

Bilaga 1.

Summary of how local students view their work together with international students in their courses of the master program in food technology and nutrition

This document summarizes and compares testimonials of local students given during focus groups interviews and only refers to their perception on how they see their work together with international students in the courses. Student's answers have been classified in 4 groups to help the reader to compare the different answers.

The interviews were carried out once per year over lunch. The details of each interview are reported in Appendix C under the folder "interviews".

As the following testimonials show, the opinion of an overall negative experience in 2011 was dominant in the group whereas in 2012, the lack of engineering/calculations knowledge of international students was the problem mostly highlighted by the local students. In 2013, they appreciated their high level of knowledge and they are mostly discussing how they "compromise" in the groups. The issue of punctuality was highlighted only in 2011. However, the issue of plagiarism is still being discussed.

After the interview of 2012, it was clear that the acceptance requirements to the program needed to change. These changes are being applied to the selection process of the students for the 2014-2016 program. It is also clear that in 2013, local students have a much better view on the issue of working together with their international classmates. I strongly believe that the discussions of these interviews with the teachers have helped to increase the awareness of the local students of the advantages of working in an international group of people. This aspect is better highlighted by the teachers in the different courses of the program. The mentorship program is also helping the local students to get to know their international classmates in a different context. Being more aware of cultural differences should also help on the "compromises" they discussed in 2013.

Question: what do you think about working together in groups with your international classmates?

2011:

- **It is not a positive experience when the teachers mix the groups with international students.** Swedish students want to choose their own groups with as many Swedish students as possible so it is easier to work because there is a deadline for the job to be done and there are other courses at the same time too.

2012:

- **Working with international students can be frustrating in some situations. It is very positive to have different views** with them which can be shared with each other but often "we have different knowledge". This difference seems to be clearer in courses with more engineering aspects. Swedish students have read engineering from the beginning of their education. **It is very difficult for international students who have not study engineering before. In this situation, Swedish students may act as teachers.**

2013:

- The knowledge of international students can vary a lot. **Most of the international students are at high level.**

- How balanced the group is between Swedish students and internationals is important. For example, if in a group there is a majority of Swedish or perhaps only one international student, then it is easy to do things in our way with the disadvantage that it might be easy to run across somebody. **How we do things in our way, will depend on the exchange student. Some of them are very active** and some are more shy mainly those feeling uncertain about their English language, falling a bit behind.

2011:

- It is not only a problem with the previous knowledge but also how international students work in groups. As they do not address the reports in the same way, **Swedish students in the group may need to re-do everything that the foreigner student did.**

2012:

- It is then a very difficult situation when there is a group of, for example 6 students, **two of them Swedish who need to do all the calculations.** Teachers sometimes give tasks where MATLAB is required and the **international students do not know MATLAB** and if, on top of that, they do not have engineering background, the situation is more complicated.
- The requirements for entering into the specialization should be the same for international students, e.g. **they need to know some calculations. Otherwise it is difficult for students and for teachers to have the course in a good level.**
- Swedish students think that **international students are very good in the knowledge they have** and they have more specialized knowledge in subjects that Swedish students have only studied in a very wide perspective

2013:

Some of them have some previous knowledge on MATLAB

2011:

- They do not address the reports in the same way as Swedish students do and **they do not work in the same way in terms of deadlines and meeting schedules.** Swedish students regard **reports written by international students as "very unstructured"**. Swedish students have learned on how to structure reports, references, citations.

2012:

- To work in a group with only Swedish students is easier as they have been studying together already for some time in many other courses. The requirements for entering into the specialization should be the same for international students, e.g. **they need to know some calculations.** Otherwise it is difficult for students and for teachers to have the course in a good level.

2013:

- **We have different ways to attack the problem.** Sometimes it can be a crash leading to discussions, but then one **learns to compromise.** Is it a challenge or an annoyance? Both, because we want to do it as we usually do and to compromise can be good but hard at the same time.

2011:

- Swedish students get angry when international students are late. They are told many times that punctuality is important but they are still coming late.
- Swedish students are surprised on the lack of knowledge of international students on plagiarism.

2012:

- Swedish students can also be late to class or group meetings

2013:

- About being late, they think is very individual and happens to everybody (Swedish or international) at some point.
- Swedish students are used to re-phrase and they have had an extensive training on it. International students are not used to do it.