



**WORKING AS A TEACHER IN FINLAND
WITH A FOREIGN QUALIFICATION**
RECOGNITION OF A TEACHER
EDUCATION COMPLETED ABROAD



FINNISH NATIONAL
AGENCY FOR EDUCATION



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1. INTRODUCTION

Recognition of qualifications refers to a decision on the eligibility that a foreign qualification provides when applying for a job or a place of study. Responsibility for the recognition of qualifications rests with the Finnish National Agency for of Education, 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 Agency for Education decides on the eligibility conferred by foreign qualifications for posts in Finland for which a higher education degree or a certain education is required. The largest professional group for which the Finnish National Agency for Education issues decisions is teachers.

This guide is mainly intended for experts working with teachers who have a foreign qualification. It provides information on the legislation on the basis of which the decisions are made, criteria for recognition and examples of different decisions. The diagram at the end of the guide is intended to support guidance situations.



2. GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE RECOGNITION OF FOREIGN TEACHING QUALIFICATIONS

If you have completed your qualification abroad and wish to practice a regulated teaching profession in Finland, you will usually need to apply to the Finnish National Agency for Education for a decision on eligibility.

The Finnish National Agency for Education makes decisions on eligibility for the following teaching posts:

- pre-primary education teachers
- class teachers
- subject teachers
- special needs teachers
- guidance counsellors
- teachers of vocational or common qualification units in vocational education and training
- teachers in liberal adult education

The qualification requirements for various teaching posts are specified in the Teaching Qualifications Decree (986/1998). The decisions follow the wording used in the legislation regulating eligibility. The Finnish National Agency for Education's decision provides eligibility in terms of the applicant's education.

¹Eligibility may be granted for teaching a subject where studies in the subject to be taught can be taken at a Finnish university as part of a subject teacher's education.

The Finnish National Agency for Education makes the decision about the application based on the documents. Each application is processed separately.

The Agency's decisions are based on the Act addressing the recognition of professional qualifications (1384/2015 – later referred to as the Professional Qualifications Act), the Act on Eligibility for Public Posts Provided by Higher Education Studies Completed Abroad (1385/2015) or the Teaching Qualifications Decree (986/1998). The applicable legislation is determined based on the country in which the qualification was obtained, the applicant's nationality and the eligibility applied for.

3. RECOGNITION OF A TEACHER'S PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS WHEN THEY HAVE BEEN ACQUIRED BY AN EU/EEA CITIZEN IN AN EU/EEA STATE

The Finnish National Agency for Education may issue a decision on the recognition of the professional qualifications of a person who has obtained a teaching qualification in another EU/EEA member state or in Switzerland. This decision may confer the eligibility for a teaching post referred to in Section 2 when the applicant has obtained qualifications in another member state.

The decision is based on the Professional Qualifications Act. As a rule, this act is applied to the recognition of a professional qualification obtained by an EU/EEA citizen or Swiss citizen in either another EU/EEA member state or Switzerland. The principle is that a professional qualification obtained by the applicant in another member state is recognised in Finland. Compensation measures may be required of the applicant. However, no supplementing studies may be required.

3.1 ADAPTATION PERIOD AND APTITUDE TEST

If the applicant's training differs substantially from the training required in Finland, the decision may require the applicant to complete an adaptation period or an aptitude test. Before setting such a requirement, the Finnish National Agency for Education examines whether the applicant's professional experience or lifelong learning covers the substantial difference in whole or partly. Generally, the applicant may choose whether to complete an aptitude test or an adaptation period.

During an adaptation period, the applicant will work in Finland under the supervision of a competent practitioner of the profession in question. Continuing education may be included in the adaptation period. The conditions of the adaptation period are specified in the decision. The applicant must herself or himself find a job where the adaptation period can be completed.

An aptitude test is a procedure measuring professional knowledge, and its purpose is to assess the applicant's ability to practise the regulated profession in Finland. A teacher's aptitude test may be taken at a higher education institution that offers education that provides eligibility for the relevant teaching profession. Generally, the aptitude test may be taken in Finnish or Swedish. A teacher's aptitude test consists of essays and a demonstration of teaching skills. The subject areas of the test are specified in the decision, and instructions for preparing for it will be attached to the decision. The relevant higher education institution will provide more information about the contents of the test and the methods by which it is completed when the applicant registers for the test.

Once the applicant has completed the adaptation period or aptitude test in compliance with the conditions set in the decision, she or he applies for a final decision on the recognition of her or his professional qualifications to the Finnish National Agency for Education.



3.2 EXAMPLES OF DECISIONS

The following sections contain examples of applications for the recognition of professional qualifications and the decisions issued to the applicants.

3.2.1 RECOGNITION OF THE PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS OF A CLASS TEACHER

EXAMPLE 1

Country and year in which the qualification was obtained	Ireland, 2017
The applicant's professional qualification in the country where the qualification was obtained	Teacher
Evidence of formal qualifications	A document certifying that the applicant has been registered as a teacher in Ireland and that she or he has completed the required induction period.
The applicant's teacher education	Bachelor of Education. The qualification is obtained by following four years of higher education studies, specialising in teaching different subjects to pupils aged from 4 to 12.
The Finnish degree level to which the education has been declared comparable ²	Bachelor's degree
The applicant's professional experience or knowledge, skills and competence acquired through lifelong learning	None
A substantial difference to the national training requirement	A difference in the content of the training: the training does not contain studies providing capabilities to apply scientific knowledge and methods.
The Finnish National Agency for Education's decision on the recognition of professional qualifications	<p>The certificates will confer the eligibility referred to in section 4, subsection 1(1) of the Teaching Qualifications Decree (986/1998) to provide class instruction in basic education once the applicant has completed either an aptitude test or an adaptation period.</p> <p>The subject areas that would be covered by the aptitude test are 'exploring teacherhood' and 'the Finnish school', and a demonstration of skills in class instruction of mother tongue and literature (reading and writing). The aptitude test may be taken at a university that provides education conferring eligibility for the post of a class teacher.</p> <p>The adaptation period would be completed by working as a class teacher in Finland. The duration of the required adaptation period would be nine months.</p>

²If the level of the applicant's qualification corresponds to a higher education degree completed in Finland, the Finnish National Agency for Education not only recognises the professional qualifications but also issues a favourable decision on the recognition of the level of the degree.

EXAMPLE 2

Country and year in which the qualification was obtained	Spain, 2015
The applicant's professional qualification in the country where the qualification was obtained	A teacher of different subjects, providing instruction that corresponds to basic education grades 1 to 6.
Evidence of formal qualifications	Diploma
The applicant's teacher education	Graduada en la Educación Primaria The qualification is obtained following four years of higher education studies, specialising in teaching different subjects to pupils aged from 6 to 12.
The Finnish degree level to which the education has been declared comparable ³	Bachelor's degree
The applicant's professional experience or knowledge, skills and competence acquired through lifelong learning	Two years of professional experience in tasks corresponding to class instruction.
A substantial difference to the national training requirement	A difference in the content of the education: the education does not contain studies providing capabilities to apply scientific knowledge and methods.
The Finnish National Agency for Education's decision on the recognition of professional qualifications	<p>The applicant's diploma confers the eligibility referred to in section 4, subsection 1(1) of the Teaching Qualifications Decree (986/1998) to provide class instruction in basic education.</p> <p>The knowledge, skills and competence acquired by the applicant through professional experience compensate for the substantial difference in the contents of the training.</p>

³If the level of the applicant's qualification corresponds to a higher education degree completed in Finland, the Finnish National Agency for Education not only recognises the professional qualifications but also issues a favourable decision on the recognition of the level of the degree.

3.2.2 RECOGNITION OF THE PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS OF A SUBJECT TEACHER

EXAMPLE 1

Country and year in which the qualification was obtained	Sweden, 2016
The applicant's professional qualification in the country where the qualification was obtained	A teacher of English and German in education corresponding to basic education and upper secondary education.
Evidence of formal qualifications	Lärarlegitimation
The applicant's teacher education	A Lärarexamen 270 högskolepoäng degree that contains English and German language studies as well as pedagogical studies.
The Finnish degree level to which the education has been declared comparable ⁴	Master's degree
Substantial differences to the national training requirement	No substantial differences
The Finnish National Agency for Education's decision on the recognition of professional qualifications	The applicant's certificates confer the eligibility referred to in section 5, subsection 1 of the Teaching Qualifications Decree (986/1998) to provide the subject instruction of English and German in basic education. The certificates confer the eligibility referred to in section 10, subsection 1 of the Teaching Qualifications Decree to provide subject instruction in general upper secondary education where one of the teaching subjects is English and the other is German.

⁴If the level of the applicant's qualification corresponds to a higher education degree completed in Finland, the Finnish National Agency for Education not only recognises the professional qualifications but also issues a favourable decision on the recognition of the level of the degree.

EXAMPLE 2

Country and year in which the qualification was obtained	Romania, 2015
The applicant's professional qualification in the country where the qualification was obtained	A teacher of physical education for pupils aged 10 to 18
Evidence of formal qualifications	Degree and study certificates
The applicant's teacher education	Diploma de Master (2015), Diploma de Licenta (2013) The studies include five years of higher education studies in which physical education is the major subject and which include pedagogical studies.
The Finnish degree level to which the education has been declared comparable ⁵	Master's degree
Applicant's professional experience or knowledge, skills and competence acquired through lifelong learning	None
Substantial difference to the national training requirement	Difference in the content of training: the studies in physical education differ from studies required for subject instruction of physical education in general upper secondary education.
The Finnish National Agency for Education's decision on the recognition of professional qualifications	The applicant's certificates confer eligibility referred to in section 5, subsection 1 of the Teaching Qualifications Decree (986/1998) to provide subject instruction of physical education in basic education. The certificates will confer the eligibility referred to in section 10, subsection 1 of the Teaching Qualifications Decree (986/1998) to provide the subject instruction of physical education in general upper secondary education once the applicant has completed either an aptitude test or an adaptation period. The subject areas that would be covered by the aptitude test are 'the Finnish school' and a demonstration of teaching skills in subject instruction of physical education in general upper secondary education. The aptitude test may be taken at a university that provides education conferring eligibility for the post of a subject teacher. Completion of the aptitude test can be proven by a certificate issued by the university. The adaptation period would be completed by working as a subject teacher of physical education in Finland. The duration of the adaptation period would be 9 months.

⁵If the level of the applicant's qualification corresponds to a higher education degree completed in Finland, the Finnish National Agency for Education not only recognises the professional qualifications but also issues a favourable decision on the recognition of the level of the degree.

3.2.3 RECOGNITION OF PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS OF A SPECIAL NEEDS TEACHER

EXAMPLE	
Country and year in which the qualification was obtained	Estonia, 2017
The applicant's professional qualification in the country where the qualification was obtained	Special needs teacher (eripedagoog)
Evidence of formal qualifications	Diploma
The applicant's teacher education	Bakalaureus artium and haridusteaduse magister degrees. The magister degree contains special needs teacher education.
Finnish degree level to which the education has been declared comparable ⁴	Master's degree
Substantial differences to the national training requirement	No substantial differences
The Finnish National Agency for Education's decision on the recognition of professional qualifications	The applicant's certificates confer the eligibility referred to in section 8, subsection 1 of the Teaching Qualifications Decree (986/1998) to provide the part-time special needs teaching referred to in section 16, subsection 2 of the Basic Education Act (628/1998).

⁴If the level of the applicant's qualification corresponds to a higher education degree completed in Finland, the Finnish National Agency for Education not only recognises the professional qualifications but also issues a favourable decision on the recognition of the level of the degree.

4. RECOGNITION OF FOREIGN HIGHER EDUCATION STUDIES

The Finnish National Agency for Education may recognise higher education studies completed abroad that are comparable to higher education degrees or studies completed in Finland and are an eligibility requirement for a certain teaching post.

The decision is based on the Act on Eligibility for Public Posts Provided by Higher Education Studies Completed Abroad. This act is applied if the decision on the recognition of professional qualifications described in Chapter 3 cannot be issued to the applicant.

The decision will be based on a comparison of higher education degrees and studies. Work experience cannot be taken into account. A prerequisite for a favourable decision is that the applicant's higher education studies are comparable in terms of level and content to corresponding teacher education studies in Finland. For instance, a decision conferring eligibility for teaching posts in basic education or general upper secondary education can only be issued if the level of the foreign degree is comparable with a master's degree.

4.1 SUPPLEMENTING STUDIES

Generally, the decisions require applicants to complete supplementing teacher education studies in Finland.

For a decision in which the Finnish National Agency for Education deems higher education studies completed abroad as comparable to a certain Finnish higher education degree, the Agency may require that the applicant completes supplementing studies, the extent of which is up to one-third of the studies leading to the degree. For example, in a decision in which higher education studies completed abroad are deemed comparable to a Finnish Master of Arts in Education degree conferring eligibility as a class teacher, the extent of which is 300 credits, no more than 100 credits of supplementing studies may be required.

When higher education studies completed abroad are compared to a certain Finnish higher education study module, the decision may require supplementing studies, the extent of which is up to half of the study module. For example, when higher education studies completed abroad are deemed comparable to a teacher's pedagogical studies, the extent of which is 60 credits, no more than 30 credits of supplementing studies may be required.

A favourable decision may not be issued if the studies of the applicant differ so much from the relevant Finnish higher education studies that the above maximum amounts of credits for supplementing studies would be exceeded.

If supplementing studies are required in the decision, the applicant should herself or himself contact a Finnish higher education institution in order to complete them. When the applicant has completed her or his supplementing studies, she or he must apply to the Finnish National Agency for Education for a final decision on the recognition of her or his studies.

4.2 EXAMPLES OF DECISIONS

The following are examples of applications for the recognition of foreign higher education studies and the decisions regarding the applications.

4.2.1 RECOGNITION OF COMPARABILITY TO THE STUDIES REQUIRED FOR A CLASS TEACHER

For working as a qualified class teacher in Finland, a Master of Arts in Education degree, multidisciplinary studies in the subjects and themes taught in basic education (later referred to as multidisciplinary studies), and teachers' pedagogical studies are required. A qualified subject teacher who has additionally completed the multidisciplinary studies is also qualified to provide class instruction.

In order for foreign higher education studies to be comparable to the degree and studies required for working as a class teacher in Finland, their level must correspond to a Finnish master's degree, and their contents must correspond to the degree and studies conferring eligibility for working as a class teacher in Finland. The higher education studies must have prepared the applicant for tasks that correspond to a class teacher's tasks.

EXAMPLE

Country and year in which the degree was completed

Russia, 2011

The applicant's qualification

Teacher. Specialisation area: pedagogy and methodology in primary education. The qualification is a five-year higher education degree. The degree included teacher education which prepared the applicant for teaching different subjects to pupils aged from 7 to 11.

The Finnish National Agency for Education's decision on recognition

The applicant's higher education degree is recognised as comparable to a master's degree completed in Finland.

The applicant's higher education degree will be recognised as comparable to a Finnish Master of Arts in Education degree conferring eligibility for working as a class teacher, which contains at minimum 60 credits of the multidisciplinary studies of subjects and themes taught in basic education, as well as at minimum 60 credits of teachers' pedagogical studies, provided that the applicant completes the following studies at a Finnish university:

- 1) 10–20 credits of advanced studies in educational science
- 2) 20–30 credits of supplementing multidisciplinary studies of the subjects and themes taught in basic education
- 3) 15–20 credits of supplementing teachers' pedagogical studies

After the completion of the supplementing multidisciplinary studies of the subjects and themes taught in basic education, the applicant's studies will be recognised as comparable to the 60 credits of the multidisciplinary studies of the subjects and themes taught in basic education. After the completion of the supplementary teacher's pedagogical studies, the applicant's studies will be recognised as comparable to the 60 credits of teachers' pedagogical studies.



4.2.2 RECOGNITION OF COMPARABILITY TO THE STUDIES REQUIRED FOR A SUBJECT TEACHER

For working as a qualified subject teacher in Finland, a master's degree, studies in the teaching subject and teachers' pedagogical studies are required. In order for foreign higher education studies to be recognised as comparable to the higher education degree and

studies required from subject teachers in Finland, their level must correspond to a Finnish master's degree, and their contents must correspond to relevant teacher education studies. The higher education studies must have prepared the applicant for tasks that correspond to a subject teacher's tasks.

EXAMPLE

Country and year in which the degree was completed	Ukraine, 1992
The applicant's qualification	Physics teacher. The qualification is a five-year higher education degree. The degree included teacher education which prepared the applicant for teaching physics at different levels of education and in different educational forms.
The Finnish National Agency for Education's decision on recognition	The applicant's higher education degree is recognised as comparable to a master's degree completed in Finland. The studies in physics included in the applicant's degree are recognised as comparable to 120 credits of studies in physics as a teaching subject. The applicant's studies in education will be recognised as comparable to the 60 credits of teacher's pedagogical studies completed in Finland if the applicant completes 25 to 30 credits of supplementing teacher education studies at a Finnish higher education institution, which must include didactic studies and supervised work practice.

4.2.3 RECOGNITION OF COMPARABILITY TO THE STUDIES REQUIRED FOR A SPECIAL NEEDS TEACHER

Eligibility for working as a teacher providing part-time special needs teaching in Finland is conferred by a master's degree and studies that provide professional competence for special needs education posts (later referred to as a special needs teacher's studies). In order for foreign higher education studies to be comparable to the higher education degree and studies required of a special needs teacher in Finland, their level must correspond to a Finnish master's degree, and their contents must correspond to special needs teacher's studies completed in Finland. The higher education studies must have prepared for tasks that correspond to special needs teacher's tasks.

The eligibility requirements for special class teachers in basic education include requiring that the person is eligible as a class teacher (see Section 4.2.1) and has completed special needs teachers' studies. In order for foreign higher education studies to be comparable to the degree and studies required of a special class teacher in Finland, their level must correspond to a Finnish master's degree, and their contents must correspond to the studies required from class teachers and special needs teachers.

EXAMPLE

Country and year in which the degree was completed	Russia, 2003
The applicant's qualification	A teacher for pupils with impaired hearing. The degree is a five-year higher education degree, which includes a special needs teacher's education.
The Finnish National Agency for Education's decision on recognition	The applicant's higher education degree is recognised as comparable to a master's degree completed in Finland. The applicant's special pedagogy studies will be recognised as comparable to the 60 credits of studies conferring professional competence for special needs education posts completed in Finland if the applicant completes 10 to 15 credits of supplementing studies at a Finnish higher education institution that confer professional competence for special needs education posts, which include teaching practice.

4.2.4 OTHER TEACHING POSTS AND RECOGNITION OF TEACHER EDUCATION STUDIES

Teachers' qualification requirements usually comprise several elements: in addition to a higher education degree of a certain level, specific teacher education studies are also required. If necessary, the Finnish National Agency for Education can declare the applicant's teacher education studies comparable in its decision also when the applicant cannot be issued a decision on all elements of the qualification.

For instance, a person who has completed a foreign higher education degree and who wishes to complete teachers' pedagogical studies in Finland may apply for a decision on the recognition of her or his degree as comparable to a Finnish degree of a certain level. If the degree is comparable to a master's degree, the Finnish National Agency for Education may look at the possibility of recognising the applicant's higher education studies as comparable to Finnish studies in a teaching subject.

A person who has completed a higher education degree and teacher education studies abroad may apply for a decision on the recognition of her or his degree as comparable to a Finnish degree of a certain level, as well as on the recognition of her or his teacher education studies as comparable to teachers' pedagogical studies completed in Finland.

For some teaching posts in both liberal adult education, and vocational education and training, the eligibility requirements are an appropriate higher education degree and teachers' pedagogical studies. A person who has obtained her or his teaching qualification abroad may prove her or his eligibility for such a post with the Finnish National Agency for Education's favourable decision on the recognition of the level of the degree and on the recognition of her or his teacher education studies as comparable to teachers' pedagogical studies completed in Finland. The decision on the appropriateness of the degree for the teaching post in question is made by the employer.



EXAMPLE: RECOGNITION OF THE DEGREE LEVEL AND STUDIES OF THE TEACHING SUBJECT

Country and year in which the degree was completed	Moldova, 1996
The applicant's qualification	A five-year diploma de studii superioare degree in mathematics Area of specialisation: mathematics
The Finnish National Agency for Education's decision on recognition	The applicant's higher education degree is recognised as comparable to a master's degree completed in Finland. The mathematics studies included in the applicant's degree are recognised as comparable to 120 credits of studies in mathematics as a teaching subject.

EXAMPLE: RECOGNITION OF THE DEGREE LEVEL AND TEACHERS' PEDAGOGICAL STUDIES

Country and year in which the degree was completed	Albania, 1995
The applicant's qualification	A teacher of the Albanian language and Albanian literature
The Finnish National Agency for Education's decision on recognition	The applicant's higher education degree is recognised as comparable to a master's degree completed in Finland. The applicant's higher education studies in education will be recognised as comparable to 60 credits of teachers' pedagogical studies completed in Finland if the applicant completes 25 to 30 credits of teacher education studies, which include pedagogical studies, didactic studies and supervised work practice as supplementing studies at a Finnish higher education institution.

5. ELIGIBILITY FOR PROVIDING INSTRUCTION IN A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

For a specific reason, the Finnish National Agency for Education may issue a decision on having sufficient studies for providing instruction delivered in a language other than Finnish, Swedish or Sámi in basic education or general upper secondary education. The decisions are based on section 21 of the Teaching Qualifications Decree. The eligibility is restricted to a specific language and a specific teaching post, for instance class instruction in education delivered in English.

The general prerequisites for receiving a favourable decision on having sufficient studies are the following:

- The applicant has a higher education degree that is comparable to a bachelor's degree at minimum.
- The applicant has completed the higher education studies required for a corresponding teaching post in the country in which the qualification was obtained.
- The teacher education completed by the applicant is comparable to the teacher education studies required for the teaching post in question in Finland regarding the studies' extent, requirements and contents.
- The applicant completed her or his teacher education in the foreign language in which she or he will teach, and this language is an official language in the country where she or he completed the teacher education.

Generally, decisions require applicants to take an aptitude test. In the aptitude test, the applicant demonstrates her or his command of the knowledge and skills required for the relevant teaching post in Finland. A Finnish university that provides teacher education will organise the aptitude test. The Finnish National Agency for Education's decision determines the subject area(s) covered by the aptitude test and where the test may be taken.

Eligibility for foreign-language teaching posts is also conferred by a decision on the recognition of professional qualifications or the recognition of foreign higher education studies (see Chapters 3 and 4 above).

5.1 EXAMPLES OF DECISIONS

5.1.1 CLASS INSTRUCTION IN EDUCATION THAT IS PROVIDED IN ENGLISH

EXAMPLE	
Country and year in which the degree was completed	Australia, 2012
The applicant's degree and proof of professional qualifications	Bachelor of Education (Primary and Middle) The qualification is a higher education degree, obtained following four years of studies in total. Certificate of Teacher Registration
The applicant's teacher education	The Bachelor of Education degree includes higher education studies focusing on teaching different subjects to pupils aged from 6 to 11 and 11 to 14.
The Finnish degree level to which the education has been declared comparable ⁷	Bachelor's degree
The language of the degree and teacher education	English
The Finnish National Agency for Education's decision on having sufficient studies for providing foreign-language education	The applicant will have a sufficient amount of the studies referred to in section 21 of the Teaching Qualifications Decree (986/1998) to provide class instruction in basic education provided in English once she or he has completed an aptitude test on two themes, which are 'exploring teacherhood' and 'the Finnish school'.

5.1.2 SUBJECT TEACHING IN EDUCATION THAT IS PROVIDED IN ENGLISH

EXAMPLE

Country and year in which the degree was completed	Canada, 2003
The applicant's degree and proof of professional qualifications	Bachelor of Education (Secondary Curriculum): Physical Education, English The qualification is a higher education degree obtained following five years of study in total. Permanent Professional Certificate
The applicant's teacher education	The degree includes teacher education that prepares the applicant for teaching physical education and English to pupils aged from 6 to 18.
The Finnish degree level to which the education has been declared comparable ⁸	Bachelor's degree
The language of the degree and teacher education	English
The Finnish National Agency for Education's decision on having sufficient studies for providing foreign-language education	The applicant will have a sufficient amount of the studies referred to in section 21 of the Teaching Qualifications Decree (986/1998) to provide subject teaching of physical education and English in basic education in English once he or she has completed an aptitude test on two themes, which are 'exploring teacherhood' and 'the Finnish school'.



6. CLASS TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS OBTAINED IN ANOTHER NORDIC COUNTRY

A person who has completed a class teacher's qualification in Sweden, Denmark, Norway or Iceland is, with certain conditions, eligible to work as a class teacher without a specific decision (Decree 986/1998, section 4). Should she or he wish, she or he may also apply to the Finnish National Agency for Education for a decision recognising her or his eligibility for teaching posts.

7. TEACHERS' LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY REQUIREMENTS AND A DEMONSTRATION OF PROFICIENCY IN FINNISH OR SWEDISH

Provisions on the language proficiency requirements for different teaching posts and the demonstration of language proficiency are laid down in the Teaching Qualifications Decree (986/1998).

The manner in which the required proficiency in Finnish or Swedish is, if necessary, to be demonstrated, is specified in the Government decree on the demonstration of proficiency in the Finnish and Swedish languages in the civil service (481/2003). The required proficiency in Finnish or Swedish can be demonstrated by a civil service language proficiency certificate, a Finnish National Certificate of Language Proficiency, or, in certain cases, documents concerning education obtained in Finland.

Persons who have completed their teacher education in Sweden and completed their teaching practice exclusively in Swedish will be considered as having excellent oral and written proficiency in Swedish as a language of instruction at a Swedish-speaking school.



FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE RECOGNITION OF QUALIFICATIONS, VISIT:

www.oph.fi/recognition

WORKING AS A TEACHER IN FINLAND WITH A FOREIGN QUALIFICATION

You have completed your qualification abroad. You would like to qualify for a teaching post, which is regulated in Finland.
 (https://www.oph.fi/english/services/recognition/professional_rights_on_the_basis_of_a_foreign_qualification/teachers)

Have you obtained qualifications in another country for the same teaching profession?

Yes

Did you obtain your qualifications in an EU/EEA member state or Switzerland?

Yes

Are you a citizen of an EU/EEA member state or Switzerland or do you have a document that entitles you to be treated as an EU/EEA citizen?

Yes

If you are applying for eligibility to teach in basic education or in general upper secondary education, is your foreign degree at least master's level?
 If you are applying for eligibility to teach in vocational education and training or liberal adult education, is your foreign degree at least bachelor's level?

Yes

Send an application to the Finnish National Agency for Education.

The Finnish National Agency for Education will process your application based on the relevant documents. The principle is that professional qualifications obtained in another member state are recognised. If there are substantial differences between the contents of your training and the training required for the same teaching post in Finland, the Finnish National Agency for Education will set an adaptation period or an aptitude test. Knowledge, skills and competences that you have acquired through your professional experience or lifelong learning will be taken into account.

The Finnish National Agency for Education's decision on the recognition of professional qualifications

The Finnish National Agency for Education will process your application based on the relevant documents. The Agency will compare your higher education studies to the teacher education studies required for the same teaching post in Finland and may determine supplementing studies if necessary. A prerequisite for a favorable decision is that there is sufficient comparability between your studies and the higher education studies required for the post in Finland.

The Finnish National Agency for Education's decision on the recognition of foreign higher education studies.

The Finnish National Agency for Education will process your application based on the relevant documents. The Agency will compare your higher education studies to the teacher education studies required for the same teaching post in Finland. A prerequisite for a favorable decision is that there is sufficient comparability between your studies and the teacher education studies required for the post in Finland. If necessary, the Finnish National Agency for Education will set additional requirements.

The Finnish National Agency for Education's decision on sufficient studies to provide foreign-language instruction

No

Find out which are the qualification requirements for the post in Finland and look for an institution where you can complete the required degree or studies.

No

- Did you complete your teacher training in the foreign language in which you wish to teach in Finland and is that language an official language in the country in which you obtained your qualification (e.g. English), and - is your foreign degree at least bachelor's level?

Yes

If your foreign degree is at least bachelor's level, you can apply to the Finnish National Agency for Education for a decision on the recognition of the level of your higher education degree and any teacher education studies.

www.studyinfo.fi

Complete the aptitude test, adaptation period or supplementing studies in compliance with the Finnish National Agency for Education's decision.

Send an application for a final decision to the Finnish National Agency for Education.



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