their area of study.





1. Why do you want to become a tutor and what motivates you? List your motives for becoming a tutor.
*
*
*
*
2. What were the topmost themes and issues on your mind when starting your studies?
In addition to their motives, a tutor should think about and recognise their actions and habits. Try to think about the role of a new student and remember your own experiences and feelings when starting your studies. When it comes to university studies and learning, study skills or social relations, what were you nervous or anxious about beforehand and when first starting your studies?
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3. What type of a tutor do you want to be? What do you want to learn when acting as a tutor? Are there some particular skills you want to develop? What types of skills required in tutoring can you use in the future when transitioning to working life? What types of expectations may new students have of their tutor? Write down your hopes and goals for acting as a tutor.
•••••
STUDENT CULTURE = Student customs in different universities, shaped by traditions, events, etc.
UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY = A group of people with a common goal or interest and shared rules. The university community consists of the students and the entire staff from professors to janitors. A functional community is a resource that offers its members more than they could achieve on their own. A tutor plays an important role in the university community.

EXERCISES

A TUTOR SHAPES STUDENT CULTURE

A tutor is a trusted member of the university community and plays a key role in welcoming new students, introducing them to the community and teaching them about student culture. Therefore, a tutor has the power and opportunities to shape, question and change the local student culture.

Student cultures spread by personal interaction. Culture is learned and people also grow into it. In addition to events, the hat and the boilersuit, it is also related to identity, humour, attitudes, values and methods. When acting as a tutor, we recommend pausing every once in a while to reflect why the prevailing student culture is the way it is and why you act the way you act. Is there a need for change?

1. What aspects of the student culture at your university do you find pleasant and worth keeping? Why? 2. Are there any student traditions you have found strange or unpleasant? Why? 3. Which aspects of the student culture could you influence through your own actions?



2

TUTOR'S PERSONAL RESOURCES

In the next section, you will understand how you, as a tutor, can promote your own studying capacity and well-being as well as those of your freshers.

2

TUTOR'S PERSONAL RESOURCES

Many students are affected by various challenges related to mental well-being and energy levels. Tutor activities can support and promote the study ability of the tutor as well as the tutored freshers.

In the next section, you will understand how you, as a tutor, can promote your own study ability and well-being as well as those of your freshers.

STUDY ABILITY = A student's capacity for work, impacting the efficiency of studying and general energy levels during the studies. Efficient studying is dependent not only on personal factors (e.g. the student's identity, life management, time management, social relations, physical and mental health, study skills and techniques) but also on external factors (e.g. physical, psychological and social studying environment, tutoring, teaching, guidance and pedagogic skills in the community).

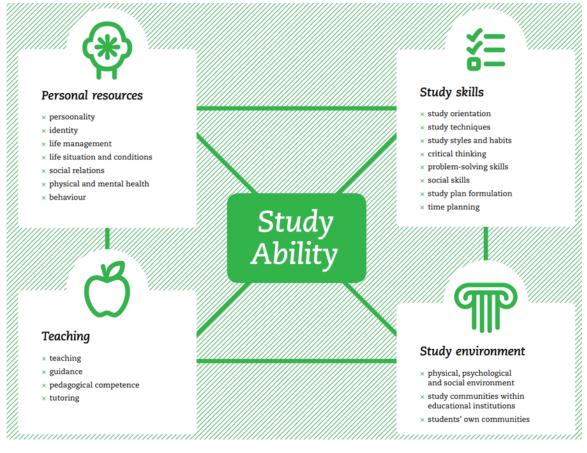
STUDY SKILLS = A student's professional skills during their studies. Study skills refer to the student's personal methods and skills of absorbing new information. By developing their study skills, the student may influence their manner of learning and understanding things. Study skills include not only technical skills of studying but also learning styles, problem-solving skills, critical thinking, social skills, presentation skills, time management and the significance of studying. Study skills can be developed independently or in interaction with others. Tutors may offer freshers tips on studying techniques, for example.



STUDY ABILITY STEMS FROM VARIOUS FACTORS

For students, study ability is the same as working capacity. By promoting study ability, it is possible to influence the progress of studies and improve the activities, well-being and atmosphere of students and their communities. Study ability also has a direct impact on future working capacity and working life skills.

Study ability consists of various factors that directly interact with each other and are manifested in the progress of the studies and the student's energy levels. The Finnish Institute of Occupational Health and the Finnish Student Health Service (FSHS) have prepared a model describing study ability and including the most essential factors for students' health and well-being. The model depicts how factors related to teaching, study skills and studying environment affect study ability alongside the individual's personal resources and health.



www.opiskelukyky.fi

EXERCISES

The contents of the sections of the study ability model (resources, study skills, teaching activities and studying environment) are different but each section impacts a person's ability for studying.

We recommend that tutors reflect on their own study ability and its development. You can also use the study ability model when instructing your freshers. Use the model to illustrate which factors influence their study ability. If a freshman is experiencing issues or challenges, you can use the model as a starting point to discuss what is wrong and how to find more information and guidance.

1. Which factors influence your own study ability? Which factors should be developed/changed? Do you need help or guidance?
• • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • •
• • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • •
2. Which factors in tutoring may weaken a fresher's study ability?
• • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • •
3. Which factors in tutoring promote a fresher's study ability?

After the first few weeks of studying, you can discuss themes related to study ability with your freshers, for example by using the following questions:

- What are study skills and how can they be developed? What tips would you give freshers for developing their study skills? Who at the university can help you with issues related to study skills?
- What is a good studying environment like and what can we all do to improve it?
- What does high-quality teaching, guidance and tutoring mean? What kind of guidance do you need? Which factors support independent studying? Which factors support studying in a group?
- Where do you get help when your own resources have been depleted? Loved ones, friends, university staff, student healthcare services?

MENTAL WELL-BEING SUPPORTS STUDY ABILITY

As discussed above, various factors can affect study ability. Mental well-being supports study ability and promotes commitment to the community and the studies. Energy levels and study performance are unique and personal. There are several factors impacting our energy levels. It is important for each person to find and understand the limits to their coping.

EXERCISE 🍑

Think about the following questions:

- 1. What do I need to feel alright?
- 2. What is important to me?
- 3. What types of things do I want to pursue and achieve?
- 4. What are my personal resources and strengths?

Challenges of mental well-being are very common and we all face them at some point in our lives. Our years as students are particularly stressful on mental health as many things happen during that time. The image illustrates the situation.



MENTAL HEALTH = Integral part of health and a cornerstone of well-being. Good mental health means psychological flexibility that helps accept changes in your life and deal with loss. Mental health is affected by various factors: individual characteristics and experiences, social interaction and societal structures, resources and cultural values. The concept of mental health as a resource and as a life skill also means that mental health can be strengthened and supported and skills related to mental health can be learned and practised.

MENTAL WELL-BEING = Outcome of good mental health.

As a tutor, you should be aware that mental well-being is supported by:

- life management skills and their development
- a safe studying environment
- support from loved ones and the studying community
- positive studying experiences
- confidence and belief in own skills
- social skills
- study ability and problem-solving skills
- feeling of being heard and having the chance to make a difference
- support systems that are close and easily accessible.

How to support the mental well-being of your freshers as a tutor:

- ✓ In every meeting, remember to mention that everyone can be themselves in the group as long as they respect others.
- ✓ Pay attention to all the members of the group make sure that nobody is left alone or becomes an outsider.
- √ Make a habit of asking how everyone is doing use first names, if possible.
- ✓ Listen and show that you are listening. Tell the members of the group when and how you can be reached.
- **√** Be resource-oriented there is always a positive side.
- ▼ Be solution-oriented think how to move forward.
- √ Be friendly, positive and supportive encourage others to be that as well.
- √ Share your best planning, time management and stress handling tips.
- **√** Tell the members of the group how to give feedback and make a difference.

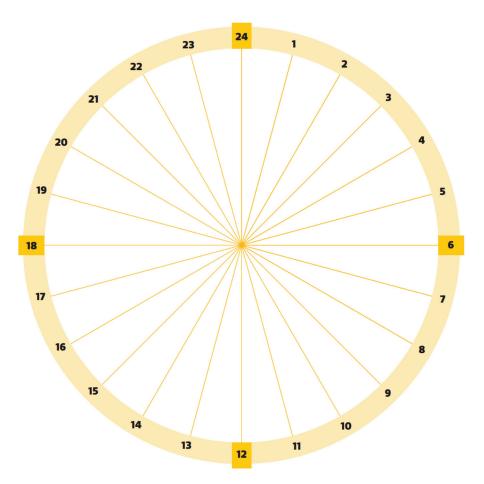
TIME MANAGEMENT AS A STUDY SKILL

Time management is one of the most important skills for students as it reduces stress and supports life management skills and mental well-being. As a tutor, you are sure to trigger many discussions with your group of freshers on the topic of time management. Start by examining what actually takes up most of people's time.

EXERCISE 🍑



Mark the different times of your average weekday on the clock face. Think about how much of your time is spent sleeping, for example. How about studying, working, meeting friends, doing chores, scrolling social media or relaxing on the sofa? Finally, use a different colour to outline how you would ideally use your time on the same clock face. Alternatively, you can draw a new clock face on one of the empty pages to lay out your ideal time management.



Ole oman elämäsi tähti! Opiskelijan opas elämäntaidoista. 2016. Nyyti ry 2018

Tip! You can also use this exercise with your group of freshers. For this and more exercises supporting mental well-being and studying capacity, please visit the website of Nyyti ry, a non-profit organisation supporting the mental well-being of students, at www.nyyti.fi/en.

3

PLANNING AS PART OF TUTORING

In this section, you will learn to plan the practical side of tutoring.



PLANNING AS PART OF TUTORING

As tutoring is part of your studies, thorough planning pays off by ensuring you receive the study credits or the agreed remuneration you are entitled to. Careful planning also makes it easier to compile a tutoring report, if necessary.

In this section, you will learn to plan the practical side of tutoring.

REFLECTION THROUGHOUT THE JOURNEY

Do not draw up a tutoring report simply to explain what you and the students did during each get-together. Instead, include some self-reflection in your reports. Think about what you have learned through your tutoring. What factors have influenced your learning, what types of observations have you made or what have you learned about yourself in relation to your plans or goals at a monthly level, for example?

You can write notes for yourself on the empty pages at the end of this book, for example, or find another way of reporting and documenting that appeals to you. Would you be more comfortable writing a learning diary or

a blog (private, password-protected blog for reporting) or making a video diary?

Planning the activities in advance makes it easier to compile a final report, if necessary. The book includes exercises to help your planning. Use the exercises and, if necessary, find more support from other tutors or the head tutors. You can set up a tutor study circle, for example, to brainstorm and share ideas. We recommend producing reports throughout the journey and self-reflecting whenever you have finished a get-together as the memories are still fresh.



PLANNING EXERCISES FOR TUTORING ACTIVITIES

Before starting the tutoring, we recommend familiarising yourself with the instructions handed out to new students. The instructions explain where to find more information and what types of information the freshers have received before starting their studies. Tutoring should be planned well in advance, preferably with the tutoring teacher (or similar) and other tutors.

EXERCISES



1. Tutoring time span

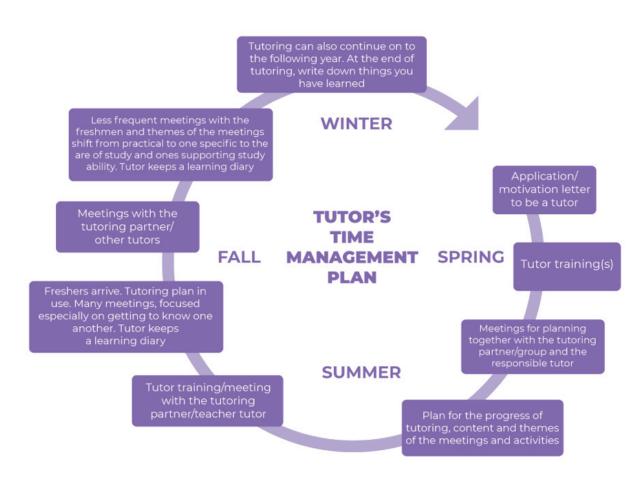
As mentioned above, advance planning is a good idea. Think about the time span covered by your tutoring: Do you intend to arrange x tutoring sessions on the first autumn of the new students or will your activities extend longer into the first academic year? Or even longer?

Write down your time span.
• • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • •
If you have already decided how many times you will meet your group of freshers, write that down as well.

Remember to tell the new students as soon as possible how long you will be available as a tutor.

2. Annual schedule for tutoring activities

In order to plan your tutoring activities in more detail compared to the time span, you can also prepare your plan as an annual schedule. Universities and other forms of education pose various requirements and schedules for tutoring. This example includes various goals and events for the year.



Example of an annual schedule

Look back on your first year of studying. What were the topics where you needed support or practical information? What type of an annual schedule would you prepare for your tutoring activities? Write down the content of your annual schedule in your notes.

3. First meeting with the group of freshers

Plan your first meeting with the group of new students in advance. Make as concrete a plan as possible for how the meeting should proceed. When meeting the freshers, your plan may be changed or adjusted, but that does not mean the plan failed or was pointless. Planning helps you orient yourself to the situation in advance and know how you want to act. Share your best ideas for the first meeting with the other tutors as well!

Your plan for the first meeting. You can also supplement the headers.
Meeting place
How to invite the freshers
Duration of the meeting
Purpose and goals of the meeting
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•••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••
Content of the meeting
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•••••••••••••••••
Other notes
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•••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••



4. Give feedback

During planning and the actual tutoring, make notes of things that could be develo-
ped at your university from a tutoring standpoint. Remember to make these notes
especially towards the end of the tutoring.
Write down things for which you want to give feedback.
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• • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • •
• • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • •
When acting as a tutor, what are the things for which you would like to receive
feedback?
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• • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • •

4

TUTOR AS A GROUP GUIDE

You will understand your role as a peer guide for adults, observe the diversity of the members of the group, think about factors affecting people's motivation for joining the group and acting in it and realise the significance of a safe atmosphere in the group's activities.



TUTOR AS A GROUP GUIDE

Various groups operate at universities: study groups, tutoring groups, classes, student organisations, hobby groups, work groups, etc. Regardless, a 2017 university student health survey showed that 22% of university students feel that they are not part of any student groups, such as their class or a study group. According to the survey, 20% of university students and 15% of students in universities of applied sciences find it clearly or extremely problematic to establish social contacts



As a tutor, you serve as an important link for new students who are trying to join various groups. That is why learning group guiding skills is a great idea.

In this section, you will understand your role as a peer guide for adults, observe the diversity of the members of the group, think about factors affecting people's motivation for joining the group and acting in it and realise the significance of a safe atmosphere in the group's activities.

DIVERSITY = The range of human characteristics, roles and groups. Diversity includes all the minority groups of society related to, for example, gender, sexuality, socio-economic status, age, physical characteristics, disability, appearance, religion, language, cultural differences, ethnicity, political views or various ideologies and beliefs. Acknowledging diversity means respecting identity and characteristics in a positive and safe atmosphere so that everyone feels welcome as they are without fear of discrimination.

EXERCISE •														
n your opinion, what is the difference between directing, coaching, leading and uiding a group?														
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• • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • •														
• • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • •														

TUTOR GUIDING A GROUP OF ADULTS AS A PEER

As a tutor, you get to practise your skills of guiding a group. Remember that, in your tutoring, you will guide a group of adults. It is important to take at least the following facts into account:

- ✓ You do not need to become an authority; it is more important to assume the role of a peer.
- ✓ You do not need to know everything; you can also use the know-how of the other group members.
- ✓ The group members want to get to know other people as friends/acquaintances/future colleagues.

When guiding adults, it is important to set goals for the activities; in other words, the activities should be beneficial and pleasant for the participants. Making the personal and mutual goals of each member makes it easier to commit to the group.

If a fresher skips the activities of the orientation weeks, such as tutoring or student parties and events, the reason is often based on the mental image they have formed of such activities. Not everyone is interested in icebreaker games or getting drunk. However, a tutor plays a key role in shaping the mental images and activities. At a university, the tutor's duties include informing the freshers about the facilities, operations and customs, but the most important duty is to help the new students get to know each other.

In groups of adults, we recommend breaking the ice with activities that are not overly sporty and do not include topics that may be too personal. Depending on the participants and the scheduled amount of time, the activities may later become more sporty and personal if the participants are ready for it.

EXERCISE 🍑	
In your opinion, what does it mean that a tutor guides a group as a peer?	
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• • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • •	
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GROUP GUIDING IS AN ATTAINABLE SKILL

Do you have previous experience of guiding a group? Have you instructed a hobby group for children or young people, for example? When becoming a tutor, you do not need to be an expert of guiding groups as this is a great opportunity to practise those skills. At mentioned above, as a tutor, you will be a peer instructor among adults.

EXERCISES 🔊
1. What types of great groups have you been a member of? What made the group great?
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•••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••
2. What characteristics do you associate with a great group?
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•••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••
3. Think back on your own first year as a student. What was it like to join a new group?
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4. What made it easier to join a new group? What felt challenging?
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••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••
•••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••
5. What was your opinion of the role of your own tutors when you started your studies?
• • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • •

As a group guide, it is important toremember that a group consists of different people with their own expectations, situations in life, backgrounds and experiences. Each member of the groups brings their own viewpoint to the group activities, which is why the members form a diverse group. To make it easy for everyone to join and participate in the group, it is important to give the group members chances to influence the group's activities.



The tutor plays a key role in observing diversity and promoting a safe atmosphere in the group. Drawing up common ground rules for the group may be of help in this. When drawing up the ground rules, remember that, as the tutor, you must be equally committed to following the rules.

GROUND RULES FOR THE GROUP

Ground rules for the group promote safety and make it easier to participate in the group. Brainstorm the ground rules for the group and agree on common ways of doing things. These can be produced in writing or in discussion within the group. As the tutor, ensure that each member can express their opinion in the discussion. When everyone has been heard and given the chance to influence the rules, it is easier for everyone to commit to them.

In the discussion, consider each member's situation in life (working while studying, family, etc.). We also recommend mentioning that everyone must be respected in the group and bullying, discrimination or other inappropriate behaviour towards others will not be tolerated. Let the members know that the ground rules equally apply to you as the tutor.

Ideas for content of shared ground rules

Principles

Everyone participates from their own point of view, everyone takes action against inappropriate behaviour, we work together towards success, speak up if you are worried about someone.

Methods

In what types of environments does the group meet? How is tutoring scheduled in relation to the freshers' studies and life? Agreeing on schedules and holding on to them.

Communicating

How and where does the group keep in touch? How often should everyone follow the communication channel(s)? A conversational culture that is respectful of others.

Checklist for creating a safe atmosphere

- ✓ Observe the diversity of the group members and the different personal boundaries of each person.
- ✓ Ensure that each member gets the chance to talk about themselves and participate in the discussion to their preferred extent.
- √ Observe each member's own pace of becoming part of the group.
- ✓ Plan the meetings in advance and tell the participants about the content before the meeting.
- √ Share your own positive studying-related experiences, tips and good practices.
- ▼ Talk about the positive elements in your studies and your initial motivations when you started your studies.
- ✓ Present the facilities, customs, communities and digital environments.
- ✓ Create shared ground rules with the other members of the group.



IDEAS AND TIPS FOR ACTIVITIES

This section includes tips for icebreaker exercises where diversity has been taken into account.



IDEAS AND TIPS FOR ACTIVITIES

As previously stated, activities start with planning. Tutors should prepare tangible plans on the content of the meetings in advance, even if they plan them together with their group of freshers. It is particularly important to plan the initial stage of activities where you get to know each other and create a mutual culture and customs.

This section includes tips for icebreaker exercises where diversity has been taken into account.

SAFE ICEBREAKER EXERCISES

The icebreaker exercises should be

- √ justifiable and have goals. Justification makes it easier to participate and promotes a safe atmosphere. What is going to happen and why?
- √ suited for adults. Think about the types of cooperation or icebreaker exercises you
 would develop for a WHP day at a workplace.

Remember:

- ✓ Not everyone wants to participate in icebreaker games as they may not feel safe. Replacing the word 'game' with 'exercise' makes it easier to participate.
- ✓ Some may have had bad experiences with participating in such games.
- ✓ Instead of forcing people, encourage them to participate. A well explained and justified exercise and an enthusiastic tutor may inspire people to join in.
- ▼ The activities can always be watched from the sidelines, participation is not obligatory.
- √ The exercises that work the best for you may not work as well for others. Therefore, observe the diversity of the group members when planning the icebreaker exercises.

Below is a list of goal-oriented icebreaker exercises you can use with your group of freshers. We recommend working on the exercises in pairs or small groups, mixing up the groups every now and then.



1. What do we have in common?

The goal is to safely get to know the other members of the group. Safety is increased by allowing each person to decide what to tell the others about themselves and not forcing anyone.

Instructions

Find a person you do not yet know. Introduce yourselves, using the name you prefer to be called. Have a discussion and pick three things you have in common. Do not pick obvious statements, such as "We are both students". Then, find another pair, form a group of four and find what the four of you have in common. You can also try to find what the entire group has in common.

2. Discuss the field of study

The goal is to safely get to know the other members of the group. Safety is increased by allowing each person to decide what to initially tell the others about themselves and not forcing anyone.

Instructions

Find a person and discuss your expectations for the upcoming studies. What made you interested in this particular field? How did you end up studying this field? What are you especially interested about in these studies? Before starting the conversation, introduce yourselves, using the name you prefer to be called.

3. On the map

The goal is to safely get to know the other members of the group and remember a fact about each person.

Instructions

Imagine that the space (room, outdoor area) where the group has gathered is the map of Finland (or the world), Ask the participants to move on the map according to instructions. After each question, you can ask the participants to discuss the topic with the person standing next to them, for example. At the beginning of any discussion or introduction, ask the person to repeat the name they wish to be called.

The questions may include:

Where do you live now?

Where did you live before moving to your current city?

Where were you born, where did you start comprehensive school?

4. Line of opinions

The goal is to open a discussion on the relevant topics and get to know the other members of the group.

Instructions

On the floor or the ground, imagine a line with two ends: yes and no. The tutor presents statements of which everyone has their own opinion. The participants place themselves part of the line that best describes their opinion. In addition to the ends stating yes or no, the participants can also choose a place anywhere between them. After each participant has chosen their place, the tutor asks why each person chose that particular spot. Do not force people to answer but assure them that each person is given the chance to explain their reasoning.

You can come up with the statements based on the topic to be discussed. For example, if the topic was 'Life as a student', the statements could be:

- I want to participate in the activities arranged for freshers.
- I have hopes concerning tutoring activities.
- I find student events easy to attend.
- I find it easy to get to know new people.
- My situation in life supports my studies.
- Intoxication is part of student culture.
- When studying, you always have to find the strength to push on.

What else to do with your freshers?

In addition to learning about student organisations and their activities, you can explore the cafés and flea markets of the area, organisations, volunteering options, hiking routes or sports clubs.

6

FINDING HELP AND SUPPORT FOR VARIOUS SITUATIONS

In this section, you will learn where to seek help and support when needed.



FINDING HELP AND SUPPORT FOR VARIOUS SITUATIONS

Remember that you are not alone when tutoring and you do not have to solve all the problems in the world. Have the courage to seek support and help from other tutors, instructors, university staff and various helpful organisations.

In this section, you will learn where to seek help and support when needed.

EXE	R	C	IS	E		3																																														
Write down the information of your university's support and guidance services. Fin information online or record the information you received in training (e.g. study pseudologist, guidance counsellor, tutoring teacher, study counsellor) here.																																																				
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ROLE OF SUBSTANCES IN STUDENT COMMUNITIES AND TUTORING

As a tutor, you will be involved in the freshers' studies and free time. Therefore, you will likely face and deal with questions related to substance use.

As a tutor, we recommend thinking about the following questions:

- How will I help the freshers get to know each other on their free time without the need for intoxication?
- Describe the nature of the event truthfully. Does the fresher initiation include activities/tasks that people may be forced to perform against their will as social pressure does not allow them to refuse?
- Would it be easier to participate in events or tutor meetings if the freshers were told that it is socially acceptable to be sober in the event or meeting or that the evening parties do not require drunkenness?

- Does the phrase "Not everyone has to drink" help in a situation where the activities
 have been specifically built around drinking? Could such activities be replaced by
 icebreaker exercises planned in advance and based on discussion or some sporty
 activities?
- Is mild or strong drunkenness the glue that holds the group together? This will not work as not everyone uses alcohol and, in reality, getting to know one another and developing a team spirit are what really holds people together. We also know that no one likes being pressured to drink. Substance use always comes with risks, such as health hazards as well as a decreased studying capacity which affects the person's loved ones or other members of the student community.

Examples of substance abuse

- Concern over a friend who often drinks until unconscious.
- People (always) have to worry about their friend's condition.
- A suspicion that a friend who is not doing well is trying to make themselves feel better through substance use.
- A friend always needs at least a day to pull themselves together after intoxication.
- All the money is spent on substances or gambling.
- Study stress can only be managed through substance use.

EXERCISE 🍑

Find out if there is a student substance abuse prevention programme at your university and where to find it. Learn about the programme to understand how to act with substance-related questions as a tutor.

The student substance abuse prevention programme defines, for example:

- substances and attitudes towards them during studies
- substance abuse prevention, student guidance and responsibilities
- drug tests, right to study and suitability to work in the field
- · seeking help and studying after treatment.



VOICING YOUR CONCERN

As a tutor, you play a key role in broaching worries. If you are worried about a fresher, their well-being or their energy levels, you can speak up as long as you are prepared to do so safely, respectfully and in private.

Studies show that students benefit from early support and broaching worries. Therefore, as a tutor, you should be aware of the key content of voicing your concern.

- Concern does not require proof, trust your gut feeling. The important thing is to address the concern.
- Talk about your feeling ("I have a feeling that... I've noticed that...") instead of blaming. Express your concern and listen.
- You may be rejected and you may also be wrong. Simply accept this.
- Be prepared to provide guidance or forward the case to other people.

VOICING CONCERN = Asking another person about an issue that is on your mind or worries you without insulting them. Anyone can address concern, which means that it is also appropriate for the role of a tutor. You may become concerned about a fresher's energy levels in their studies, their mental well-being or their use of substances. The earlier the concern is addres-sed, the better the chances of correcting the issue. Studies show that ear-ly intervention is an effective method.

Voicing your concern

- Think about ways to start the conversation and express your concern in advance: "I
 haven't seen you for a while, how are you?" "You've seemed unusually tired lately,
 how are you doing?"
- It is important to listen. Come up with solutions together. Think about places to seek and get help. If necessary, guide the student to support services, such as the university's study psychologist or student healthcare services.
- If the student refuses to talk about the issue, you need to accept that. Be satisfied in knowing that you at least tried to have a discussion and express your support towards the student.
- Remember to take care of your own energy levels as well. Constant worry will only
 deplete your own resources. Learn to establish boundaries and be strict to protect
 yourself as well.

EXERCISE	6
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As a tutor, you will face many different people and solve problems. Prepare by practising practical situations in advance. In each example, think about how you would act as a tutor.

Case Niika
New student Niika talks about their bad financial situation and asks you to loan them 100 euros for food and bills. How would you act as a tutor?
Case Sassa
New student Sassa says that they don't not quite get along with the other members of their student group. Sassa is upset about the situation as they feel lonely. How would you act as a tutor?
Case Aati
New student Aati says that they are really stressed about the start of the studies and cannot sleep well. They think that they are not good enough to study in their field. How, as a tutor, would you support Aati?

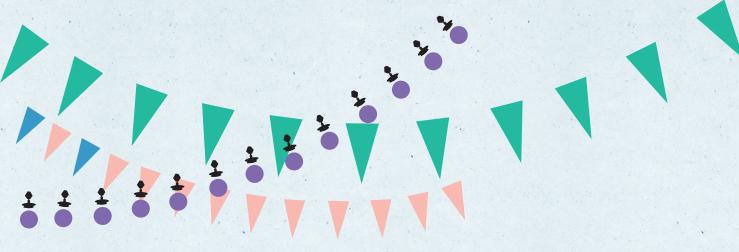


Remember that, as a tutor, you do not need to know everything. If necessary, direct the fresher to the relevant services. Learn about at least the following services:

- The university's guidance services
- The university's student substance abuse prevention programme
- Student healthcare and FSHS
- Municipal health and mental health services

Find support services online:

- Mental Hub, information and self-help tools for mental health and substance abuse issues www.mielenterveystalo.fi/en
- Crisis helpline of MIELI Mental Health Finland, tel. +358 (0)9 2525 0111, www.mieli.fi/en_
- Sekasin chat of MIELI Mental Health Finland: www.sekasin247.fi
- Nyyti ry, information and support for students and study communities for promoting mental health and studying capacity <u>www.nyyti.fi/en</u>
- Nyyti ry. Life skills for students (in Finnish): www.nyyti.fi/wp/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/Ole-oman-elamasi-tahti.pdf
- Nyyti ry. 'Learn life skills' materials: https://www.nyyti.fi/en/opiskelijoille/opi-elamantaitoa/
- Substance abuse helpline: help and support for those concerned about their own substance use or that of a loved one, tel. +358 (0)800 90045, www.ehvt.fi/paihdeneuvonta
- AddictionLink: self help tools for monitoring, reducing and quitting substance abuse and information on various substances, www.paihdelinkki.fi/en
- OttoMitta mobile app for monitoring alcohol consumption (in Finnish): www.ehyt.fi/taitolaji
- Peluuri: information, tools and support for addressing a gambling problem www.peluuri.fi/en
- Limit'less Gaming: information, peers and support for problematic gaming https://digipelirajaton.fi/tietoa/tietoa-meista/in-english/
- Intervention for cannabis use among young people project (2018–2020, EHYT ry and YAD ry): www.kannabishanke.fi (in Finnish)



HAVE YOU EVER CONSIDERED?

Do you feel like some tutoring policies are outdated and do not provide support? As a tutor, you can challenge the existing ways of thinking and working.

- You get a chance to meet a group of people where each person has their own situation in life and background.
- You can offer your group of freshers safe icebreaker exercises that are suited to everyone instead of awkward games.
- You can encourage new students to think about their study skills and, instead of trying to fix their problems on their own, to seek cooperation and support.
- You can recommend working on tasks piece by piece to ensure no one is overcome by a mountain of deadlines.
- You can ensure that everyone can find pleasant activities at parties, whether it be drinking, a fun programme, etc.
- You can help the students not feel pressured to use substances and make parties
 and events less centered around substance use. Instead, help the students focus on a
 fun activity.
- You can ask students how they are really doing instead of laughing about the drunken stories from the night before.
- You can encourage students to note how much easier it is to study when you are energetic and not tired from staying up late or partying.
- You play a key role in shaping or even building a new type of student culture.

HOUSE RULES FOR ETHICAL AND HIGH-QUALITY TUTORING



Tutor

- participates in guidance **voluntarily and systematically**, and also **reports** on the activities
- reflects on their **own role**, including what tutoring is and is not
- reflects their own actions as a tutor
- does not share **confidential** information
- does not make unjustified or unnecessary promises and is trustworthy
- sees themselves as a **representative and a calling card** of their area of study
- **directs** to further resources, when necessary
- is interested in their own **coping** and that of others
- shapes student culture with their behaviour and actions.

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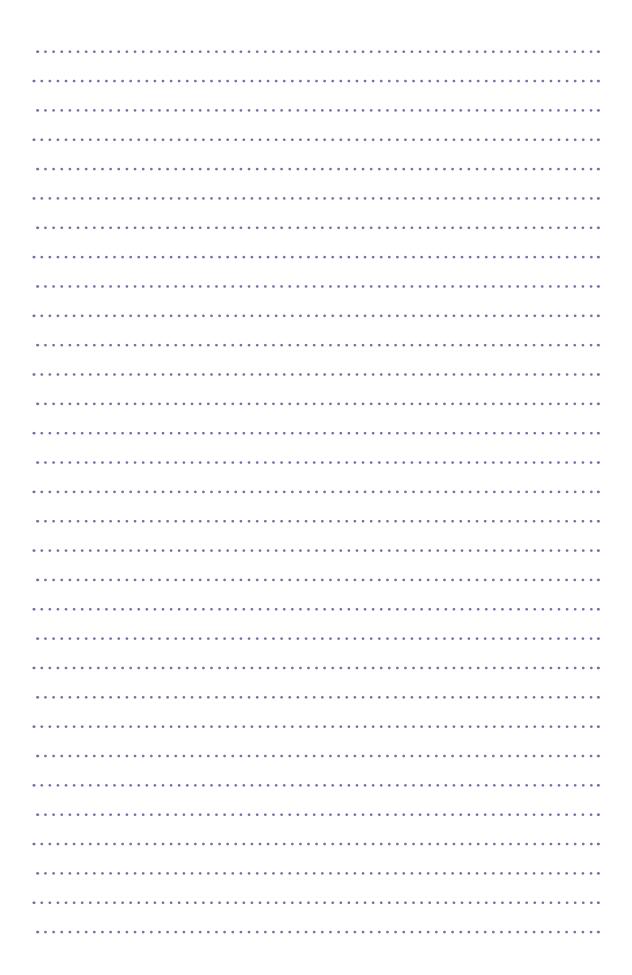
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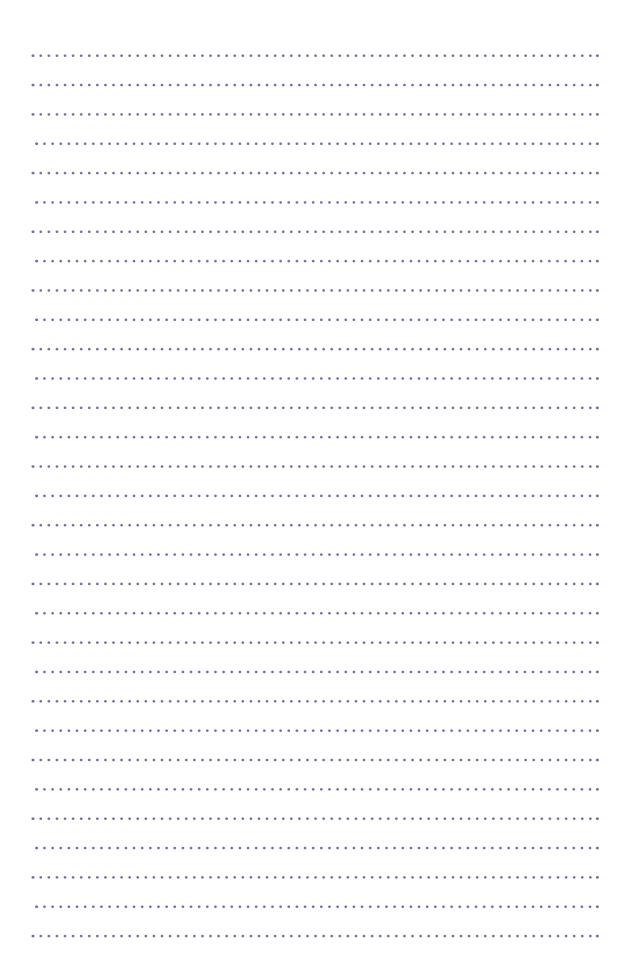
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SKILLFUL TUTOR

Exercise book for student tutors

The book is intended as a tool for university student tutors. You can use the exercise book in planning, implementing and reporting tutor activities. You will also find tips for acting as a tutor and exercises to reflect on your role and your resources.

This exercise book was published by the KUPLA project of EHYT ry and Nyyti ry (2018-2020). The project was designed to support the well-being and studying capacity of university students, promote substance abuse prevention in university communities and foster communal and accessible studying culture. The exercise book consists of the key tutor training content developed during the project.

Thank you for your efforts in creating a better student culture!

We wish you a fun tutoring experience!





