



**Guideline on complementary
studies at Tampere University
as of 1 August 2021**

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Purpose of the guideline

This guideline on complementary studies is a policy that further specifies Tampere University Regulations on Degrees and the Vice President's decision *Principles of changing the right to study - transferring directly to the master's degree* (TAU/518/501/2019). The purpose of the guideline is to

- 1) describe the procedures for applying the stipulations that concern complementary studies at Tampere University in accordance with the Universities Act and Tampere University Regulations on Degrees, and
- 2) guide curriculum design, and support academic staff, study services staff and other persons engaged in academic guidance and counselling in the practices related to complementary studies.

This policy is also based on the agreement between Tampere University and the Ministry of Education and Culture for 2019–2020, according to which higher education institutions will mainly give up the so-called bridging studies.

Faculties may issue policies that further specify these guidelines.

Legal basis and scope of application

According to the Universities Act:

The university may require a student admitted to study for a higher university degree to complete supplementary studies of an extent requiring a maximum of one year of studies in order to acquire the knowledge and skills needed for the studies. (Universities Act 558/2009, Section 37.4)

The university may require a student admitted to study for an academic or artistic postgraduate degree to complete the necessary supplementary studies in order to acquire the knowledge and skills needed for the studies. (Universities Act 558/2009, Section 37.6)

(The supplementary studies in the Universities Act equal complementary studies in the university regulations.)

According to Tampere University Regulations on Degrees:

The faculty may require individuals admitted to studies leading to a university degree to complete the necessary number of complementary studies in order to acquire the capabilities necessary for the studies. (TAU Regulations on Degrees, Section 18.3).

The University may require that a student admitted to study for an academic or artistic postgraduate degree complete the necessary number of complementary studies. (TAU Regulations on Degrees, Section 20.2).

These guidelines are applied at Tampere University in the admission of students to studies leading to a master's degree and to studies leading to a scientific or artistic postgraduate degree.

In addition, the guidelines apply in cases where a student's right to study leading to a bachelor's or master's degree is changed on the basis of a prior degree so that the student moves to complete only a master's degree (so-called direct transfer to the master's degree). A previous degree is considered equal to the degree on which the selection was based, in which case the same procedures apply as in direct admission to a master's degree. Therefore, the following principles apply to the change of the right to study:

- If a student already has the required degree and other possible required competences on the basis of which he or she could have been admitted in an actual admission directly for a master's degree, the student's right to study may be changed upon application and transferred to a master's degree only.
- **However, if a student has a bachelor's degree in a different field and could not have been selected directly for a master's degree in the regular student admission, the student cannot be transferred to complete just a master's degree.** In this case, the student first completes a bachelor's degree in accordance with his or her initial right to study. Studies from a previous degree may be accredited in a bachelor's degree in accordance with the instructions on the recognition of prior learning.

Specifications

No complementary studies can be required of students admitted to a bachelor's degree or the Licentiate Degree Programme in Medicine.

Faculties are not required to assess a potential student's or applicant's competencies and possible complementary studies prior to admission. Potential applicants can use the learning outcomes of curricula and the admission criteria to assess their competences.

The concept of complementary studies

For the purposes of this guideline, complementary studies refer to those studies that are defined separately and on a case-by-case basis which a student is required to complete in addition to the studies specified in the degree programme curriculum so that he or she can acquire the skills needed in the studies and the competence required to complete the degree. Here, the concept of complementary studies covers the so-called bridge studies.

The principles of complementary studies in master's degrees

Students who have been admitted to studies leading directly to a master's degree at Tampere University may be required to complete complementary studies to ensure they have the skills that a student must have in order to make progress in the studies towards a master's degree. The following principles apply to complementary studies:

- The maximum extent of complementary studies is 60 credits. However, the scope of complementary studies must be as narrow as possible.
 - If the extent of complementary studies would exceed 60 credits, the applicant is instructed to supplement his or her skills with, for example, Open University studies or to apply for the right to complete a bachelor's degree.
- Complementary studies are included in the degree and, as a rule, must fit within the minimum scope of the degree. If the minimum scope is exceeded, the applicant must be informed of this at admission.
- Complementary studies must be justified so that the completion of the student's degree is not unnecessarily slowed down, and the student has the opportunity to complete the degree within the target time.
- The completion of complementary studies is planned as part of the student's personal study plan for free choice studies.
- Complementary studies that are not within the scope of the degree are waived. This means that complementary studies that are not included in the degree should not be required.

The principles of complementary studies in postgraduate degrees

The University may require that a student admitted to study for an academic or artistic postgraduate degree complete the necessary number of complementary studies in order to gain the knowledge and skills required for the studies.

- The maximum extent of complementary studies is 60 credits.
 - If the extent of complementary studies would exceed 60 credits, the applicant is instructed to complement his or her skills with, for example, Open University studies or to apply for the right to complete a master's degree.
- The completion of complementary studies is planned as part of the student's personal study plan.
 - When applying for the right to postgraduate studies, the applicant, if necessary, draws up a personal plan of complementary studies with the proposed supervisor and submits it to the doctoral programme for consideration in connection with the application.
- As a rule, complementary studies are included in the degree.

Complementary studies and the curriculum

Individualised complementary studies are planned as part of the student's personal study plan and, in the case of a master's degree, as part of the degree's free choice studies. In principle, these complementary studies do not exist in the degree programme curriculum. However, typical complementary studies can be described in the descriptive texts.

If all students with a certain educational or competence background always complete the same studies in order to progress in their studies and achieve sufficient competence to complete the degree, these studies must be made a part of the curriculum of the degree programme. This does not mean complementary studies but studies that should be genuinely included in the joint studies of the degree programme or in advanced studies. The curriculum describes the studies required in the programme according to the student's educational background by creating separate study units for different target groups (for example, students who have completed a prior degree at Tampere University / University of Applied Sciences / Finland / abroad) as mutually optional studies or study modules (not as specialisations). Which ones of the optional studies or course units in the curriculum a student completes, is planned as part of the student's personal study plan.

In a manner appropriate to the degree programme, programmes must ensure that appropriate attention is paid to the differences in the starting level of competence caused by the students' different educational backgrounds and that the necessary complementary teaching and support is provided.

Validity

This guideline enters into force on 1 August 2021. This guideline may already be applied to students' advantage before that.

Sources and further information

Universities Act (558/2009). Finlex. <https://www.finlex.fi/en/laki/kaannokset/2009/en20090558>
Retrieved on 25 June 2020.

Tampere University Regulations on Degrees (in force from 1 August 2020)
<https://intra.tuni.fi/en/handbook?page=2264>

[Principles governing the structure and content of bachelor's and master's degrees](#) from 1 August 2019 PDF file (in Finnish).

[Principles governing the structure and content of bachelor's and master's degrees in the field of engineering](#) PDF file (in Finnish)

[Degree structures as Tampere University from 1 August 2019](#) PDF file (in Finnish)

Principles governing the structure and content of English-language Bachelor's and Master's degree programmes (adopted by the Academic Board on 14 April, 2020. The principles enter into force on 1 August 2021. <https://intra.tuni.fi/handbook?page=14095>

[Principles governing the structure and content of bachelor's and master's degrees from 1 August 2020](#) adopted by the Academic Board on 11 June 2019 (in Finnish)

General admission criteria for doctoral programmes as of 1 August 2021. (Approved by the Academic Board on 9 June 2020) <https://tweb.tuni.fi/TWeb/tfile?id=126222>

Principles of changing the right to study - transferring directly to the master's degree, a decision by Vice President, Education on 18 February 2019 (in Finnish).

https://wiki.tamk.fi/download/attachments/100963676/Vararehtorinpäätös_18.02.2019_Opiskelu_oik_muutos_ylempään.pdf

Further information on the application of this guideline:

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