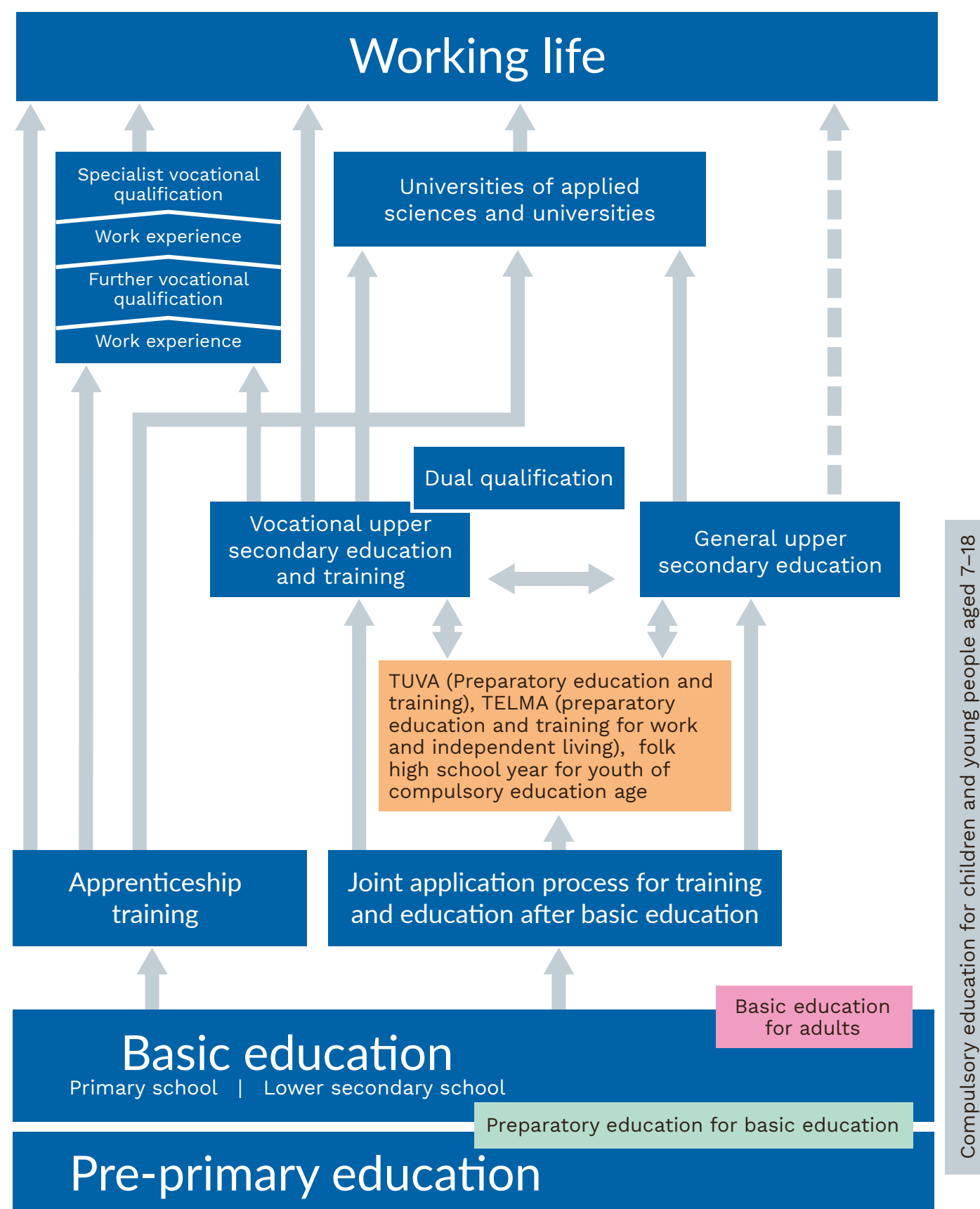


Learn more about further studies

**Compulsory education in and after
basic education**





What does compulsory education mean?

When a child or adolescent is of compulsory education age, they must attend basic education. Basic education refers to grades 1–9 in comprehensive school. In addition, they must participate in further studies that begin after basic education.

Compulsory education usually begins in the year that the child turns seven years old. This is when the child starts comprehensive school. Compulsory education ends when the young person turns 18. However, if the young person completes an upper secondary qualification before the age of 18, compulsory education ends for them at that time.

An upper secondary qualification refers to a qualification that a student completes at an upper secondary school (lukio) or vocational institution (ammattillinen oppilaitos).

When a child or adolescent is of compulsory education age, teaching is provided for them for free. This means that the educational institution provides the teaching and school books for free. The educational institution also provides other materials needed in the studies free of charge.

Education is compulsory for children and young people who reside permanently in Finland. Compulsory education is based on the Finnish legislation. In some situations, a child or young person may be exempted from basic education. However, the exemption is only granted temporarily and only for a specific reason.

Studies after basic education

All pupils in basic education must apply for a study place before their basic education ends. This subchapter explains what



these different study places are. After a young person has completed their basic education, they can start their studies at the upper secondary level. This means that the young person can attend an upper secondary school or vocational institution.

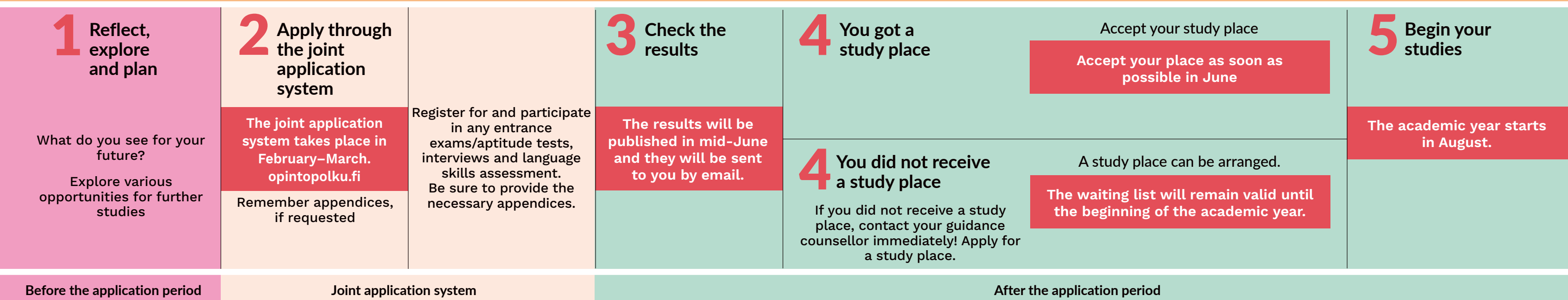
In addition, there is education provided after basic education that does not lead to a degree or qualification. Such training is, for example, TUVA training, i.e. preparatory training for a qualification. The goal is that after attending TUVA training the student will apply for training or education leading to a degree or qualification.

If the young person needs special support, they can apply for TELMA training. TELMA training prepares young people for work and independent living. The goal after TELMA training is not to move on to training or education leading to a qualification or degree.

Young people can also study at a folk high school. They can apply for study programmes intended for people of compulsory education age.

This guide describes all these training options. It also explains how to apply for basic education for adults. The abbreviation for basic education for adults is AIPE.

Joint application system after basic education



What is a joint application system?

The joint application system is intended for pupils whose basic education is about to end. In addition, the joint application system is intended for pupils who are currently attending TUVA or TELMA training. The joint application system is also intended for pupils who study at a folk high school in a study programme for people of compulsory education age.

In the joint application system, the applicants apply to upper secondary education or preparatory training.

The joint application system is organised once a year, during February and March. At other times, there is rolling admission, which we will look at next.

What is rolling admission?

There are educational institutions to which people can apply through rolling admission. Rolling admission is open all year round. Young people can participate in rolling admission if they have not been granted a study place through the joint application system.

Applicants can also participate in rolling admission when they, for some other reason, want to apply for a study place when the joint application system is not available.

Upper secondary education

Studying at an upper secondary school or vocational institution means attending upper secondary education. These studies lead to a qualification.

Next, this guide will look at upper secondary education and the related studies.

Studying at an upper secondary school

An upper secondary school is an institution providing general education. Students do not graduate from an upper secondary school with a vocational qualification. Upper secondary school studies are more theoretical in nature than vocational studies.

Students study different languages and mathematical subjects in upper secondary school. In addition, they study humanities and sciences. These include religion,

ethics, psychology, philosophy, history, social studies, physics, chemistry, biology, geography and health education. In upper secondary school, students also study skills- and art-focused subjects such as visual arts, music and physical education. The studies also include student counselling.

Students usually attend upper secondary school for two, three or four years. Most students complete their upper secondary school studies in three years.

When the upper secondary school studies are coming to an end, the student can participate in a matriculation examination. The student must complete examinations of at least five subjects in order to pass the matriculation examination. If the student wants, they can complete more than the five subject-specific examinations.

In the matriculation examination, the Finnish language examination is mandatory. The student must therefore complete the Finnish language examination either as a first language or as a second language. The subject is called äidinkieli ja kirjallisuus (Finnish language and literature). If the student studies Finnish as their first language, they must complete the examination as a first-language examination. If the student studies Finnish as a second language, they must complete the examination as a second-language examination.

In addition, the student must complete the advanced syllabus of mathematics, the second national language or a foreign language. The student gets to choose which other subjects to take.

Once the student has passed the matriculation examination, they may apply to a university or university of applied sciences. The student may also apply to vocational institutions.

Students may also complete the upper secondary school syllabus without taking the matriculation examination. In that case, however, they cannot apply to university. They can still apply to a university of applied sciences or vocational education and training.

What is an IB degree?

The International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IB) is an international matriculation examination. The programme is in English. The IB degree can be completed in more than 150 countries and more than 5,000 educational institutions. The IB degree can also be completed in Finland. In Finland, students complete their IB studies in three years.

Once the student has completed their IB degree, they can apply to different universities and universities of applied sciences in Finland and other countries.



How to apply to an upper secondary school

When a young person of compulsory education age has completed comprehensive school, they can apply to any upper secondary school in Finland.

Students can apply to upper secondary school through the joint application system held during the spring when they get their school-leaving certificates from a comprehensive school in Finland.

There are 10 Finnish-language upper secondary schools in Espoo. These upper secondary schools include two upper secondary schools where you can complete an IB degree. Espoo also has one Swedish-language upper secondary school.

If the applicant has received a school-leaving certificate from a comprehensive school in Finland, they can apply to an upper secondary school on the basis of this certificate. The average grade of theoretical subjects in the school-leaving certificate determines whether the applicant will be admitted to a particular upper secondary school. Theoretical subjects include the following: mother tongue and literature, second national language, foreign languages, religion or ethics, history, social studies, mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, health education and geography.

Different upper secondary schools have a different number of study places.

Each upper secondary school decides independently how many new students it accepts. The number of applicants and their average grade and scores influence whether an applicant is admitted to a particular upper secondary school. This also varies from year to year. The average grades needed to get accepted to an upper secondary school differ from year to year.

In Espoo and the Helsinki Metropolitan Area, you need to have an average grade of at least 7.0 in theoretical subjects to get accepted to an upper secondary school. However, many upper secondary schools only accept students whose average grade in theoretical subjects is much higher than 7.0.

There are also special upper secondary schools where students study certain subject areas more than in other upper secondary schools. Some upper secondary schools also have programmes where students study certain subject areas more than in other upper secondary schools. If a young person wishes to apply to such an upper secondary school, they must attach certain appendices to their application or take an entrance exam.

More information about different upper secondary schools can be found on the upper secondary schools' websites and at opintopolku.fi.

A young person can apply to an upper secondary school even if they do not have a school-leaving certificate from a comprehensive school in Finland. In such a situation, the upper secondary school decides on the admission case specifically. This means **discretionary admission**.

When an upper secondary school uses discretionary admission, the upper secondary school assesses the applicant's ability to cope with the studies. The upper secondary school assesses the applicant's level of competence and whether the applicant is sufficiently proficient in the language of instruction.

However, it is rare for upper secondary schools to admit students through discretionary admission.

Upper secondary schools may also use discretionary admission in cases where applicants have had a personalised syllabus in mathematics and the mother tongue. In addition, an upper secondary school may use discretionary admission if the young person applying to the school has discontinued their basic education or they do not have a school-leaving certificate for some other reason.

More information about the upper secondary schools in Espoo can be found at: www.espoo.fi/en/specialised-schools-lines-and-weighted-curriculums

Completing an upper secondary vocational qualification

Students complete upper secondary vocational qualifications in vocational institutions. An upper secondary vocational qualification is closer to the working life than the studies completed at upper secondary schools. An upper secondary vocational qualification means that the student is a qualified professional. It also provides a wide range of capabilities for operating in the working life. In addition, an upper secondary vocational qualification comes with specific skills that vary depending on the student's study choices.

There are many different upper secondary vocational qualifications. An upper secondary vocational qualification largely consists of **preparatory studies for a vocational qualification**. In addition, an upper secondary vocational qualification includes studies shared by different upper secondary vocational qualifications. Such studies include, for example, languages and mathematics.

When a student is completing their upper secondary vocational qualification, they

study at both their education institution and different workplaces.

An upper secondary vocational qualification is completed in two, three or four years. Students usually complete their qualifications in three years.

After a student has completed their upper secondary vocational qualification, they may apply for a study place in a university or university of applied sciences.

Students can also complete upper secondary school studies while completing their upper secondary vocational qualifications. In this case, the upper secondary school studies are part of the upper secondary vocational qualification. Students can also complete their matriculation examinations while completing their upper secondary vocational qualifications.

When an applicant wants to complete an upper secondary vocational qualification, they can apply to any vocational institution in Finland. In Espoo, this type of training is provided by an educational institution called **Omnia**. More information about Omnia is available here: www.omnia.fi.

There are also special vocational institutions. Special vocational institutions are intended for students who have been provided with special support in comprehensive school. These educational institutions provide support for students who require a high level of special support to complete their qualifications.

In Espoo, special vocational education is provided by an educational institution called LIVE. More information can be found at: www.livesaatio.fi/opisto

More information on special vocational education in general can be found at: www.ameo.fi

Applicants can apply to any special vocational institution in Finland.

How to apply to a vocational institution

If the applicant has a school-leaving certificate from a comprehensive school in Finland, they can apply to a vocational institution in the joint application system organised in spring. Students can apply to vocational institutions through the joint application system held during the spring when they get their school-leaving certificate from a comprehensive school in Finland.

Vocational institutions emphasise school-leaving certificates in their student admission. Some vocational institutions also organise entrance exams. There are also vocational institutions where students are admitted solely on the basis of their entrance exams.

The applicants are scored according to their school-leaving certificates and possible entrance exams. A person's total score determines whether they will be accepted to the institution.

If an educational institution organises an entrance exam, applicants must take it.

In addition to the joint application system, the applicant can also apply to a vocational institution through rolling admission. Rolling admission is open all year round.

What is apprenticeship training?

Apprenticeship training is a form of studying where the student completes their upper secondary vocational qualification by learning the profession in question through work. Through apprenticeship training, students can complete their upper secondary vocational qualification either in full or only parts of it.

If a student wants to start apprenticeship training, they must get a job suitable for a specific upper secondary vocational qualification. They must also sign an agreement with their vocational institution concerning the apprenticeship training.

The apprenticeship agreement therefore has three parties: the student, the employer and the vocational institution.

When the student is completing their apprenticeship training, they have an employment relationship with their workplace. During the apprenticeship training, the student receives guidance from a supervisor at the workplace. They are also paid for their work.

Apprenticeship training provides the student with work experience and develops their professional skills. The training is also an opportunity for the student to establish professional networks that may benefit them in the future.

However, some things cannot be learnt at an apprenticeship workplace. Students study these things either at an educational institution or in some other way.

The student's vocational institution and workplace are responsible for the way the student's studies are planned, supervised and evaluated.

The studies are free of charge for the student.

When the student has completed their upper secondary vocational qualification through apprenticeship training, they have the same qualification as students who completed the same upper secondary vocational qualification by studying in a vocational institution. The student can also apply for a study place in a university of applied sciences or university.

How to apply to apprenticeship training

Applicants can apply to apprenticeship training immediately after basic education or later.

Contact your regional apprenticeship office to get more information about how you can apply to apprenticeship training.

Further information about apprenticeship training is also available at www.oppisopimus.fi.

In Espoo, the teaching is provided by Omnia. For more information, contact the Omnia Apprenticeship Training Centre at www.omnia.fi/en/study-options/upper-secondary-vocational-qualifications/apprenticeship

Preparatory training for qualifications

This guide will now focus on studies after comprehensive school that do not lead to a qualification. These studies prepare the student for upper secondary education. In addition, there is information about basic education for adults.

What is TUVA training?

TUVA training refers to preparatory training for education leading to a qualification. The training lasts up to one year. TUVA training aims to provide students

with the capabilities needed to apply for a study place in an upper secondary school or vocational institution and complete their studies.

In TUVA training, students can practice things such as their Finnish language skills, study skills and life management. In addition, students can improve the grades in their school-leaving certificates from basic education. They can also complete upper secondary education studies or vocational studies during the training. Students are provided with guidance during their studies.

A person of compulsory education age can apply to TUVÄ training once they have completed basic education. They may also apply to training once they have completed in another country training or education that corresponds to basic education in Finland. In this case, the applicant must have a certificate of this training or education.

People aged 18 or over can also apply to TUVÄ training if they do not yet have an upper secondary education qualification.

You can apply to TUVÄ training through the joint application system or rolling admission.

Applicants can apply to any educational institution that provides TUVÄ training in Finland.

In Espoo, TUVÄ training is provided by Omnia. More information about Omnia is available at: www.omnia.fi

If the student requires a high level of special support, the TUVÄ training is provided by LIVE. More information about LIVE is available at: www.livesaatio.fi/opisto/hakijalle/tuva

What is TELMA training?

TELMA training refers to preparatory training that prepares students for work and independent living. The training is intended for students who require a high level of special support. The training is usually provided by special vocational institutions.

In TELMA training, students learn the skills they will need at home and at school, in working life and in society. The training lasts for 1–3 years. The aim is not to apply to education leading to a degree or qualification after the training.

You can apply to TELMA training through the joint application system and rolling admission. The TELMA application must include appendices explaining why the young person is applying to TELMA training.

In Espoo, TELMA training is provided by the vocational institution LIVE. More information about this educational institution can be found at www.livesaatio.fi

People of compulsory education age can also attend folk high school

Folk high schools offer studies for students of compulsory education age. The studies are suitable for young people who have completed their basic education but do not yet know what they want to study next.

Folk high school studies for students of compulsory education age last for one school year. The studies aim to strengthen young people's study skills. They also aim to strengthen young people's capacity for further studies. In addition, the objective is to support students when they are planning their lives.

People can apply to any folk high school in Finland. They can apply to a folk high school through the joint application system and rolling admission. More information about folk high schools is available at www.kansanopistot.fi.

What is AIPE?

AIPE refers to basic education for adults. In AIPE training, the student can complete the syllabus of basic education for adults and get a school-leaving certificate from basic education. The students get to improve the language and study skills they will need in upper secondary education.

Applicants may apply to AIPE training if they have not completed basic education.

This may be due to, for example, the applicant moving to Finland at the end of comprehensive school. Applicants may also apply to AIPE training in situations where they are no longer allowed to attend basic education for children and young people.

The right to attend basic education for children and young people ends at the

end of the spring term in the year when the person turns 17 years old.

Before a student starts their AIPE studies, their initial situation is assessed in cooperation with the student. The purpose of the assessment is to determine what kind of studies the student needs, what stage of studies they are completing and what their goals are. In addition, the initial assessment examines how the student will achieve these goals. The student will also be prepared a personal study plan.

Basic education for adults consists of three stages. These are **literacy phase studies, initial phase studies** and **final phase studies**.

During the literacy phase, students learn to read and write in Finnish.

The initial phase studies correspond to the subjects studied in grades 1–6 of basic education. If a student does not know how to read or write or their command of these skills is lacking, the student will also train these skills during the initial phase studies. The initial phase studies take about 1.5–3 years to complete.

The final phase studies correspond to the subjects studied in grades 7–9 of basic education. The studies in the final phase last about 1–2 years. The duration of the studies varies based on what the student has studied previously.

Application to AIPE training is open 3–5 times a year. Applicants can apply to any educational institution offering AIPE training in Finland. The application form can usually be found on the educational institution's website.

In Espoo, AIPE training is provided by Omnia. More information about Omnia's AIPE training can be found here: www.omnia.fi/en/educations/basic-adult-education



How the joint application system works

When an applicant wants to apply to a school through the joint application system, they must fill out an application form. The form must be completed in Finnish or Swedish.

The form is submitted electronically. You can find it at www.opintopolku.fi.

The same site also has a demo form, which allows the applicant to practice filling out the form in advance. It is possible to use the demo form for a few months before the application period for the joint application system begins.

Some educational institutions also ask applicants for other information related to applying.

You should familiarise yourself with the different training and education options in advance. Applicants should also discuss their plans with a guidance counsellor.

In the joint application system, you can apply for up to seven training options. It is a good idea to apply for as many interesting training options as possible.

The training that the applicant prefers the most should be marked as the first-priority option. The applicant will be accepted to the training for which they have a high enough score or average grade (school-leaving certificate).

The applicant will be offered a place in the training for which they have a high enough score or average grade and which is the highest in their preference hierarchy. At this point, the other places for which the applicant has applied are cancelled automatically.

However, if the applicant is not selected for the training they wanted, they can still be put on a waiting list. In this case, the applicant will wait for a study place. The applicant may be on a waiting list for all the training options for which they

were not selected. However, the applicant must be eligible to attend these training options. This means that they must meet the requirements set by the training.

If the applicant does not get a study place in any of their training options, they will be left without a study place. In that case, they are still obliged to apply to training.

Information about all educational institutions in Finland is available at www.opintopolku.fi. There is also information about things that affect the application.

If the applicant has received a school-leaving certificate from abroad, they can apply for training through discretionary admission included in the joint application system. More information about this is provided in the next subchapter.

Applicants can also apply for training through rolling admission.

What is the discretionary admission included in the joint application system?

Upper secondary schools and vocational institutions can accept students through discretionary admission. In that case, the upper secondary school or vocational institution will make the student selection in such a way that they do not take into account the applicant's score or only take part of it into account.

There is no discretionary admission for TUVA training, TELMA training, folk high school studies or vocational education provided for students who need a high level of special support.

There is no discretionary admission for programmes that only admit students based on entrance exams or aptitude tests.

Discretionary admission can be used for a variety of reasons. If an applicant is applying to a **vocational institution**, these reasons include:

- learning difficulties and social reasons
- education completed abroad
- a personalised syllabus in mother tongue and mathematics.

Discretionary admission may also be used when the applicant's language skills are not sufficient to complete the degree or qualification. In addition, discretionary admission is used when the applicant has discontinued their basic education and therefore lacks a school-leaving certificate.

If an applicant is applying to an upper secondary school, discretionary admission can be used for the following reasons:

- the applicant has discontinued their basic education and therefore does not have a school-leaving certificate
- the applicant has completed their education or training abroad
- the applicant has a personalised syllabus in mother tongue and mathematics.



How to apply through discretionary admission

When an applicant applies for a study place through discretionary admission, this must be indicated in the application form they use in the joint application system for each study place for which they apply using discretionary admission.

The applicant must also send to the educational institution to which they are applying all the appendices on which the discretionary admission is based.

If the applicant has completed a personalised syllabus in mother tongue and mathematics in comprehensive school, they are automatically included in discretionary admission. In this case, the applicant is not included in score-based admission.

In the joint application system, applicants can apply with a certificate of training or education completed abroad, if they do not have a school-leaving certificate from Finnish basic education.

Applicants who have a school-leaving certificate from a Finnish comprehensive school or are in the process of obtaining one cannot apply with a certificate completed abroad.

How to indicate discretionary admission in the joint application system form

The joint application system form contains the section “Your basic education” (Pohjakoulutuksesi),

If the applicant does not have a school-leaving certificate, mark in this section “No school-leaving certificate” (Ei päättötodistusta).

If the applicant has a school-leaving certificate that cannot be compared with a school-leaving certificate from Finnish basic education, mark in this section “Training or education completed abroad” (Ulkomailla suoritettu koulutus).

If the applicant has learning difficulties, they need to attach to the discretionary admission application a statement from a special needs teacher, psychologist or doctor.

A statement or report is also needed if the applicant has some other reason that has hindered their performance in school. Such a reason may relate, for example, to the applicant’s own life or health.

More information about application guidelines and training and education options is available on the websites of different educational institutions as well as at www.opintopolku.fi.

How to accept a study place

The results of the joint application system are announced in June. The applicants will be notified of the result of the joint application system by email: they will be sent an email to the address that they provided in their application form. The sender of the message will be Opintopolku. The message will indicate which study place is being offered to the applicant and for which study places they are on a waiting list.

The applicant will also be sent another message. This message will contain instructions on how the applicant can accept the study place offered to them. This message will also contain a link through which the applicant can accept the study place.

The study place must be accepted in June.

The educational institution in question will send the applicant instructions that they must follow.

Once the applicant has accepted the study place, they can still be on a waiting list for the educational institutions they gave priority in their application form.

The results of the joint application system will also be published on educational institutions’ websites. However, the name of the applicant will only be published if they have given their consent to this in the joint application form.

Studies will begin in August. A person of compulsory education age must attend the training or education for which they have accepted a study place.

If an applicant of compulsory education age does not get a study place, they must immediately contact the student counsellor of their own comprehensive school. If the applicant has not attended a comprehensive school, they must contact Ohjaamotalo. More information about Ohjaamotalo is available here: www.espoo.fi/en/youth/ohjaamotalo

If the applicant is still a minor, their guardian is responsible for them. The guardian must ensure that their child completes compulsory education.

Study place through rolling admission

If an applicant has applied for a study place through rolling admission, they will be sent a message telling them whether they have been given a study place. The applicant will be sent a separate message for each place they have applied for. The message will also state how the applicant can accept the study place.

More information about training and education in Espoo

Below are links through which you can access more information about training and education in Espoo. You can also find information about how to apply to training or education. In addition, below are links to services offered to people who have recently moved to Finland. For example, the City of Espoo provides these services.

Upper secondary school education in Espoo:

www.espoo.fi/en/specialised-schools-lines-and-weighted-curriculums

Vocational education and training, TUVA training, AIPE training and apprenticeship training in Espoo: www.omnia.fi/en

LIVE Vocational College in Espoo: www.livesaatio.fi/opisto

General information about special vocational institutions: ameo.fi/en/front-page/

City of Espoo guide: www.espoo.fi/en/information-about-joint-application-system

City of Espoo services for those who have moved to Finland:

www.espoo.fi/en/city-and-decision-making/international-espoo/services-new-international-residents/hello-espoo-info

Support for studies, career planning and job search: www.espoo.fi/en/youth/ohjaamotalo

Information about the Finnish education system: www.infofinland.fi/fi/education

The cultural instructors of Finnish basic education can also provide assistance in school-related matters in different languages. Their contact details can be found here: www.espoo.fi/fi/suomenkielisen-perusopetuksen-yhteystiedot

City of Espoo, Finnish Basic Education
Multicultural Education Services, Meliora project