

Heuristic	Is the heuristic violated? How?	Severity
1. Visibility of system status The system should always keep users informed about what is going on, through appropriate feedback within reasonable time.	<p>The front page of oma.metropolia.fi gives good information to the user. The main page gives the user immediate information about the newest announcements, latest events, quick access to user's workspaces and news. Each section is color matched so they are easily recognizable.</p> <p>On the upper right the user can clearly see the number of unread messages.</p>	
2. Match between system and the real world The system should speak the users' language, with words, phrases, and concepts familiar to the user, rather than system-oriented terms. Follow real-world conventions, making information appear in a natural and logical order.	<p>In this case "real world" means what the user is accustomed to. The website has a very conventional design with the username and messages on the right upper page as well as the menu options on the left upper side. It is a very familiar design for any user. The menu icons are easily recognizable, and one could easily guess what they mean even without clicking on them.</p>	
3. User control and freedom Users often choose system functions by mistake and will need a clearly marked 'emergency exit' to leave the unwanted state without having to go through an extended dialogue. Support undo and redo.	<p>If the user remains on the main website, there's the possibility to press the main logo and you will be brought back to the main page. A slight issue is that a multitude of buttons on the main page open different types of external applications like outlook email, tietohallinto.metropolia.fi. From these websites you can come back to oma.metropolia.fi just by pressing the browser's back button. Another slight issue is that these external websites open in the same window as opposed to a new one.</p>	
4. Consistency and standards Users should not have to wonder whether different words, situations or actions mean the same thing. Follow platform conventions.	<p>The Students Desktop and General Desktop are very similar and if a user knows how to browse one, he'll know his way in the second. Both have the same layout with the Username on the right and menu buttons on the left. The Student's Desktop also includes the workspaces, shortcuts, and announcements. So, it feels familiar.</p>	
5. Error prevention Even better than a good error message is a careful design which prevents a problem from occurring in the first place.	<p>Even though the menu icons are clear and understandable, there can still be confusions as to what they do. There is no functionality to hover over icons and be shown what a specific icon does. One needs to click on it and go to a different page to find out.</p>	

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6. Recognition rather than recall Make objects, actions, and options visible. The user should not have to remember information from one part of the dialogue to another. Instructions for use of the system should be visible or easily retrievable whenever appropriate.	The general desktop of the website has a recognition-based design where, with little experience, you could reach the places you want to reach. The problem I'm seeing is when a student wants to switch to the student's desktop. The shortcut for student desktop is hidden behind the main logo.	
7. Flexibility and efficiency of use Accelerators – unseen by the novice user – may often speed up the interaction for the expert user, such that the system can cater to both inexperienced and experienced users. Allow users to tailor frequent actions.	As I mentioned in 3. The link to the student's desktop is hidden behind the main page logo. This can be of course seen as a shortcut for users that know what they're doing. The website offers the users a possibility to create favorites and links to certain places on the website for fast access. This makes for a smoother experience and less time wasted searching through the menu.	
8. Aesthetic and minimalist design Dialogues should not contain information which is irrelevant or rarely needed. Every extra unit of information in a dialogue competes with the relevant units of information and diminishes their relative visibility.	All in all, the website looks crowded. It's in some places simplistic enough and in other places one is bombarded with a lot of information. This is to be expected though since a student needs a lot of information at hand and fast. The good thing is that most of the cards that appear on the main page can be customized to show more or less information based on everyone's preference.	
9. Help users recognize, diagnose, and recover from errors Error messages should be expressed in plain language (no codes), precisely indicate the problem and constructively suggest a solution.	Errors are quite common on oma.metropolia.fi and most of the time they show a random code that doesn't help anyone but helpdesk. They do present with a solution since there's usually a shortcut to Helpdesk's link so one can report the problem.	
10. Help and documentation Even though it is better if the system can be used without documentation, it may be necessary to provide help and documentation. Any such information should be easy to search, focused on the user's task, list concrete steps to be carried out and not be too large.	The Student Desktop offers the student plenty of help and documentation to do whatever one needs. There are sometimes texts that are written just in Finnish, so an external translating app is needed but overall, the website guides it's users with help.	