

Degree Programme in Social Services

Options for
Community Development Work or
Diaconal Youth and
Community Development Work



Degree Diak for students
Diaconia University of Applied Sciences

Degree Programme in Social Services

Focus on Community Development Work

or

Focus on Diaconal Youth & Community
Development Work

Degree: Bachelor of Social Services, 210 ECTS

If you...

- would like to study social services and community development in an international context
- want to develop the skills needed to make a difference in local communities
- would like to study in English

Diak offers you the opportunity to learn in an open, multicultural environment.

Diak values are based on Christianity, therefore we emphasise the human dignity of each person. Diak is committed to social justice, solidarity and the empowerment of people.

Diak aims to train people to influence social change, work for a multicultural society and fight against social exclusion.



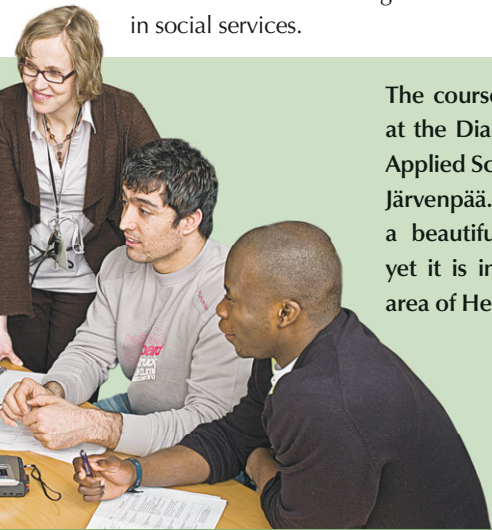
One programme, two options:

Community Development Work

Are you are interested to develop your professional knowledge and skills in order to work with marginalised, people and deprived communities? Then our international degree programme with a focus on community development work could be the option for you. The programme attracts students from Finland and all world regions and it aims to prepare graduates for professional community development and social services work.

Diaconal Youth and Community Development Work

If you are interested in working marginalised or deprived young people and in working for a church or Christian organisation, you could choose the option in Diaconal youth and community development work. If you are a member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland, the course gives you the qualification necessary to be ordained a Deacon. Other churches may recognise this qualification for work in youth or social work. Graduates also gain a recognised qualification in social services.



The course tuition is located at the Diaconia University of Applied Sciences, Diak South, Järvenpää. Our campus is in a beautiful lakeside setting, yet it is in the Metropolitan area of Helsinki.

Aims of the Programme

The course aims to train professionals who are able to work with marginalised or disadvantaged people and communities. Graduates will have a broad view of society which will enable them to develop their work in response to the rapid changes which are affecting people and communities. Because of our value base, Diak is especially concerned with poverty and social exclusion. This means that you will develop your knowledge and skills in order to:

- work for communities and a wider society which are more inclusive and offer greater chances for participation
- address the challenges of differences in culture, gender and race which impact on personal life and employment
- develop social services which encourage the participation of those affected by different issues in their lives and in their communities
- have a European and international perspective on social policy





Graduate Expertise

Graduates from the programme will be able to:

- support the engagement of local communities in social action and of civil society in working for change.
- address the impact of globalisation on local communities and changes in working life in urban and rural areas
- encourage processes which lead to community wellbeing and resilience
- take a rights based approach to social welfare and social work in relation to such issues as migration
- develop and manage new and innovative projects with communities and groups

Other themes such as work on issues of disability and human rights may be taken up in elective studies organised as part of the programme. Students may follow their own interests through placements and research within the field of the programme.

The course is ecumenically open and relates Christianity through dialogue, to multi-faith contexts.

Focus on Diaconal Youth & Community Development Work

Diaconia is a ministry of the church which is focussed on social issues and spirituality. It is organised differently in different countries and churches. Within this degree programme, there is a possibility follow an option for Diaconal Youth & Community Development Work.

This option is especially focussed on the issues facing marginalised young people and other deprived groups. They may be recent immigrants, unemployed people or those excluded in other ways.

Graduates will follow the course outlined on the previous pages but this specialised option will:

- provide a grounding in theological disciplines relevant to Church social work, social service and youth work
- have a special focus on the problems facing marginalised or disadvantaged young people
- link the church's social engagement to the core skills of community development, young people's participation and empowerment
- understand the nature and importance of contextual theology related to local communities and groups
- be able to contribute to worship and spiritual growth in different contexts

In addition to the studies, students will be expected to do placements in local churches and diaconal organisations and will develop a research thesis related to diaconia.

Studies in the degree programme

Close to real life, close to student's interests

The programme starts with student's own interests and has an emphasis on community based learning. Diak has long term involvement with different local communities which enables students to get involved. During the programme, students work with local organisations, municipalities, churches and faith communities which are working with marginalised people. This means they are engaged in developing work in challenging contexts both in Finland and internationally. The learning is close to 'real life' and the campus based learning uses a variety of methods including project work. The multidisciplinary 'network' approach is an important element in the skills learnt. Students often work in small groups and teams related to the specific themes of each semester and practical placements in Finland and internationally form a structured part of the programme.

Research and development

Research is a key part of the degree programme and this is linked to the issues which are encountered in placements or are being tackled by Diak and its partners, locally or internationally. Diak has many international links and students are encouraged and supported in undertaking an international placement. Students are also encouraged to get involved in projects and to develop their own project interests.

Possibilities for work after graduation

Community development work and participatory social work are the basis of the flexible expertise needed in rapidly changing societies. Graduates will be able to work for public and private organisations, non-profit organisations, churches and faith communities in the following contexts:

- with people on the local level to address pressing social and economic problems
- with organisations to develop networks and build strategies for change and development
- on research and evaluation to improve the effectiveness of social services and develop new knowledge

Graduates will be able to work as social service workers in the Finnish context and as social workers in many other countries. In Finland, the designation 'social worker' is reserved for those with a Master Degree of a science university.

Those who take the option for Diaconal Youth & Community Development Work will be eligible for ordination as Deacon, if they are members of the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church. It may be that other churches will recognise this qualification in future. Graduates will also be able to take up positions in social services work or in youth and community development in many different contexts.

International Opportunities for Graduates

The course balances the need for knowledge of the Finnish and international contexts and takes a comparative approach to social work and community development. This means that graduates will be able to work in Finland, or in other countries.

Those at the cutting edge of social service work are often involved in international projects and networks. English is

most often the preferred language of international projects. Graduates of this programme, which deals with development work, will therefore have a head start in such projects. Those who take the option for Diaconal Youth & Community Development Work will also be well equipped to work in international and ecumenical projects.

Applying to study in the programme

The course is open to students of all ages, from Finland and abroad. It is preferable that applicants have some experience of social service or youth and community work in a voluntary or paid capacity. Applicants should have a high school or vocational high school leaving diploma, an aptitude for the profession and be able to follow a course of study, practical and written work in English.

The selection will be based on qualification and the quality of the application form, a written examination and an interview.

Application Process

Diak is a member of the national joint University application system and for the application procedures you should consult the web site: www.admissions.fi

Please check the specific requirements for applicants in good time. The web site details the qualifications needed and the need to have proof of proficiency in the English language (for example applicants may need an IELTS or TOEFL certificate).

Application forms are available on line in December each year and the application period is usually from early January to mid February for August admissions.

Further Questions

If you have further questions about the course please consult the web site: www.diak.fi click on 'Pages in English' and follow the links via 'Studies in English'

If you have other questions please write to admissions@diak.fi

About Diak

Diaconia University of Applied Sciences (Diak) has four units nationwide in Finland, with more than 3,000 students. Diak is a University level institute which offers innovative degree programmes emphasising a close relationship to practice and working life. Diak is the largest provider of training for the health and social services field in Finland.

DEGREE PROGRAMME IN SOCIAL SERVICES

Focus on Community Development Work

or

Focus on Diaconal Youth & Community
Development Work

Diak South

Järvenpää Campus

Järvenpääntie 640

FI-04400 Järvenpää

Finland

www.diak.fi

Click on Pages in English and follow the links

Diak North

 Oulu

Diak East

 Pieksämäki

Diak West

 Pori

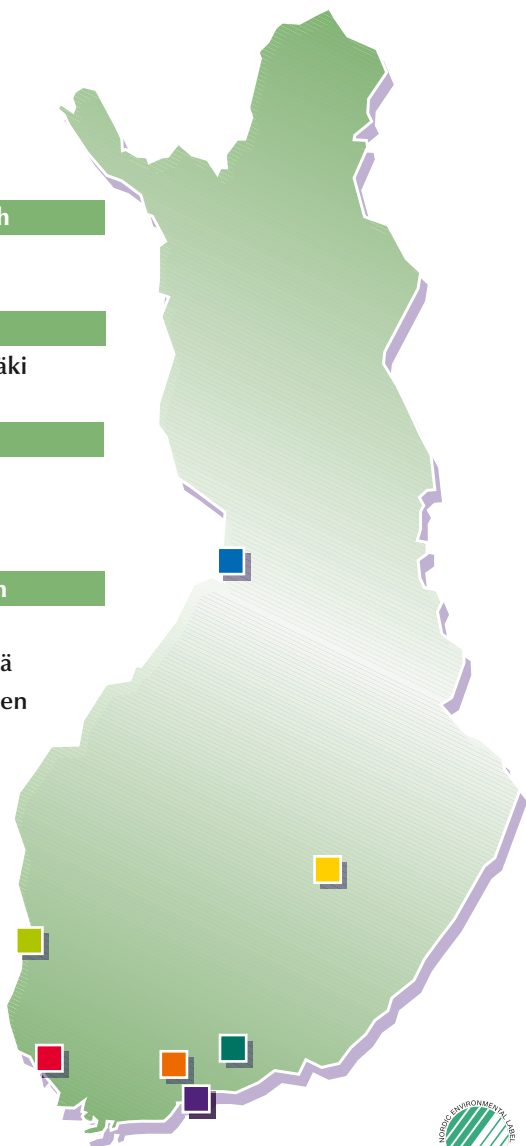
 Turku

Diak South

 Helsinki

 Järvenpää

 Kauniainen



Diaconia University of Applied Sciences

Diak South | Järvenpää Campus

Järvenpääntie 640

FI-04400 Järvenpää

Finland