Quick guide for creating Instagram Stories

Before starting your Instagram Story takeover

Agree on the IG takeover with Marjo Eskola (marjo.eskola@helsinki.fi). Admission Services can request takeovers from student ambassadors, but you can also suggest suitable topics and days yourself. These suggestions will be considered on a case-by-case basis, and we can also work on them together.

The Instagram account for the University of Helsinki is universityofhelsinki. Request the password via SMS or email from Marjo or Susse Peltonen at Communications. Your contact person during your shift will be Susse Peltonen (050 317 6385).

Plan the content in advance, and think about what links to share in your posts. You can also take pictures beforehand and store them in your photo gallery, and write text in your notes app. The links can then be copied and pasted into the posts. However, it's not necessary to have everything planned out in advance. You should be prepared to change your plans if something more interesting comes along.

How to begin

Start the Story with a picture that lets the viewers know what the story will include. This picture can be a portrait, landscape or a group photo – it’s your choice. The main thing is that it tells a story. Static closeups of a single person are not interesting. The photo should show where it’s taken, or feature a detail that relates to the University. It can also be a video with you explaining that you’re taking over the University’s account for the day.

Remember that a well-lit photo taken outside always looks better than a dark photo taken inside. It’s better to post sections of the Story as batches of several videos or photos than to make individual posts.

You can speak in Finnish or Swedish, but remember to add a short headline or explanation in English because it is the primary language of the University’s account! Some example headlines: student ambassador takeover day, upper-secondary school visit, working at a student fair. You’re also free to mix English, Finnish and Swedish!

How to put the Story together

The main focus of the University of Helsinki’s Instagram is student life, the University as a study environment and Helsinki as a student city. “Our Insta shows you ideas and dreams of days and nights at the University – follow us and join in the fun!”
Photos feature members of the University community, the University or Helsinki: they must always include people or their working, studying and living environments. Remember that your normal student life is a dream for many applicants! They’re interested in what studying is like, what the classrooms and other facilities look like, what it’s like living as a student in Helsinki and what kinds of student communities Helsinki has. You don’t have to idealise your life for the Story. If your apartment is a mess because you’re too tired after a bunch of exams, it’s an interesting detail of student life.

Our Instagram content should invite action, engagement and enthusiasm, and it should be approachable. Write the captions as if you were talking to someone who doesn’t study at the University of Helsinki. Try using the “questions” sticker for some clips. People tend to react well to them.

You can decide yourself what to photograph and how to do the story. You can use any Story features you want, and add a reasonable number of emojis and stickers (if you’re sure you understand what they mean), hashtags and filters. You can also tag other Instagram users. We primarily recommend that you use the Paris filter if any; don’t post overly filtered photos. We suggest you don’t use the face filters that add features such as cat whiskers.

Location data is encouraged, for example, if you’re at a particular University building.

You can ask other students to join in the Story, but remember to tell them that you intend to post their photos on the University’s Instagram account. If you take photographs in which other people can be identified, for example, during an upper-secondary school visit, you must ask for permission to post them. If the people in the photos are over 18, you can ask them, but for minors you have to request consent from their guardians. In practice this means that you shouldn’t post photos of minors, unless the photo is a general shot of a large group. For example, you don’t have to ask for permission to post a shot of a crowd at a student fair.

Don’t give the login details to anyone else. Don’t take photos of intoxicated people. The University of Helsinki’s Communications staff may moderate the story at their discretion.

**Posts for the feed**

Post one photo a day to the University of Helsinki’s Instagram feed. Introduce yourself briefly (name, major subject) and explain which topic or event you intend to feature in your Instagram story. Write in English! Use hashtags, such as #wearehelsinkuni, #takeover, #helsinginyliopisto, #universityofhelsinki, #helsingforsuniversitet and #studentambassadors, #studentambassadörr and #opiskelijalähettäjät. If your Story will primarily focus on your work as a student ambassador, you can also use the hashtag #unijob. Feel free to use other hashtags. The caption can also include some Finnish or Swedish. Again, use emojis sparingly.

The feed post should always be taken with your camera app, (not in the Instagram app).

Choose a well-lit location and a photo that tells a story. The photo can be of people or of an environment. If it features people, they should be doing something (it can be funny).

The photo size for Instagram posts is 4x5.
You can crop the photo in your photo app.
You can also share the post in your own social media channels.

Technical instructions

Post approximately ten images in the story (they can be photos, videos or text). Mainly shoot in portrait orientation. Avoid background music for copyright reasons.

An Instagram Story video should be shot in portrait mode and be less than ten seconds in duration. The recommended video resolution is 1080x1920 pixels.

Instagram Stories are online for 24 hours and are then automatically deleted. The Stories can later be linked to the University’s Instagram profile as a highlight (e.g., under Our students). Takeover shifts are primarily scheduled to cover a full day from morning to morning. It doesn’t matter if there is some overlap in the Stories.

You can also include your own Instagram account in the Story, but bear in mind that you may receive a huge number of questions about applications and such. You can and should always direct such questions to Admission Services.

If you receive questions on the post or Story, you can reply as the University (if you can and have the time), but this is not necessary. Usually the questions have to do with applications and scholarships. If you receive any harassment, contact Susse, who will decide on moderation. This is extremely rare, however. We usually just get hearts.

Finally

At the end of your Story, don’t forget to thank the audience.

Instagram Story instructions: https://www.facebook.com/help/instagram/1660923094227526/