Qualifications in Humanities and Education (vocational qualifications and further qualifications) impart the competence needed in many types of tasks involving instruction, education and communication. Jobs are offered by municipalities, congregations, churches, associations and many organisations, but the field also offers opportunities for entrepreneurs or self-employed people. Professionals in this sector are employed by day care centres and in open early childhood education, or by schools and educational institutes, youth centres, enterprises, and institutions. Actors in the field provide services and organise many types of activities for children, young people, and families, including interpretation services for immigrants and guidance and instruction for those using sign language or various other communication methods.

Prerequisites for working in this field are good skills in interpersonal relationships and interaction and an ability to take into consideration the needs for instruction and support of different customers in various age groups. Employees in this field often work in close contact with people of all ages. They need to be psychologically resilient, balanced, and flexible. In many vocations in the field, they also need to assume responsibility for the safety of the customers or the people they instruct. Ethical responsibility associated with values is also emphasised in jobs in this field. Communication and self-expression skills are also important in the field in order to make sure that messages are comprehensibly transmitted. Familiarity with the way the society’s service system functions is a precondition for acting in multiprofessional teams and networks.

The employment situation in the field is good. The need for instruction, education, and language services will increase in the future.

Vocational Qualifications
- Vocational Qualification in Child Care and Education and Family Welfare
  (1 study programme / competence area)
- Vocational Qualification in Youth and Leisure Instruction
  (1 study programme / competence area)
- Vocational Qualification in Sign Language Instruction
  (1 study programme / competence area)

Further Qualifications
- Further Qualifications in Special Needs Instruction for Children and Young People
- Further Qualifications for Community Interpreters
- Further Qualifications for Vergers
VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

Vocational qualifications impart wide-ranging vocational competence needed in working life, specialist skills in the field, and capacity for further studies. The scope of a vocational qualification is 120 credits, mostly consisting of vocational qualification modules made up from on-the-job work and activity packages. In addition to compulsory vocational modules of the qualification, there is a large selection of optional ones, for example those that are part of other vocational qualifications. It is also possible to individually expand the qualification. Upper secondary vocational education and training also contain modules complementing vocational skills and optional modules. A vocational qualification can be taken in 2-4 years, depending on the student’s basic education and work experience.

A vocational qualification can be taken through vocational upper secondary education and training or as a competence-based qualification.

At their discretion, students or candidates can take one or several modules of the vocational qualification at a time, whenever this is appropriate for their placement in working life. In that case, a plan covering the entire vocational qualification is prepared.

FURTHER AND SPECIALIST QUALIFICATIONS

For further qualifications, the students or candidates demonstrate their mastery of vocational skills required of an employee in the field, and in specialist qualifications, mastery of the most demanding tasks in the field.

The further and specialist qualifications consist of on-the-job work and activity packages. Compulsory and/or optional modules of the qualification are determined in the qualification requirements. The scope of further and specialist qualifications or their parts is not determined in credits.

Further and specialist qualifications are taken as competence-based qualifications.
Vocational Qualification in Child Care and Education and Family Welfare

Holders of this qualification extensively look after the education and welfare of a child. They support the physical, psychological, and social development of a child and promote the child’s inclusion and experiences of being part of a community. They are also able to support the child’s religious, spiritual, and mental growth. In guiding a child or a group of children, they use various means of expression and guidance methods; they work with children and families in various life situations following the principles of educational partnership; also in questions associated with beliefs, religion and values.

In addition to studying basic skills in the field, holders of a Vocational Qualification in Child Care and Education and Family Welfare may opt for such specialisations as instruction in expression skills, dealing with children and families in need of special support, acting in a multicultural environment, and Christian education or service provision.

Title:

• Children’s Instructor

Jobs: Providers of early childhood education services, or municipalities, congregations, organisations and private service providers, day-care centres, family day care and open early childhood education services, children’s clubs and family clubs, morning and afternoon activities for schoolchildren, and child welfare agencies.

Vocational Qualification in Youth and Leisure Instruction

Holders of this qualification organise goal-oriented activities that produce experiences for customers of different ages, draw on their own leadership skills in their work, and act in line with the vocational principles and values of youth and leisure instruction work. They use and apply a versatile range of instruction methods: cultural instruction, physical education instruction, nature-based activities, and those providing customers with experiences, information, and advisory services for young people, media, and on-line instruction or instruction in technical and manual skills. They lead various activities and encourage participation.
Title:
• Youth and Leisure Instructor.

Jobs: Operating environments in the youth and free-time sector: organisations, municipalities, government services, enterprises or other organisations, youth centres, camps, and various institutions.

Vocational Qualification in Sign Language Instruction
Holders of this qualification instruct and assist people who use sign language for communication, people with hearing and vision impairments, deaf-blind, and handicapped customers as well as those with specific language impairments. To assist and instruct their customers, they use the Finnish sign language, methods based on signing (such as signed speech and support signs), and communication methods that support and replace speech. They plan, organise, and assess goal-oriented educational and stimulating activities for various age groups while supporting the development of the communication and language skills of their customers.

Title:
• Sign Language Instructor

Jobs: In the sector of social services and education, in day-care services, schools, educational institutions, morning and afternoon activities for schoolchildren, camps, clubs, care institutions, supported living units, and activity centres. Sign Language Instructors may also work in camps and as personal assistants for handicapped persons.
**Further Qualifications**

**Further Qualification in Special Needs Instruction for Children and Young People**

Holders of a Further Qualification in Special Needs Instruction for Children and Young People work in demanding tasks of education, instruction, and organisation. They are engaged in various projects and situations involving activities through network cooperation and are able to recognise both individual and communal needs for instruction. They work in multiprofessional teams as experts in children, young people and their culture, special needs education, and the wellbeing and living conditions of families.

**Jobs:** In special youth work and multicultural work, workshops and activity centres for young people and special groups, institutions, hospitals, civic and organisational activities, day-care providers, work with children and families in congregations, schools, afternoon clubs, leisure centres, and enterprises in the field.

---

**Further Qualification for Community Interpreters**

Holders of a Further Qualification for Community Interpreters act as interpreters in situations and encounters between the customer (frequently an immigrant) and Finnish authorities. They interpret the dialogue between the authorities and the customer, without expressing an opinion on the actual contents of issues. They also translate details of cultural background when this is essential for dealing with the issues and help the parties to understand each other across the language barrier. The situations in which an interpreter is needed may sometimes be crucial in the customers’ lives (for example, asylum interviews or psychiatric treatment). Community Interpreters are responsible for communicating messages and ideas.

**Jobs:** Community interpretation centres from which customers order interpretation services. An interpreter also works in everyday situations, such as parents’ evenings in schools, child welfare clinics, employment offices, medical examinations, or various negotiations.
**Further Qualification for Vergers**

Holders of a Further Qualification for Vergers are responsible for arranging church services and other ceremonies and for ensuring that they run smoothly. They take into consideration the nature of ceremonies, period of the ecclesiastical year, and the associated symbolism. Vergers maintain the property and facilities of the congregation and the church. They know how to maintain church artefacts and textiles with cultural history value. They also provide minor refreshments and catering services. Vergers maintain graveyards and manage activities related to burials in observance of ecclesiastical customs and the applicable legislation.

**Jobs:** Christian churches (Evangelic Lutheran or Greek Orthodox), congregations, and their facilities.

---

**OPPORTUNITIES FOR FURTHER STUDY**

Vocational qualifications and further and specialist qualifications confer on the student a general eligibility for further studies at universities of applied sciences and universities. A natural path for further studies for students with a vocational qualification include a qualification in humanities from a university of applied sciences, such as a Bachelor’s degree in Social Pedagogy (study programme in civic activities and youth work) or Sign Language Interpretation (a bachelor's degree in the study programme for sign language interpreters). In both programmes, the students can also study for a postgraduate qualification in humanities at universities of applied sciences. These are also organised as English-speaking programmes.

Another path for further studies in the field is a social services and health sector qualification from a university of applied sciences, or a Bachelor’s degree in Sosionomy, in particular the Christian child and youth work or diaconal social work orientations. At a university, the students may take a Bachelor’s or Master’s degree in Social Sciences in the M.A. programme for youth work and youth studies. Pedagogical studies for a vocational teacher give eligibility for further education in the tasks of a vocational teacher.

For more information, visit:

www.oph.fi
www.koulutusnetti.fi
www.ammattiosaaja.fi