

# Student Life's wellbeing services for International Master's degree students

Panajiota Räsänen, university teacher  
(student well-being, M. Psych., Doctoral researcher)  
Student Life's student wellbeing team

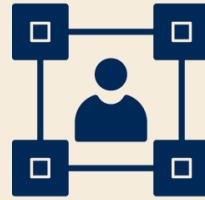


27.8.2025

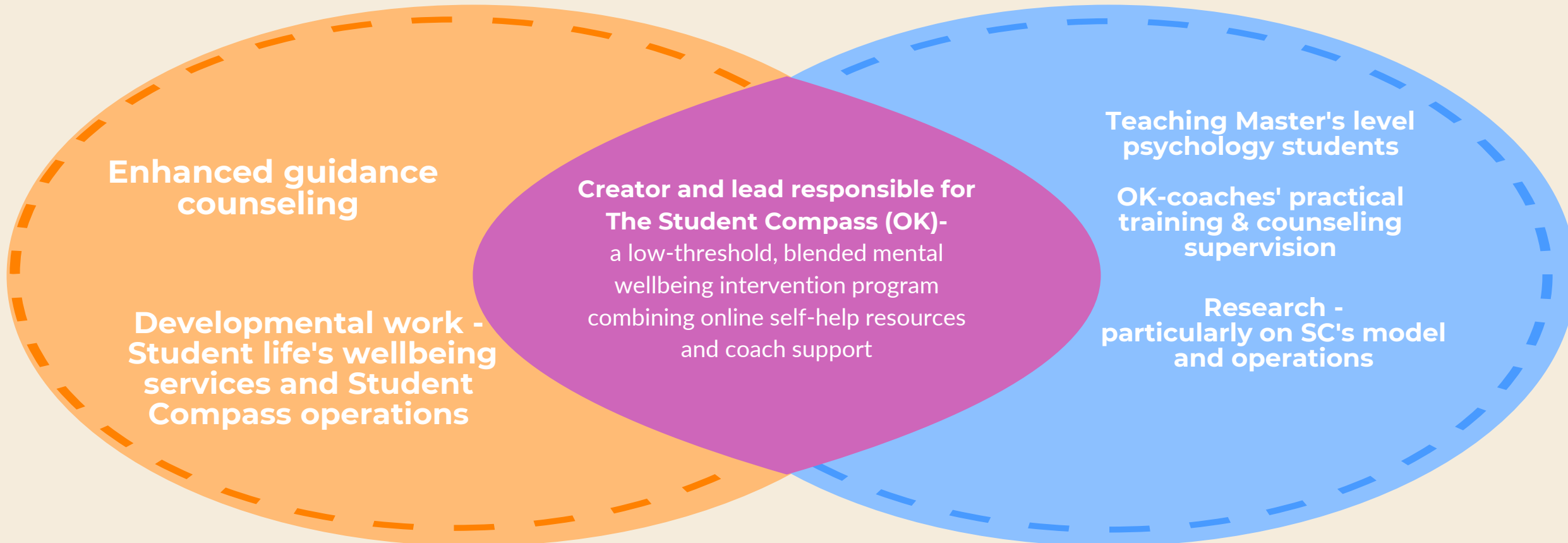


# My role at JYU: university teacher

**Student Life - JYU's  
Student wellbeing services**



**Psychology department**



# Today's themes

## Student Life: Three stepped care model of student wellbeing:

- Basic support for all
- Supplementary support
- Enhanced support
- Action programs and models supporting student wellbeing



When you think of wellbeing, what is the first thought that comes to mind?



Wellbeing is a state where everyone is able to realise their potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully and is able to make a contribution to their community (WHO, 2019).

Why  
wellbeing is  
important?

# Introduction



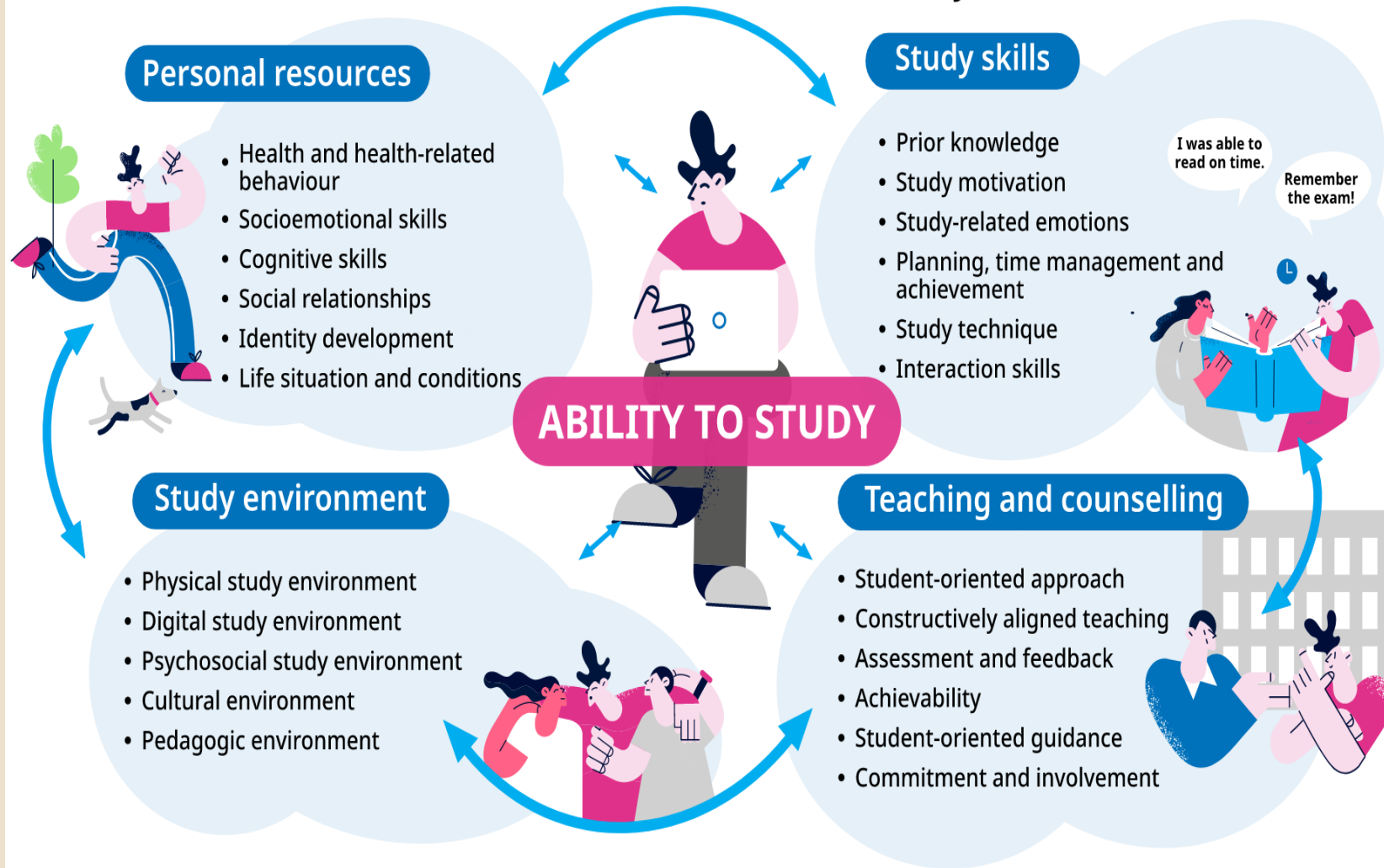
# Why wellbeing is important for students?

- Shapes **quality of life**, growth, and relationships
- **Foundation for study ability** → focus, memory, motivation
- Affects **study progress, performance, and learning outcomes**
- Supports **resilience** against stress. Helps you cope with pressure and bounce back from setbacks
- **Strengthens belonging, friendships, and community**



# Model for students' study ability

The ability to study forms and evolves in a dynamic interaction between the student and the study environment.



- Ability to study means a student's ability to work, and it's a combination of several interconnected factors.
- Study ability reflects the compatibility between a student and their learning environment.
- Study ability is realized in credits and grades.
- The student defines their own study ability and makes choices based on it.
- Study ability changes and varies throughout the course of studies.

[More info](#)

# JYU's Student Life's Wellbeing Services in a nutshell: Video animation





# Stepped well-being support

1

## Basic Support for all

Quality teaching and guidance is at the heart of it all.  
e.g. Study counseling, Courses, Online Self-help programs, Activities & Events

The idea behind Student Life's stepped model is that most students will benefit from and receive help from the first two proactive steps

2

## Supplementary support

A wide range of guidance and services provided by wellbeing experts

e.g. Counseling & Coaching, Group Workshops

3

## Enhanced support

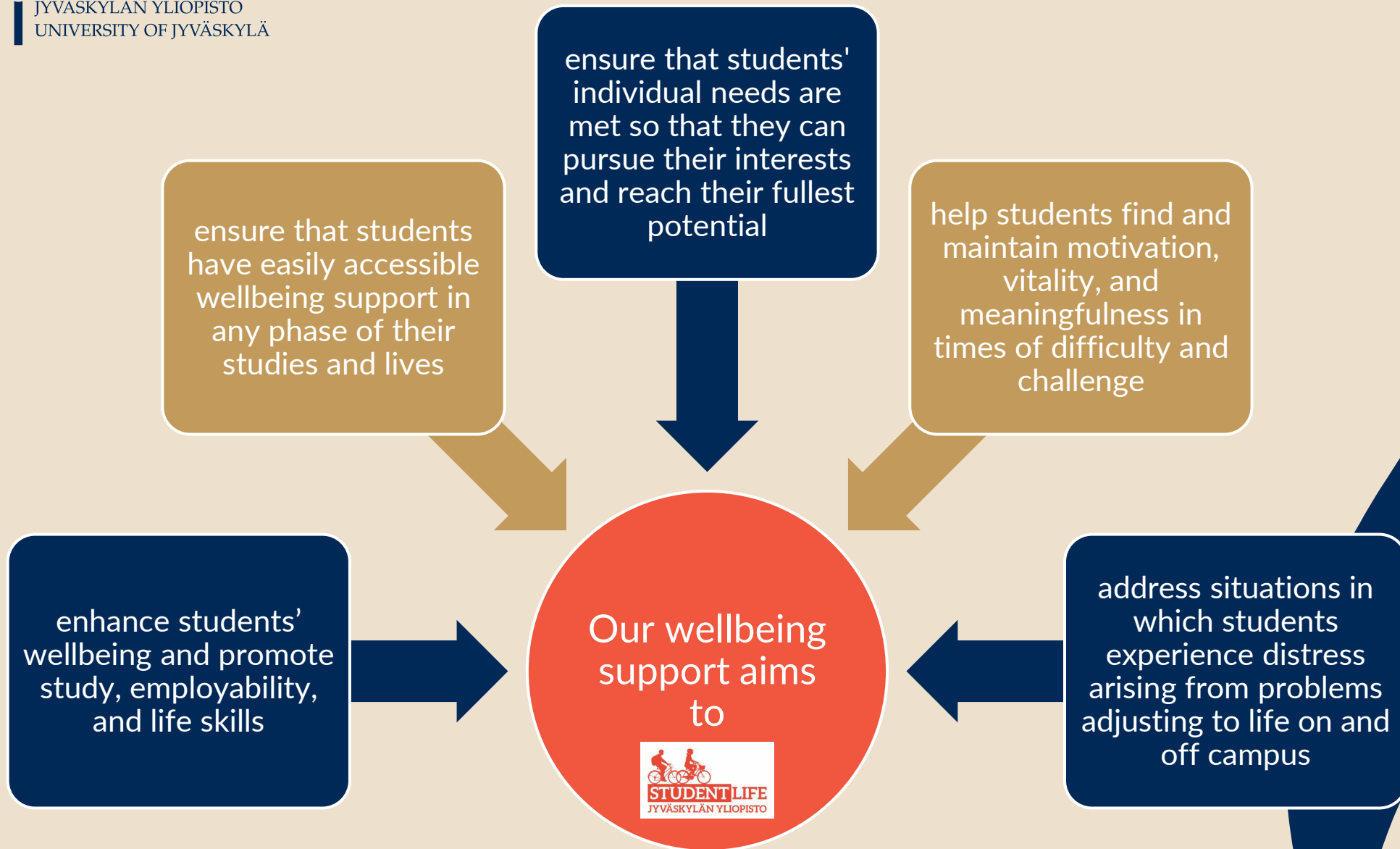
Individual and Group Enhanced Counseling from SL's multidisciplinary student wellbeing team (psychologist, special education experts, education and health counselor)

More intensive and targeted support for students

Prevention Programs, Action plans & Procedures



# Student Life - a three-step guidance pathway to support well-being and study ability skills





## Hanna Ahola

*Specialist in Student Wellbeing (M.Sc.  
Health Sciences, Study Counsellor)  
Department of Psychology*



## Panajiota Räsänen

*University Teacher, Student Wellbeing  
(M.Sc. Psychology), Doctoral Researcher  
Department of Psychology*



## Riitta-Leena Metsäpelto

*Specialist in Student Wellbeing (Ph.D.  
Psychology)  
Educational Services*



## Heta Orrain

*Specialist in Student Wellbeing (M.Ed.,  
Special Education Teacher, Study  
Counsellor)  
Educational Services*

Enhanced guidance and counseling  
Individual study arrangements  
Maintenance and development of  
the "Hyvis" wellbeing model  
(responsible person)  
Substance abuse prevention  
program (contact person and  
SORA procedures)  
Responsible instructor for the  
course HYVY001  
Staff training

Enhanced guidance and counseling  
Individual study arrangements  
Overall responsibility and  
development of the Student  
Compass -service  
Teaching and Research duties  
(Department of Psychology)

Enhanced guidance and counseling  
Individual study arrangements  
Contact person for interventions in  
bullying and harassment cases  
Contact person for SORA  
procedures  
Instructor for the course HYVY001  
University-wide development tasks  
(OpiskeluPLUS program, University  
Community Development Forum)

Enhanced guidance and counseling  
Contact person for individual  
study arrangements  
Instructor for the course  
HYVY001  
University-wide development  
tasks (Working group on social  
sustainability and responsibility)  
Contact person for the "Study  
Skills Map" (Opiskelun Taitokartta)

Available for International students

### Courses

- HYVY -courses,
- MOVI -courses,
- Career skills -courses,
- University sport's wellbeing courses

### Activities

- KnowHau -activity
- Student ability peer support
- Compassion mentoring



Self-help web-based programs  
Student Compass/  
Opiskelijan Kompassi

### Self-guides

Academic skills - guides

### Self-assessment tools

Opiskelun taitokartta/  
Study Skills Map

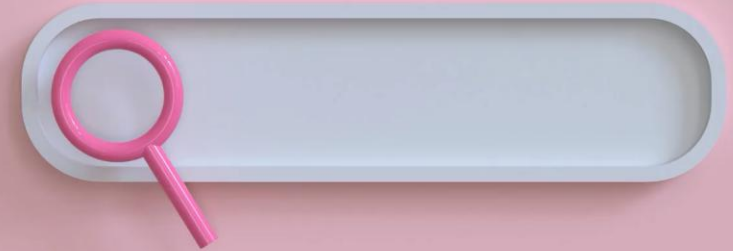
Teaching and its supporting group guidance

**First step: Basic support for all**

**Students can seek basic support independently**

# 1. Student Life's basic support

Some examples of services provided specifically by our  
Student life's wellbeing support team





# Academic study skills guides by Movu

The Academic study skills -website helps you in developing your study skills so that your studies at the university go as smoothly as possible. Regardless of the field, you need, among other things, technology-mediated collaboration skills, the ability to read and produce academic text, feedback interaction skills and multilingual communication skills

[More info](#)



# Knowhau - Care and Reading dogs on Campus

The Centre Multilingual Academic Communication of the University of Jyväskylä in cooperation with Student Life, the Student Union, and the Kennel Club, have brought Care and Reading Dogs on campus to enhance the well-being and learning ability of students, as well as to promote new pedagogical methods.

The dogs are part of certain courses at Movi and they can also be met outside the courses in the dog lounges, in Oppio (O103/104) or MaA104. You can [sign up](#) to study together with the dogs at the dog lounge

[More info](#)





# Movi courses that aid studies

## Examples

- [XENX029 Activate Your English \(3 ECTS\)](#)
- [XENX1000 Gaining confidence in English \(1 ECTS\)](#)
- [XENX1002 Speak up: Improving your English through Spoken Interaction \(2 ECTS\)](#)
- [XENX022 E-Learning Module: Academic Reading \(2 ECTS\)](#)
- [XENX023 E-Learning Module: Academic Vocabulary \(2 ECTS\)](#)
- [XENX024 E-Learning Module: Grammar for Writing \(2 ECTS\)](#)
- [XENX026 E-Learning Module: Pronunciation \(2 ECTS\)](#)
- [XENX037 E-Learning Module: Presentation Skills Toolkit \(2 ECTS\)](#)

## [More info](#)



# uMOVE - ACADEMIC SPORTS OF JYVÄSKYLÄ



- Offer sport and wellbeing services to students such as yoga, meditation, relaxation and mobility exercises, as well as sessions related to stress management and personal growth with leading experts in their field.
- In addition to group fitness classes, they offer sport courses as well as Yogobe, a digital health platform which offers workouts online.
- More info: <https://www.korkeakoululiikunta.fi/en/university-sports/courses>





# Student Compass



**Student's Compass (OK) is a research-validated, web-based program designed at JYU to promote student mental wellbeing, study ability, and essential life skills. OK is readily accessible to JYU students and also available with low-threshold support.**

## 01.

### Skills-based program

OK is a values-, acceptance- and mindfulness-based program that promotes psychological, social and emotional wellbeing and skills. Students get to practise:

- Identifying their own values and setting goals
- Skills for working with thoughts and emotions
- Skills for self-awareness and personal development
- Recovery and relaxation skills
- Mindfulness skills

## 02.

### Theoretical framework

The program is primarily based on Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT). One of the main goals of ACT is to increase psychological flexibility, which means the ability to be mindfully present and accept one's own thoughts, feelings, and other internal experiences while guiding one's own actions toward a meaningful life. Psychological flexibility can be practiced.

## 03.

### Research based

The programme has been proven effective in numerous studies. According to our research, the results show that the OK programme significantly increases students' wellbeing.



- ✓ **mental wellbeing**
- ✓ **self-esteem and satisfaction with life**
- ✓ **psychological flexibility**
- ✓ **mindfulness skills**
- ✓ **skills to handle effectively stress, anxiety, and depression**



# The Student Compass

Visit our website for [more info](#)



## Accessible to All

Open to all students at the University of Jyväskylä, The Student Compass offers a confidential and free resource, with no referral needed for anyone that wants to enhance their wellbeing. Studies show that it is particularly beneficial for those facing **stress, anxiety, low mood, or student life challenges**.



## Boost your Mental Wellbeing Flexibility & Academic Life

The program fosters mental wellbeing, enhancing study ability and personal growth. It provides tools improve self-awareness, and cultivate essential skills for learning, work life, and relationships.



## Flexible to use as self-help or with coach/professional support

The Student Compass is web-based, allowing you to **access it anytime, anywhere, at your own pace**. The program offers optional support from a wellbeing coach or psychologist, ensuring a personalized and supportive experience.

## 2. Student Life's supplementary support

Some examples of supplementary services available to  
international students





Students can receive individual or group guidance based on their needs from the university services provided in Supplementary support:

Hyvis/  
Goodie  
advisers

University  
Chaplain

Students' union  
- JYY's health  
and well-being  
sector

Support for  
Accessibility and  
Accessible  
learning  
environments

Student  
Compass (OK) -  
psychology  
coaches

Study Skills Map  
(OT)-special  
education coaches

Not available  
for  
International  
students

Support and/or  
advice about  
bullying or  
harassment

Support on  
substance  
abuse and  
support  
interventions

When you need  
someone who  
listens...



Students can seek these services directly or with the support of tutors or guidance counselors

**Second step: Supplementary support**

# Hyvikset/Goodies – student wellbeing advisers



University staff members, who have been selected and trained to support the wellbeing and study ability of students.

## What and for whom?

- The Hyvis/Goodie wellbeing advisers are there for you when you need someone to talk to! Students can come with any issue or problem that is troubling them and has a negative effect on their studies. Goodies offer one-to-one support (often 1-5 sessions) to help students gain understanding of their situation and most importantly to be heard.
- Provide options - They can assist students in finding information on how to promote their wellbeing, and get them in touch with available peer support groups and share ideas on how to build their own support network
- They give referrals to other experts or programs (e.g. enhanced guidance counseling)

Available mo-fri  
during office hours  
(9-16 Finnish time)

Find more info &  
your department's  
Goodie [here](#)



## Reasons for contacting Goodies?

The most common and frequent reasons:

- Study planning
- Time management
- Study habits
- Study motivation

The second most common are:

- Depression
- Social anxiety
- Other mental health problems

The third most common are:

- Burnout
- Stress and fatigue

# University chaplain



The University Chaplain of JYU is Miika Mäkinen. You can discuss with him about any matter that is on your mind—it doesn't need to be spiritual in nature. You can talk with him about anything that is troubling or distressing you. All conversations are confidential and free of charge.

Email: [miika.makinen@evl.fi](mailto:miika.makinen@evl.fi)

- Phone number: 044 431 4438
- You can book an appointment with Miika [here](#)

[More info](#)

# Student Compass' coaching support (OK)

Free, low-threshold support. Guidance on developing mental wellbeing skills and enhancing academic ability. Wellbeing coaches are trained Master's students in psychology.

Contact person:  
**Panajiota Räsänen**

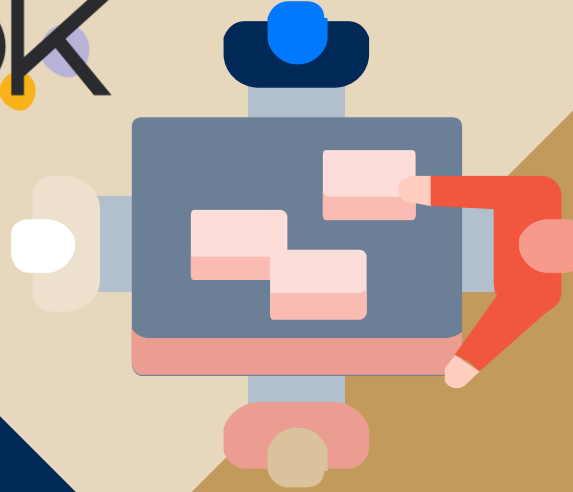


## One-to-one coaching

Students can discuss any concerns they have about their mental well-being, such as study stress, low mood, anxiety, and academic difficulties such as performance anxiety, time-management and planning, and study routines.

The support lasts for 7-8 weeks and includes:

- Three sessions with a wellbeing coach
- The five-module online program with weekly exercises tailored to the needs of the student
- Three written online feedback sessions via the OK platform
- Individual assessment of mental wellbeing
- Final progress report and further recommendations



**AVAILABLE BOTH FALL 25 & SPRING 26**

**FALL 2025:** We offer wellbeing one-to-one coaching during weeks 43-50. Check out the [detailed schedule](#).  
**Registration online:** 15.9.2025–3.10.2025

**SPRING 2026:** We offer wellbeing one-to-one coaching during weeks 8-15. Check out the [detailed schedule](#).  
**Registration online:** 15.1.2026–2.2.2026

You can register easily online by filling in our form (check our website).

[More info & coach support schedules](#)





# 3. Student Life's enhanced guidance support

Services available to is from our Student life's  
wellbeing support team



The third step of wellbeing support consists of enhanced guidance counseling.

Enhanced guidance counseling is offered when a student has a need for special guidance.

Enhanced guidance is provided by experts specializing in supporting student well-being and learning ability. Experts offer both individual and group guidance.

Enhanced  
guidance  
counseling

[Visit our website for  
More info](#)



## 3rd Step: Enhanced guidance counseling

Students can access our enhanced guidance support **only by referral** from our Goodie wellbeing advisers or Student Compass -program's coaches or Finnish Student Health Services (FSHS/ YTHS).



# Our enhanced guidance counseling team & areas of counseling expertise



**Hanna Ahola**

Student wellbeing expert  
(M.H.Sc., C.C.C)

She offers support in any of the following issues that may impact your ability to study:

- Academic challenges
- Career counseling
- Time management and scheduling
- Motivation issues
- Stress
- Concentration and attention challenges
- Social isolation and loneliness
- Substance abuse prevention



**Panajiota Räsänen**

University teacher (student wellbeing)  
(M.Sc., Ps doctorate candidate)

- Study skills support (e.g. planning, scheduling, study habits)
- Study motivation issues and procrastination
- Study anxiety (e.g. tests, writer's block, public speaking)
- Difficulties with stress, anxiety, depression, study fatigue
- Attention and concentration problems
- Social interaction issues (e.g. loneliness, homesickness)
- Identity and self-development challenges
- Life transition challenges and cultural adjustment



**Riitta-Leena Metsäpelto**

Student Wellbeing specialist (Phd in psychology, docent in educational psychology)

She offers counselling to students regarding well-being and various challenges related to ability to study, such as:

- Problems with learning motivation
- Social challenges (e.g., social anxiety, difficulties in social interaction)
- Mental well-being issues, anxiety and depression
- Challenges with executive functions
- Bullying and harassment (serves as the university contact person)
- Issues of unsuitability in SORA fields



**Heta Orrain**

Student Wellbeing Expert (M. ed., M.S.E., C.C.C)

- Academic study skills (reading, writing and study strategies)
- Learning difficulties and disabilities
- Stress, coping, time management and scheduling
- Concentration and attention challenges



# Student Health Consultation

Solutions for promoting study ability and continuing academic progress

29.8.2025

JYU SINCE 1863.



# Description of the Student Health Consultation Process



A student health consultation can be arranged when a student is **experiencing difficulties in progressing with their studies or their study ability has declined due to health-related reasons.**



The consultation **includes the student, representatives from the university** (such as from the degree program and an enhanced guidance counselor), **and representatives from student health services** (connected to the student's care pathway).



Any of the three parties mentioned above may initiate the meeting, though in Jyväskylä, it is **most commonly initiated by the Finnish Student Health Service (FSHS/YTHS).**



The consultation examines how significantly the student's study ability has declined, in which areas the decline is most evident, and what underlying factors may be contributing to it. In its content and principles, the meeting is similar to an occupational health consultation.



During the meeting, different support options are discussed, **a support plan is created, and roles and responsibilities are agreed upon between the involved parties.**  
NOTE: Strengthening the student's own agency and commitment is the primary goal.



A memo is written from the meeting and stored in the student's records in the FSHS system.



The implementation of the plan is monitored through follow-ups by FSHS's special support services.

More [info](#)

- Absence due to illness
- Delays in academic progress
- Changes in the student's behavior or study ability

**The key is to have a multidisciplinary team with a shared understanding of how to support the student's academic path and the factors affecting it.**

# Examples of Support Measures (Possible Solutions)



Individual study arrangements (required statements from the university and/or FSHS)

- Updating the personal study plan (HOPS), taking into account stress factors
- Enhanced guidance and study ability support within the university
- Additional assessments if needed (e.g., DigiLukiseula - digital dyslexia screening)
- Kela benefits and related statements (e.g., vocational rehabilitation)
- Support from FSHS: e.g., brief therapy, special support appointments
- Other rehabilitative services, such as Nuotti coaching, Omaväylä rehabilitation, or Nuoren Elo rehabilitation
- Other assessments (e.g., AKSE – Vocational Rehabilitation Assessment)
- **The student's commitment, motivation, and informed consent are central!**

A great way to avoid overlapping actions and prevent additional burden from support measures.



A top-down view of a pink desk with two laptops, papers, a plant, a coffee cup, and a notebook. The desk is set against a background of three green chairs and a concrete floor. A large dark blue semi-circle is overlaid on the left side of the image, containing the title and list.

## Action programs and Models Supporting Student Wellbeing

- Accessible studying at the University of Jyväskylä
- Anti-bullying and harassment prevention and intervention model
- Substance abuse prevention program



# Accessible Studies at the University of Jyväskylä



- Accessibility refers to implementation of a physical, psychological, social and digital environment **where each individual can, regardless of personal qualities, operate on an equal basis.** Accessibility is especially important to the University community members with a disability or learning difficulty, as well as to ageing persons and the members of cultural or linguistic minorities.
- The Accessibility Action Plan aims to develop courses at the department and degree-program levels so that they are as accessible as possible and **support the participation, completion, learning, and life–study balance of as many students as possible.**
- Accessibility work is grounded, among other things, in the Non-Discrimination Act. At the University of Jyväskylä (JYU), the Equality, Gender Equality, and Accessibility Plan has been updated for 2025–2026.



## Individual study arrangements

### What are individual study arrangements?

Individual study arrangements are adjustments to teaching, guidance, or exams that help support studies – for example, due to a disability, illness, learning difficulty, or mental health reasons. The recommended arrangements do not alter or override curriculum assessment criteria.

### Which students are eligible?

Students with medical certificate or expert opinion. Examples include: long-term illness, neurodivergent conditions, learning difficulties, or recent mental health issues.

More info [visit our website](#)



# Process for Individual Study Arrangements

## Three Ways to Obtain a Recommendation



### Goals

- Smoother processes
- Stronger student focus
- Note: The role of education planners / accessibility liaison officers is consultative only



Contact:

[opintojarjestelyt@jyu.fi](mailto:opintojarjestelyt@jyu.fi)



Heta Orrain



More info: [visit our website](#)



## 1. DROP-IN Sessions



Student Life premises, Lähde, B214



Orrain & Metsäpelto

- Early-stage support
- Referral to enhanced guidance if needed

International Students drop-in session:

- **Mon 15 September 2025,  
12.15 PM -16.00 PM**

## 2. Enhanced Guidance Counseling



Ahola, Metsäpelto, Orrain, Räsänen



Streamlined support

## 3. Remote via TEAMS



Orrain



For KYC and multimodal students



Also available in other well-founded cases

### **⚠️ Important**

To receive any recommendations, you must present a current, valid medical certificate, an expert opinion or individual arrangement document from your own university (exchange students). You need a translation of your diagnosis documents, if they are a language other than your degree's language (English or Finnish).

# Anti-Bullying and Harassment Prevention & Response Model



The university intervenes in any student misconduct in accordance with the Universities Act. Misconduct includes (but is not limited to) disrupting teaching, violent, threatening or fraudulent behaviour, bullying, or harassment.

## Aims of the model

- Safeguard every student's right to learn in a safe environment.
- Prevent bullying, harassment and other inappropriate behaviour before it occurs.
- Make it easier to address incidents of bullying, harassment and misconduct by students.
- Standardise the way such cases are handled.
- Support students' ability to study and their overall well-being.

## Possible measures

- Hearing the parties involved, joint meetings, mediation, and/or disciplinary actions
- **More [info](#)**
- **Contact person:** Riitta-Leena Metsäpelto
- [JYY's contact persons](#)

Our university's values are openness, trust, quality and integrity, and they lay the foundation for our operating culture and our [Code of Conduct](#).



# Student Substance-Abuse Program

## Objectives

The programme aims to

- promote students' ability to study and work;
- support students' health and well-being;
- prevent substance-related harm;
- make it easier to intervene when a student has a substance-use problem; and
- improve referral to treatment.

## Possible measures

In certain fields of study, continued drug or other substance use may lead to the loss of the intervention and treatment do not succeed in eliminating problematic use. At the University of Jyväskylä, the following fields are:

- Teacher Education
- Guidance and Counselling
- Psychology
- Psychotherapy Training
- Social Work

[More info](#)

Contact person: Hanna Ahola



# Contact us

Visit our Student Life's wellbeing support [website](#)



## For inquiries:

- Panajiota Räsänen (presenter), university teacher, Student life's wellbeing expert | Psychology department
- email: panajiota.rasanen@jyu.fi
  
- Hanna Ahola, student wellbeing specialist | Psychology department
- email: hanna.r.ahola@jyu.fi
  
- Riitta-Leena Metsäpelto, student wellbeing specialist | Student and Academic Services
- email: riitta-leena.metsapelto@jyu.fi
  
- Heta Orrain, student wellbeing specialist | Student and Academic Services
- email: heta.orrain@jyu.fi

Thank you!  
Have a great semester!



**STUDENT LIFE**  
JYVÄSKYLÄN YLIOPISTO

