Good practice of learning of the University of Tartu Student Body

The good practice of learning is an agreement between the members of the University of Tartu Student Body on what good learning is and how it should be done. On the one hand, the practice is an understanding of how to manage successfully at the university. On the other hand, it constitutes principles which the students of the University of Tartu should comply with. The good practice of learning is a part of the university’s good practices.

The prerequisite of good learning is motivation. Motivation works two-ways: the student’s task is to choose a specialisation of interest, set goals for their studies and participate actively in studies. Motivation is supported by well thought-out and prepared studies, counselling and supervision provided by the university.

Good learning is purposed and structured
A part of good learning is setting goals for each lecture or seminar, the entire course, and curriculum which support individual motivation, preparation and development. The learner gives meaning to their activities and analyses what to do and what for and chooses the appropriate measures to do it.

In order to give meaning it is important to have structured learning. The student gets acquainted with the structure of the curriculum and modules, the main tasks and learning outcomes, plans and divides their workload and makes connections between courses. Completing the curriculum should be approached as an integral task which is based on the knowledge and viewpoints that are acquired upon completing the curriculum. The student demonstrates their skill to apply the acquired knowledge with the final thesis or exam. It is important to understand how studies support the achievement of broader future plans and goals.

Good learning includes self-reflection and analysis of studies
Learning is a process. The student reflects on their studies by analysing their own development and how it has been supported during the studies and by analysing the achievement of their goals. On the basis of this the student sets new goals and develops himself/herself, proceeding from the principles of lifelong learning.

Well-thought-out and substantial feedback on the activity of the teaching staff, course and curriculum helps increase the efficiency of the learning experience of the student and others. Being constructively critical if necessary but never inconsiderate or rude, the student gives feedback also during the course so it could be taken into account in studies immediately.

Good learning is focused, open and investigative
The base of learning is curiosity and openness to new viewpoints and knowledge. The student participates actively in all forms of study. Studies focuses on acquiring basic knowledge and achieving original results based on this. The student looks for connections between specialisations and relates theory to practice and experience to what they have learned. Learning also includes student mobility, practical training, interdisciplinary studies, participation in professional associations and other extracurricular activities which support learning and professional development.
Good learning requires preparation
Motivation and curiosity do not substitute diligence; preparation and independent learning are required to achieve each learning outcome. The student does preparatory work before contact-based study and goes through the required materials before seminars and practical sessions.

Good learning is done in cooperation with fellow students
Learning in the university includes learning in a group. When doing group work, students work together to achieve common goals, they also support each other in achieving individual goals. Equal division of work and valuing everyone’s work is important in group work. This type of cooperation serves several purposes: developing transferable skills, diversifying learning methods and shaping academic culture.

Good learning is done in cooperation with teaching staff and supervisors
Cooperation is based on openness to new knowledge, asking questions without false shame and initiating discussions. In addition to work done in lectures and seminars, individual studies and research work is also important and requires cooperation with the supervisor. The student’s initiative and determination and also a respectful and honest communication with the teaching staff and supervisors are important. This also requires complying with the study regulations, set deadlines, agreed times and general good practices.

Good learning is ethical
Good learning is honest and ethical and respects academic practices. Good learning excludes plagiarism, cheating and other dishonest methods. In doing studies and research work, especially in case of research on humans and other living beings, the student complies with ethical requirements. The student does not engage in irrelevant activities and is awake and sober during learning activities. If the student notices that fellow students or teaching stuff violate good academic practice they react in an appropriate manner.