

Translation from Finnish
Legally binding only in Finnish and Swedish
Ministry of Education and Culture, Finland

Government Decree on University Degrees and Professional Specialisation Programmes

(794/2004 Amendments up to 27/2015 included)

Chapter 1
General provisions

Section 1 (1439/2014)
Scope of application

This Decree lays down provisions on the Bachelor's and Master's degrees, academic and artistic postgraduate degrees, and professional specialisation programmes that may be completed at the universities referred to in the Universities Act (558/2009). Provisions on the third-cycle postgraduate degrees awarded by universities are issued separately.

Section 2
Educational responsibility for each field of study and degree

A list of the fields of study, the degree titles and the universities awarding the degrees is appended to this Decree.

Section 3 (2013/1039)
Provision of education leading to Bachelor's and Master's degrees

Education leading to Bachelor's and Master's degrees may be provided by study subject or in the form of a degree programme.

Education leading to a Master's degree that is based on a Bachelor's degree or education of corresponding level may also be provided as a degree programme subject to a separate admissions procedure.

Education leading to a Bachelor's or Master's degree may be provided in the form of international cooperation. Education leading to a degree may also be provided in the form of education leading to one or more degrees together with one or more Finnish or foreign universities.

Section 4

Section 4 has been repealed by Decree 1039/2013.

Section 5

Units of scope of studies

Credits are used as the units of scope for the studies . Study units are quantified according to the required workload. The average work input of 1,600 hours required for completing one academic year of studies corresponds to 60 credits.

Section 6 Language proficiency

Student shall demonstrate attainment of the following standards in the studies included in the programme for a Bachelor's or Master's degree, or in some other manner:

1) the proficiency in Finnish and Swedish language that is required of central government staff in bilingual public organisations under subsection 1 of section 6 of the Act on the Knowledge of Languages Required of Personnel in Public Bodies (424/2003) and that is necessary for their own field; and

2) proficiency in at least one foreign language that enables students to monitor progress in their own field and operate in an international setting.

The provisions of subsection 1 do not apply to a student whose school education was conducted in a language other than Finnish or Swedish, or to a student whose school education took place abroad. The universities shall determine the language proficiency of such students.

Universities may either wholly or partly exempt a student from the language proficiency requirements laid down in subsection 1 where there are special reasons for doing so.

Chapter 2 Bachelor's degree

Section 7 (2013/1039) Objectives of education leading to a Bachelor's degree

The objective of education leading to a Bachelor's degree is for the graduate to have:

1) a grasp of the basics of the major and minor subjects or equivalent educational programme included in the degree, or of the studies included in the degree programme, and the capabilities to monitor progress in the field;

2) the knowledge and skills for academic thinking and working methods, or the knowledge and skills required for artistic work;

3) the capabilities for studies leading to a Master's degree and for lifelong learning;

4) the capabilities for applying acquired knowledge when working in positions and international collaboration in the graduate's own field;

5) adequate communicative and language proficiency for duties in the graduate's own field, and for international operations and collaboration.

The education is based on academic research or artistic activity, and on professional practices in the field.

Section 8

Scope of studies required for a Bachelor's degree

The scope of studies required for a Bachelor's degree is 180 credits, unless otherwise provided below. Universities shall arrange the education in such a way that students can complete the degree in three academic years of full-time study.

The scope of studies required for the degree of Bachelor of Fine Arts is 210 credits. Universities shall arrange the education in such a way that students can complete the degree in three and a half academic years of full-time study.

Section 9 (2013/1039)

Structure of a Bachelor's degree

The studies leading to a Bachelor's degree may include:

1) core and intermediate studies;

2) communication and language studies;

3) interdisciplinary study modules;

4) other studies;

5) practical training for professional development.

The degree of Bachelor of Science in Pharmacy includes a compulsory internship. The minimum scope of core studies in the subject or an equivalent module is 25 credits. Together with core

studies, the minimum scope of intermediate studies in the subject or an equivalent module is 60 credits. The intermediate studies in the major subject or an equivalent module or degree programme include a thesis of a minimum of six and a maximum of ten credits.

Section 10

Completion of a Bachelor's degree

To be awarded a Bachelor's degree, the student shall complete at least core and intermediate studies in the major subject or an equivalent module or degree programme, together with language and communication studies.

The student shall demonstrate attainment of the assigned objectives of the degree, the studies and the thesis, and the language proficiency referred to in section 6. The student shall write a maturity essay demonstrating conversance with the topic of the thesis and proficiency in either the Finnish or Swedish language.

Where a student is not required to possess the language proficiency referred to in subsection 1 of section 6, the university separately determines the language of the maturity essay.

Section 11

Section 11 was repealed by Decree 1439/2014.

Chapter 3

Master's degree

Section 12 (2013/1039)

Objectives of education leading to a Master's degree

The objective of education leading to a Master's degree is for the graduate to have:

- 1) a good grasp of the major subject or equivalent module, and a good grasp of the basics of the minor subjects or a good grasp of the advanced studies included in the degree programme;
- 2) the knowledge and skills for applying academic knowledge and working methods, or the knowledge and skills for independent and demanding artistic work;
- 3) the knowledge and skills for discharging demanding specialist and development duties and international collaboration when working in the graduate's own field;
- 4) the knowledge and skills for academic or artistic postgraduate studies and lifelong learning;

5) good communicative and language proficiency for duties in the graduate's own field, and for international operations and collaboration.

The education is based on academic research or artistic activity, and on professional practices in the field.

Section 13 (2013/1039)

Scope of studies required for a Master's degree

The scope of studies required for a Master's degree is 120 credits, unless otherwise provided in this section or in section 14. Universities shall arrange the education in such a way that students can complete the degree in two academic years of full-time study.

The scope of studies required for the degrees of Master of Arts (Psychology), Master of Music and Licentiate of Odontology is 150 credits.

Universities shall arrange the education in such a way that students can complete the degree in two and a half academic years of full-time study.

The scope of studies required for the degrees of Licentiate of Veterinary Medicine and Licentiate of Medicine is 180 credits. Universities shall arrange the education in such a way that students can complete the degree in three academic years of full-time study.

Section 14 (2011/351)

Arrangement and scope of education leading to a Master's degree in the fields of medicine and dentistry

Universities may arrange education leading to a Master's degree in the fields of medicine and dentistry without including a Bachelor's degree in the education.

The scope of studies required for the degree of Licentiate of Medicine is 360 credits if the university arranges the education leading to the Master's degree in such a way that it does not include a Bachelor's degree. Universities shall arrange the education in such a way that students can complete the degree in six academic years of full-time study.

The scope of studies required for the degree of Licentiate of Dentistry is 330 credits if the university arranges the education leading to the Master's degree in such a way that it does not

include a Bachelor's degree. Universities shall arrange the education in such a way that students can complete the degree in five and a half academic years of full-time study.

Section 15 (2013/1039) **Structure of a Master's degree**

The studies leading to a Master's degree may include:

- 1) core and intermediate studies and advanced studies;
- 2) communication and language studies;
- 3) interdisciplinary study modules;
- 4) other studies;
- 5) an internship to develop expertise.

A compulsory internship forms part of studies for the degrees of Licentiate of Medicine, Licentiate of Dentistry and Licentiate of Veterinary Medicine, of education in social work forming part of a degree in the field of social sciences, of the degree of Master of Science in Pharmacy, and of the degree of Master of Science in Psychology.

Core studies and intermediate studies have the minimum scopes referred to in subsection 3 of section 9. The minimum scope of advanced studies is 60 credits. The advanced studies in the major subject or an equivalent module or degree programme include a thesis of a minimum of 20 and a maximum of 40 credits.

Section 16 **Completion of a Master's degree**

To be awarded a Master's degree, the student shall complete at least advanced studies in the major subject or an equivalent module, or the advanced studies of a degree programme, and any internship supervised by the university that may be included in the degree. The student shall also complete adequate minor subject studies, unless these have been completed in education leading to a Bachelor's degree.

The student shall demonstrate attainment of the assigned objectives of the degree, the studies and the thesis, and the language proficiency referred to in section 6. The student shall write a maturity essay demonstrating conversance with the topic of the thesis, and proficiency in either the Finnish or Swedish language.

The student shall not be required to demonstrate proficiency in the Finnish or Swedish language in a maturity essay submitted for a Master's degree completed in the same language if the student has demonstrated the said language proficiency in a maturity essay submitted for a Bachelor's degree.

Where a student is not required to possess the language proficiency referred to in subsection 1 of section 6, the university separately determines the language of the maturity essay.

Section 17 (2009/1136)
Compliance with European Community legislation

The arrangement of education leading to the degrees of Licentiate of Veterinary Medicine, Licentiate of Dentistry and Licentiate of Medicine, the degree of Master of Science in Pharmacy and the degree of Master of Science in Architecture, and of the education leading to the Bachelor's degrees on which these Master's degrees are based, shall comply with European Community legislation concerning the minimum level of education.

Chapter 4
Provisions on teacher education

Section 18 (2013/1039)
Objectives of teacher education

A special objective of teacher education arranged in universities is for the graduate to be capable of working independently as a teacher, instructor and educator.

Section 19
Teacher education studies

Teacher education comprises:

- 1) studies conferring professional competence for positions in early childhood education and care and pre-primary education;
- 2) multidisciplinary studies in the subjects and cross-curricular themes taught in basic education, conferring professional competence for teaching the common core subjects included in the basic education syllabus under section 11 of the Basic Education Act (628/1998);
- 3) studies conferring professional competence for positions in special needs education;
- 4) studies conferring professional competence for positions in student guidance and study guidance;

5) pedagogical teacher education studies, which are didactically-oriented studies in educational science including guided teaching practice, and allow specialisation particularly in basic education, general upper secondary education, vocational education and training, or adult education duties; and

6) studies in the teaching subject of subject teacher education, which are studies furthering mastery of a subject included in basic education, general upper secondary education or other education.

The minimum scope of the studies referred to in paragraphs 1–5 of subsection 1 is 60 credits, arranged by universities with an educational responsibility in educational science. The teaching practice referred to in paragraph 5 of the said subsection shall be completed in a teacher training school, in another educational institution approved by the university, or in some other manner approved by the university.

The studies in the teaching subject for subject teacher education referred to in paragraph 6 of subsection 1 above are core, intermediate and advanced studies in the major subject or in an equivalent module included in the Master's degree, and core and intermediate studies in another subject or in an equivalent module.

Section 20

Structure of teacher education

Education leading to the degree of Master of Arts (Education) may include the class teacher education, special needs teacher education and guidance counsellor education referred to in subsection 1 of section 19. Part of the studies involved in this education may be completed in studies leading to the Bachelor's degree that forms the basis for the Master's degree. Education leading to the degree of Bachelor of Arts (Education) may include kindergarten teacher education.

Kindergarten teacher education includes the studies referred to in subsection 1 of section 19 conferring professional competence for positions in early childhood education and care and for pre-primary education; class teacher education includes multidisciplinary studies in the teaching subjects and cross-curricular themes taught in basic education; special needs teacher education includes studies conferring professional competence for special needs education, and guidance counsellor education includes studies conferring professional competence for student guidance and study guidance. The pedagogical teacher education studies referred to in the same subsection are

included in all of the teacher education forms listed above, with the exception of kindergarten teacher education.

In addition to inclusion in the degrees of Bachelor of Arts (Education) and Master of Arts (Education), the teacher education studies referred to in subsection 2 may also be incorporated into other applicable Bachelor's and Master's degrees, or may also be completed separately as non-degree studies after graduation.

Education leading to a Master's degree may include subject teacher education, including the studies in one or two teaching subjects referred to in subsection 1 of section 19, and the pedagogical studies of a teacher. The studies may be completed either as part of a degree or separately. Part of the studies involved in subject teacher education may be completed in education leading to the Bachelor's degree that forms the basis for the Master's degree.

Chapter 4a (2014/1439) **Professional specialisation programmes**

Section 20a (2014/1439) **Objectives of professional specialisation programmes and demonstration of competence**

The objective of professional specialisation programmes arranged in universities is for the student, based on educational background and work experience:

- 1) to be able to serve in demanding specialist functions in a field of work specified in an agreement procedure under subsection 3 of section 7b of the Universities Act (558/2009);
- 2) to command the academic professional expertise required for a specialist role and its links to the operating environment;
- 3) to be capable of analysing, assessing and developing the professional practices of the student's field of specialisation, applying academic research findings or the methods of artistic activity;
- 4) to be able to serve in organisations and networks as a specialist in the student's own field of specialisation.

Expertise is demonstrated in the manner specified in the agreement procedure laid down in subsection 3 of section 7b of the Universities Act (558/2009).

Section 20b (2014/1439)
Scope of professional specialisation programmes

The minimum scope of professional specialisation programmes is 30 credits.

Section 20c (2014/1439)
Agreement on professional specialisation programmes

An agreement of the kind referred to in subsection 3 of section 7b of the Universities Act (558/2009) may be contracted on condition that the parties to the agreement comprise a majority of the universities with the educational responsibility specified in the annex to this Decree in the field of education in which the professional specialisation programmes are to be arranged.

With respect to music education, the parties to the agreement shall nevertheless comprise a majority of the universities to which educational responsibility for music education has been assigned in this Decree or in a Decree of the Ministry of Education and Culture issued pursuant to subsection 3 of section 7 of the Universities Act (558/2009).

The parties representing the world of work and the manner in which their representatives have participated in the agreement procedure shall be recorded in the agreement.

An agreement on a professional specialisation programme shall at least specify the name of the programme to be arranged, its scope, objectives, and target group, and the demonstration of student expertise. A university may also join an agreement on a professional specialisation programme after the agreement has been concluded. The original parties to the agreement shall be required to accept as parties to the agreement all universities to which educational responsibility for the field in which the professional specialisation programme is arranged has been assigned in this Decree or in a Decree of the Ministry of Education and Culture issued pursuant to subsection 3 of section 7 of the Universities Act (558/2009). Parties join an agreement by signing the original agreement document.

Section 20d (2014/1439)
Arrangement of professional specialisation programmes

Universities may arrange professional specialisation programmes in accordance with their educational responsibilities. It shall be a condition of arranging a professional specialisation programme that the university is a party to an agreement referred to in section 20c.

Section 20e (2014/1439)

Public register of professional specialisation programmes

Details of the parties to an agreement referred to in subsection 3 of section 7b of the Universities Act (558/2009), the duration of the agreement and the name and professional specialisation programme criteria of the professional specialisation programme specified in the agreement shall be entered in the public register of professional specialisation programmes.

The criteria entered in the register shall be the scope, objectives and target group of the education to be arranged. Other necessary details of the agreement may also be entered in the register. The register is maintained by the Finnish National Agency for Education. Parties to the agreement are required to notify details of an agreement to the public register. A university that arranges a professional specialisation programme based on an in-house decision because there are no other universities with educational responsibility in the field of specialisation concerned has a corresponding duty to notify details of professional specialisation programmes for the register.

The Finnish National Agency for Education maintains a public electronically viewable file of current agreements on professional specialisation programmes.

Chapter 5 Postgraduate academic and artistic education

Section 21 (2013/1039)

Objectives of postgraduate academic and artistic education

The objective of postgraduate education is for those completing the course to:

- 1) be profoundly familiar with their own field of research and of its social significance;
- 2) have gained the knowledge and skills to apply academic research methods independently and critically and create new academic knowledge;
- 3) be highly familiar with the progress, basic problems and research methods of their own field of research;
- 4) have attained a grasp of the general theory of science and other disciplines related to their field of research that enables monitoring of progress in those fields;
- 5) have gained communicative and language proficiency and other knowledge and skills that are adequate for discharging broad and demanding specialist and development duties at work and in international collaboration.

In addition to the objectives referred to in subsection 1, the objective of postgraduate education leading to the degree of Doctor of Arts may be for the student to gain the knowledge and skills for independently conceiving methods of artistic creation or for creating products or performances that satisfy high artistic demands.

In addition to, or instead of the objectives referred to in subsection 1, the objective of postgraduate education in the field of art and design that does not lead to the degree referred to in subsection 2 may be for the student to gain the knowledge and skills for independently conceiving methods of artistic creation or creating products or performances that satisfy high artistic demands.

Section 22 (2013/1039)
Completion of a doctorate

To be awarded a doctorate, a student admitted for postgraduate education shall:

- 1) complete the postgraduate studies;
- 2) demonstrate independent and critical thinking in the student's field of research; and
- 3) prepare and publicly defend a doctoral dissertation, or supply any other public thesis project or final project stipulated by the university.

Section 23
Completion of a licentiate degree

A student admitted to postgraduate education may be awarded the licentiate degree on completing the portion of postgraduate studies prescribed by the university and any professional specialisation programmes included in the degree.

The licentiate degree includes a licentiate thesis, in which the student demonstrates good conversance with the field of research, and the knowledge and skills for independently and critically applying academic research methods.

A licentiate degree in the fields of music and of theatre and dance may include a public thesis project or final project instead of a licentiate thesis.

A quantity deemed adequate by the university of academic publications or manuscripts vetted for publication concerning a given problem area and a paper summarising the findings or some other

work satisfying corresponding academic criteria may also be approved as a licentiate thesis. The publications may also include co-authored publications if the author's independent contribution to them can be demonstrated.

Section 24

Section 24 was repealed by Decree 1439/2014.

Chapter 6 Miscellaneous provisions

Section 25

Section 25 was repealed by Decree 1136/2009.

Section 26 (2014/1439) Diplomas

On completion of a Bachelor's or Master's degree, the university issues a diploma to the graduate, which shall state:

- 1) the degree title and the field of study;
- 2) the major subject or equivalent module or the degree programme;
- 3) any professional specialisation programmes included in the degree;
- 4) the principal content of the degree;
- 5) the language proficiency demonstrated by the student; section 19 of the Government Decree on the Demonstration of Proficiency in the Finnish and Swedish Languages in Civil Service (481/2003) shall be considered when recording language proficiency.

The diploma issued for a postgraduate university degree is governed by paragraphs 1–4 of subsection 1.

A Finnish or Swedish language diploma and, in addition to the Finnish or Swedish degree title specified in the annex, the English degree title so specified, is also issued for a degree completed in a language other than Finnish or Swedish in accordance with subsection 2 of section 11 of the Universities Act (558/2009).

If, in accordance with subsection 2 of section 3, education leading to a degree has been arranged in the form of education leading to one or more degrees together with one or more Finnish or

foreign universities, then the diploma shall specify the other degrees and diplomas issued on the basis of the same education and the other universities that issue the degree.

Universities issue a certificate to the student on completion of a professional specialisation programme. The certificate shall state the name and principal content of the professional specialisation programme.

Universities issue to a person who has completed a degree or studies at the university a special supplement to the diploma or certificate intended for international use. The supplement shall provide adequate details of the university and of the studies and study attainments referred to in the diploma or certificate, and of their level and status in the education system.

While studies are still ongoing, universities furnish, on request, students with a certificate of the studies that the students have already completed. If the degree includes the teacher education studies referred to in section 19, then the diploma indicates the eligibility conferred by the studies under the Decree on the Qualification Requirements for Teaching Personnel (986/1998).

A university where a study attainment can be completed that forms part of the teacher education studies referred to in section 19 may issue a certificate on request indicating that the applicant has demonstrated acquisition of knowledge and skills corresponding to the study attainment otherwise than by means of the studies prescribed in statutory eligibility requirements. The university may require the applicant to complete supplementary studies as a condition of issuing the certificate.

Section 27 (2013/1039) **Academic titles**

A university may entitle:

1) a person holding the degree of Master of Science in Economics and Business Administration to use the title *ekonomi*;

2) a person holding the degree of Master of Science in Agriculture and Forestry to use the title *agronomior metsänhoitaja*;

3) a person holding a Diploma in Fine Arts awarded under the repealed Decree concerning the Lower and Higher University Degree in Fine Arts (367/1993) to use the title *kuvataiteen kandidaatti* and a person holding a Degree in Fine Arts awarded under the said Decree to use the title *kuvataiteen maisteri*; and

4) a person who has been awarded a Master's degree called *kandidaatti* under provisions and regulations previously in force to use the title *maisteri*.

5) a person who has been awarded a Bachelor's and Master's degree majoring in meteorology, or a Master's degree called *kandidaatti* majoring in meteorology under provisions and regulations previously in force, to use the title *meteorologi*.

Section 28

Development of education and degrees

Universities shall continually evaluate and improve degrees, degree studies and teaching. Particular attention shall be paid to the quality of degrees, instruction, study guidance and studies, to educational needs in society, to the national and international equivalence of degrees and studies, and to the effectiveness of education.

Chapter 7

Entry into force and transitional provisions

Section 29

Entry into force

This Decree shall enter into force on 1 August 2005.

This Decree shall repeal the following decrees as subsequently amended:

- 1) Decree on Degrees in Veterinary Medicine (298/1978) issued on 21 April 1978;
- 2) Decree on Degrees in Pharmacy (246/1994) issued on 30 March 1994;
- 3) Decree on the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy (1279/1991) issued on 25 October 1991;
- 4) Decree on Degrees in Dentistry (290/1976) issued on 26 March 1976;
- 5) Decree on Degrees in the Humanities and Natural Sciences (221/1994) issued on 18 March 1994;
- 6) Decree on Degrees in Educational Science and Teacher Education (576/1995) issued on 21 April 1995;
- 7) Decree on Degrees in Economics and Business Administration (139/1995) issued on 31 January 1995;
- 8) Decree on Degrees Awarded by the Academy of Fine Arts (381/1997) issued on 25 April 1997;

- 9) Decree on Degrees in Sport and Health Sciences (327/1994) issued on 22 April 1994;
- 10) Decree on Degrees in Medicine (762/1975) issued on 26 September 1975;
- 11) Decree on Degrees in Agriculture and Forestry (214/1995) issued on 17 February 1995;
- 12) Decree on Degrees in Law (86/1996) issued on 12 February 1996;
- 13) Decree on Degrees in Psychology (318/1996) issued on 3 May 1996;
- 14) Decree on Degrees awarded by Sibelius Academy (148/1995) issued on 3 February 1995;
- 15) Decree on University Degrees in Art and Design (440/1994) issued on 3 June 1994;
- 16) Decree on University Degrees in Theatre and Dance (216/1995) issued on 17 February 1995;
- 17) Decree on Degrees in Technology (215/1995) issued on 17 February 1995;
- 18) Decree on Degrees in Theology (517/1995) issued on 7 April 1995;
- 19) Decree on Degrees in Health Sciences (628/1997) issued on 19 June 1997; and
- 20) Decree on Degrees in Social Sciences (245/1994) issued on 30 March 1994.

Subsection 3 was repealed by Decree 561/2005.

Section 30

Status of students

Pursuant to the transitional provisions of the Act Amending the Universities Act (715/2004), a student who, on the entry into force of this Decree, is studying for a degree under a Decree repealed under section 29 shall be entitled to transfer to studies governed by this Decree, or to continue studying under the repealed Decree.

The student may count study attainments gained under the repealed Decree towards a degree governed by this Decree, as stipulated by the university.

Section 31

Transitional provision on degree titles in the field of law

The provisions of Acts or other statutes governing the degree of Candidate of Laws shall also govern the degree of Master of Laws after this Decree enters into force.

Section 32

Titles of Candidate of Medicine and Candidate of Dentistry

A student in medicine may continue to be awarded the title of Candidate of Medicine referred to in subsection 3 of section 17 of the Decree on Degrees in Medicine if all of the universities with educational responsibility for medical science arrange education leading to the degree of Licentiate of Medicine with no Bachelor's degree included in the education.

A student in dentistry may continue to be awarded the title of Candidate of Dentistry referred to in subsection 4 of section 17 of the Decree on Degrees in Dentistry if all of the universities with educational responsibility for dental science arrange education leading to the degree of Licentiate of Dentistry with no Bachelor's degree included in the education.

A list of university education fields, degree titles and universities awarding degrees is appended to this Decree. (2013/1039)