



## Recognition of foreign qualifications in Finland

Recognition of qualifications refers to a decision on the types of eligibility that a foreign qualification provides when applying for a job or a place of study. Responsibility for recognition of qualifications rests with the Finnish National Board of Education (FNBE), a field-specific authority, an employer, a higher education institution or some other educational institution, depending on the purpose for which recognition is applied.

- **The Finnish National Board of Education** decides on the eligibility conferred by foreign qualifications for posts in Finland for which a higher education degree of a certain education is required.
- **Field-specific authorities** decide on granting the right to practise a profession or use a professional title. For instance, decisions on health care and social welfare professions are made by the National Supervisory Authority for Welfare and Health, Valvira ([www.valvira.fi](http://www.valvira.fi)).
- **Private sector employers** generally assess the competence conferred by a foreign qualification themselves when deciding on employee recruitment.
- **Higher education institutions and other educational institutions** decide on the eligibility that foreign qualifications give for further studies in Finland and on recognition of studies completed abroad towards a qualification to be completed in Finland. Contact details of Finnish higher education institutions: [studyinfo.fi](http://studyinfo.fi).

## Finnish National Board of Education decisions on recognition of qualifications and studies completed abroad

A person who has completed a qualification abroad usually requires a decision on recognition of higher education studies completed abroad if he or she applies for a position in Finland for which a higher education degree of a certain level or a certain education is required.

The qualification must be completed. In addition, the qualification must fall within the official education system of the country in which the qualification has been completed.

A decision may only be obtained by application. Each application is processed individually. A decision on recognition of a higher education qualification does not transform the foreign qualification into a Finnish one. A Finnish qualification title can only be obtained by completing a Finnish qualification.

### Types of decisions

#### Decisions on recognition of the level of a degree

A foreign higher education degree can be recognised as comparable to a Bachelor's or a Master's degree completed at a university of applied sciences (UAS), a Bachelor's or a Master's degree completed at a university, or to a postgraduate Licentiate's or Doctor's degree. The studies must be comparable with those required in Finland in terms of their scope, requirements and orientation.

#### Decisions on eligibility for a profession

Holders of foreign qualifications need a decision made by an authority to be qualified for a profession for which a certain education is required. A list of these professions and the authorities that issue the decisions is provided on our website.

The Finnish National Board of Education decides on the eligibility that foreign qualifications give for positions among others in the education sector and in early childhood education and care. There are two types of decisions: decisions in which foreign higher education studies are recognised as comparable with certain studies completed in Finland, and decisions that concern recognition of professional qualifications.

### **Recognition of higher education studies completed abroad as comparable with certain studies completed in Finland**

The Finnish National Board of Education may recognise a foreign higher education degree or foreign higher education studies as comparable with certain higher education studies that are required for working in a profession or a position in Finland. The studies must be comparable with those required in Finland in terms of their scope, requirements, orientation and contents.

The decision may require supplementing studies. To complete the supplementing studies, the recipient of the decision applies for the right to study at a Finnish higher education institution.

### **Recognition of professional qualifications**

An EU/EEA or Swiss citizen who has obtained professional qualifications in another EU/EEA Member State or in Switzerland may apply to the Finnish National Board of Education for the recognition of professional qualifications. The applicant must possess qualifications in another Member State for the same profession for which he or she seeks eligibility in Finland. In certain situations, professional experience is also required.

The decision may require the applicant to complete an adaptation period or an aptitude test.

### **Applying for a decision and the processing of the application**

To apply for a decision, the applicant needs to send an application form with appendices to the Finnish National Board of Education. Detailed instructions are given in the application form.

The application form and instructions are available in Finnish, Swedish and English on our website. In addition, the application instructions are available in Russian.

The decision is issued in Finnish or Swedish. It is subject to a fee. The applicant may appeal against the decision to an Administrative Court. Appeal instructions are appended to the decision.

### **Statements on vocational qualifications completed abroad**

The Finnish National Board of Education issues advisory statements on foreign vocational qualifications for which it is not possible to issue a decision. A statement can be drawn up on a completed qualification that falls within the official system of education in the country in which the qualification was completed. A statement does not confer eligibility for a position for which a certain education or an education of a certain level is required. Nevertheless, it may be helpful when seeking employment or applying for studies.

The statement provides information about the level and content of the qualification and the competence provided in the country of origin. Statements are issued in Finnish or Swedish.

To apply for a statement, the applicant needs to send a completed application with appendices to the Finnish National Board of Education. The application form and instructions are available in Finnish, Swedish and English on our website. The statement is subject to a fee.

## Further information:

The Finnish National Board of Education (FNBE)

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[recognition@oph.fi](mailto:recognition@oph.fi)

[www.oph.fi/tutkintojentunnustaminen](http://www.oph.fi/tutkintojentunnustaminen)

[www.oph.fi/recognition](http://www.oph.fi/recognition)

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