

# Diploma of Higher Education

## Short Cycle Higher Education Pilot in Finland

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# Background and objectives of the pilot

- Education Development Group, the Ministry of Education and Culture
- Higher education must offer more flexible and rapid solutions
- Multiple education as a weakness
- Needs for new competences, career development, employment
- More modules providing competence should be offered
- Higher education for all regardless of the background
- Development of short cycle higher education in Europe and the US

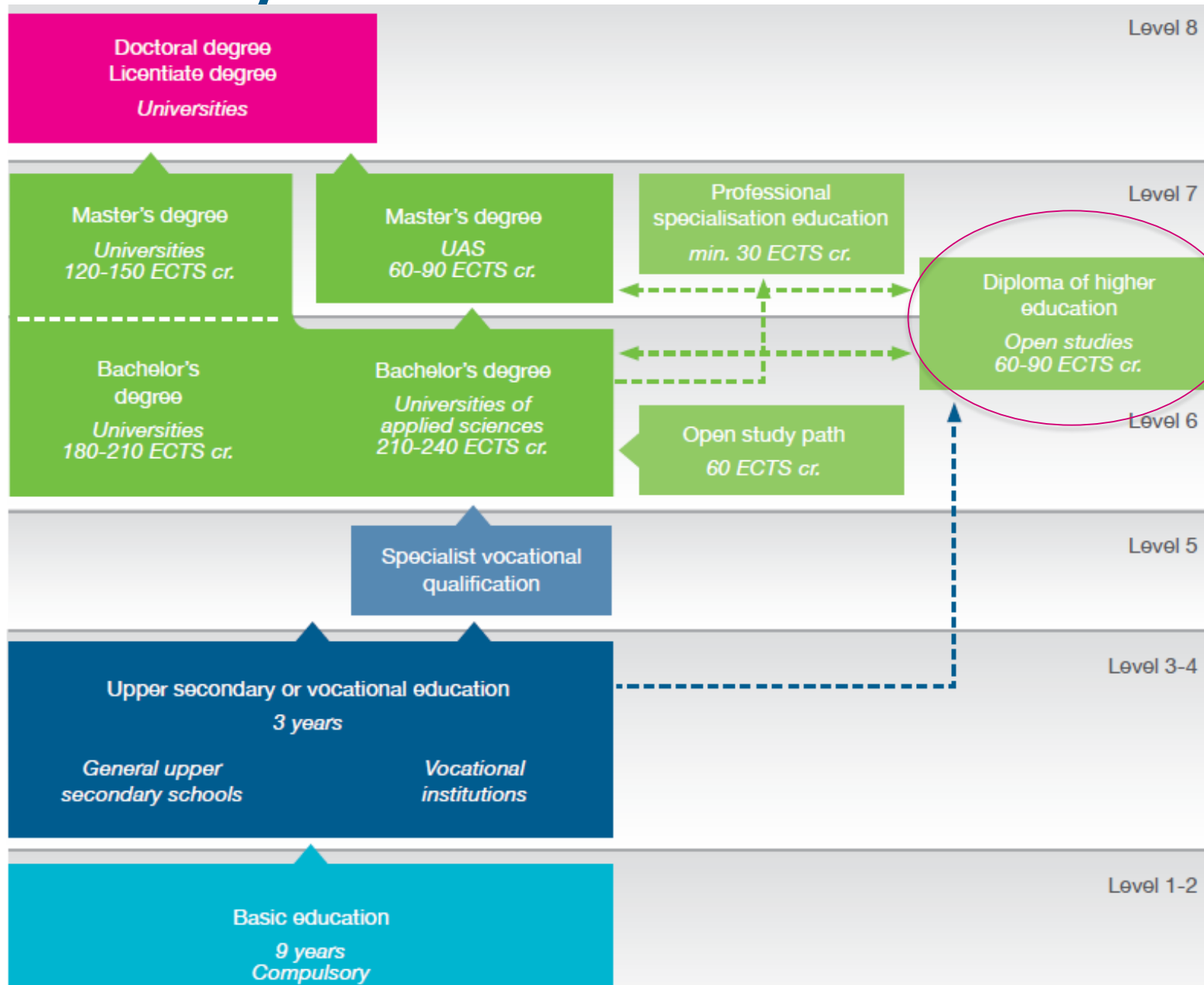
# Diploma of Higher Education – national pilot 2013-2016

- Develops structured competence modules that consists of parts of degrees (bachelor & master)
- Investigates the needs of working life for new modules narrower in scope than existing degrees
- How do these programmes best meet the needs of students with various backgrounds?



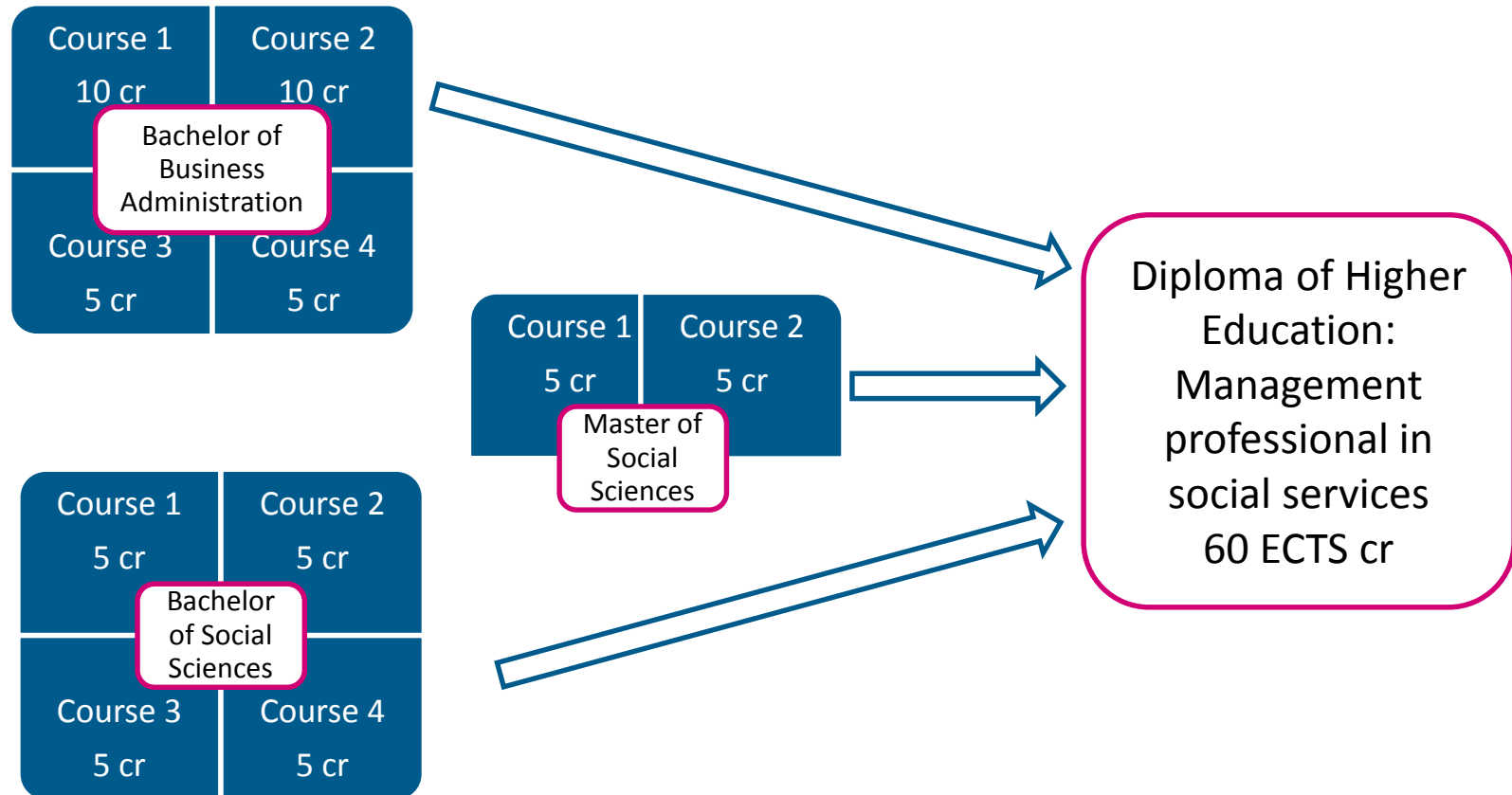


# Education system in Finland



# Diploma of Higher education as a competence module

Consisting parts of the bachelor's/master's degrees, for example:



# Role of the Diploma of Higher Education in level 5/Chain5?

- Short cycle higher education
- In Finland the diploma consists from parts of studies at level 6 and 7 – NQF is not officially confirmed by parliament in Finland
- Same purposes and objectives\*:
  - advanced technical and/or management competences, improving job prospects and helping change or progress in careers
  - most level 5 qualifications are self-standing qualification: own profile and labour market relevance, as opposed to being only the short cycle of another qualification
  - double function (combining labour market orientation with progression opportunities to/within higher education) makes them attractive to learners
  - qualifications at level 5 contribute to lifelong learning by being attractive and accessible to adult and non-traditional learners
  - in higher education the number of ECTS cr. varies from 60 to 180 ECTS, with an average of 120 ECTS.

(\*Qualifications at level 5: progressing in a career or to higher education 2014  
<http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/publications/6123> )

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# Diploma of Higher Education

- Competence modules
- 60(-90) ECTS cr., 10 € / ECTS cr.
- Flexible part-time studies, 1,5-2 years
- Based on the needs of working life
- Students can complement their existing skills or gain completely new competence
- Can be recognized as part of a degree
- No entry requirements, part of Open Studies (Open UAS)



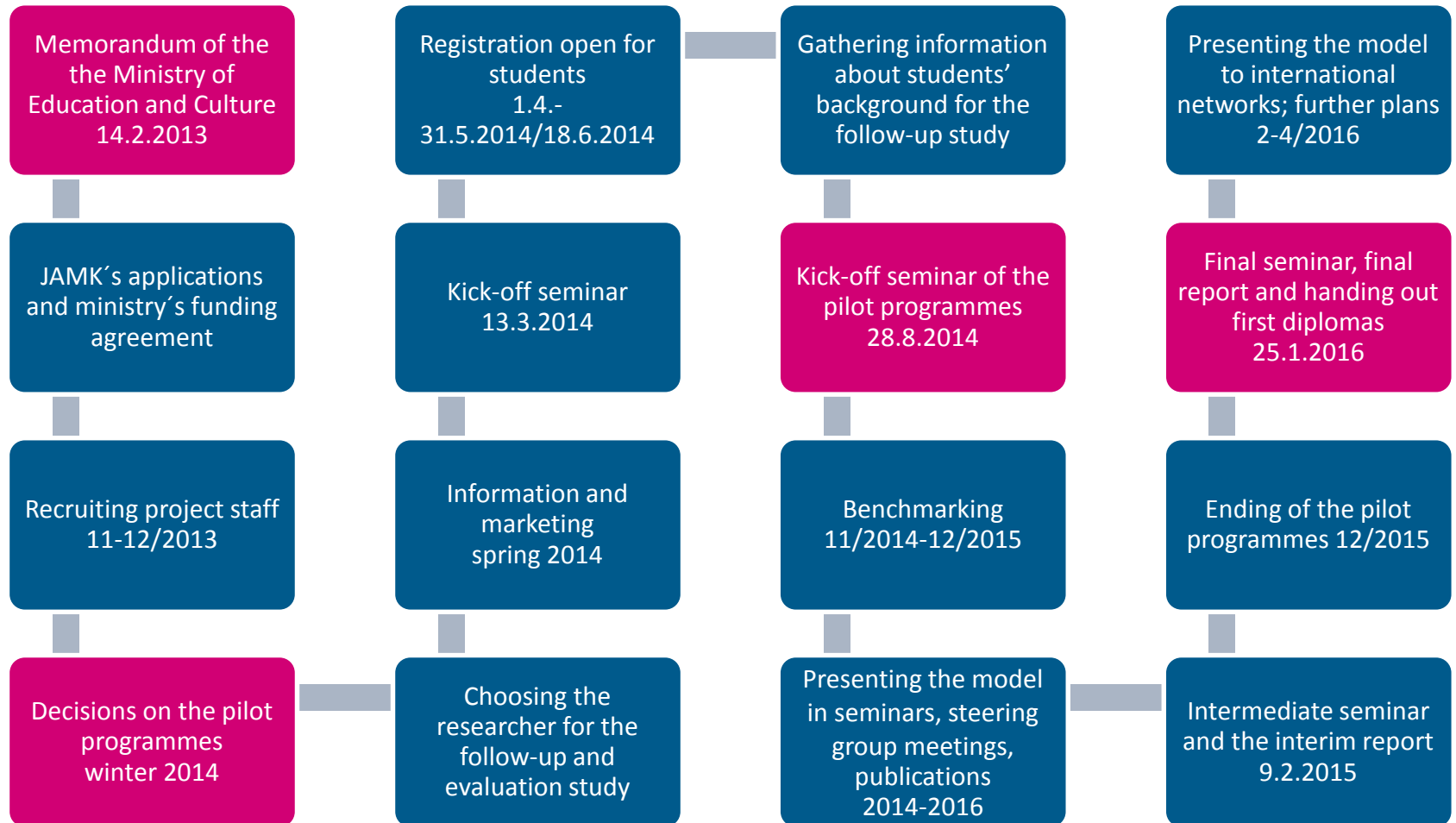


# Evaluation and follow-up study

- The Finnish Institute for Educational Research ([FIER, University of Jyväskylä](#))
- Examines educational and learning processes, the development of competencies, the impacts of education on employment and labour market position, and the place of the Diploma of Higher Education in the Finnish higher education system.
- Interviews (staff, students, employers), questionnaire for the students, participating in the steering group, background research
- Interim report (2/2015) and final report *The most important thing is to learn and develop – The title is not important* (1/2016)

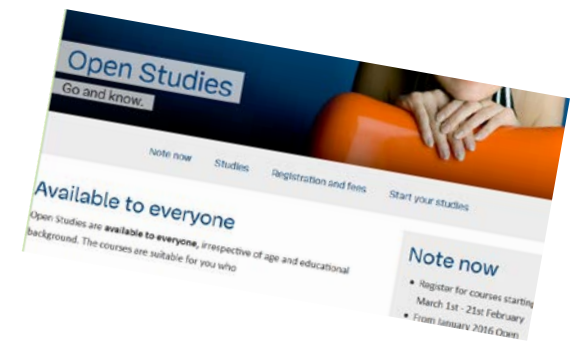


# Pilot project



# Diploma of Higher Education as a part of Open Studies (UAS)

- Universities/universities of applied sciences (UAS) offer Open Studies as a part of the adult education system
- Do not lead to a degree, courses are part of the degree studies → a wide variety of subjects, can be recognized as part of the degree
- Open to everyone, no entry requirements
- Fee-charging courses (max. 15 €/ECTS credit)
- Different roles:
  - ✓ Individual courses
  - ✓ Applying via Open Study Path = first year of the degree studies
  - ✓ Diploma of higher education -pilot = structured competence modules that consists of parts of degrees



<http://www.jamk.fi/en/Education/Open-studies/>

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# Study fees in Finland

- Degree programmes: no tuition fees are charged, entry requirements and entrance examinations
- Open Studies in higher education: max. 15 €/credit –no entry requirements
- Customised continuing education at market prices
- Equality as a fundamental value



# Pilot programmes

- Agricultural entrepreneur business competence
- Gerontological rehabilitation
- HR and financial specialist
- Purchasing
- 85 students:
  - ✓ 78 % women, average age 41 years
  - ✓ Educational background:
    - vocational degree 53 %
    - bachelor degree in UAS 28 %
    - masters degree in the university 19 %
  - ✓ 10 unemployed



Read more about the content of the programmes:

<http://www.jamk.fi/en/Education/diploma-of-higher-education/>

# Pedagogical solutions

Best results with flexible, part-time studies:

- Online studies
- 1-2 meeting / month → networking, group formation, group working, learning from each other, visits
- Central concept: sharing of students' personal experiences and practices within the group
- Combining studying and working
- Development projects
- Guidance and tutoring in a key role







# Results of the pilot

- Not a degree → a freely and rapidly available education to address acute competence shortages in society
  - Is not comparable to a degree → provides the student with 60 ECTS cr. amount of advanced expertise in the chosen area to supplement existing competence
  - 60 credits
    - is comparable to many other qualifications
    - a full degree is often too demanding alongside work
    - enough for additional competence
  - Openness and moderate price enables participation of wide target groups
- Expands the number of people participating in higher education

# Results of the pilot

- Aims to career and working life development with pedagogical solutions → flexible, part-time learning, online studies, peer learning, sufficient guidance and support
- Various backgrounds of the group → a strength, which should be utilised in the teaching as much as possible
- Group formation is the key! Learning, support, networking.
- Diploma as a self-standing qualification – it can offer a route to degree studies
- A lot of "hidden" competences/courses in the degree studies → improving accessibility for non-degree students



# Future of the Diploma of Higher Education?

- No need for so-called short cycle higher education *degrees* in Finnish education system → more flexible, agile models alongside degree education
- Demand, other UASes are interested
- Spring 2016: defining the content of the model on the basis of the pilot and the follow-up study (HEI's and the ministry)
- Diploma of Higher Education in co-operation: combining studies from different HEI's?



# More Information



- Diploma of Higher Education in JAMK UAS:  
<http://www.jamk.fi/en/Education/diploma-of-higher-education/>
- Publication: [Diploma of Higher Education – Competence Modules for Everyone](#) (download free)
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