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Free education consists of different forms of qualifications

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Finnish vocational education and training consists of vocational upper secondary qualifications, further vocational qualifications, and specialist vocational qualifications. There are approximately 160 different qualifications and the educational institutes also offer preparatory education.

Vocational qualifications are wide-ranging and flexible. Their scope is expressed in competence points. Vocational qualifications consist of compulsory and optional vocational qualification units. The students can, based on their needs, complete entire qualifications, parts of it, or just a single qualification unit. The most popular vocational qualifications, when measured in numbers, are the Vocational Qualification in Social and Health Care and Vocational Qualification in Business.

The Ministry of Education decrees the requirements for the qualifications and the vocational colleges specify these by creating qualification-specific implementation plans.

Vocational upper secondary qualifications are wide-ranging and in them the students demonstrate the basic competences needed to work in different fields. In addition, the students demonstrate more specialised competences and the vocational competences required by the working life in at least one part of their field. The vocational upper secondary qualification consists of vocational and common units. There are over 40 vocational upper secondary qualifications.

In further vocational qualifications, the students demonstrate more focused competences required

by the working life, either more in-depth or for more exclusive tasks. There are over 60 further vocational qualifications.

In specialist vocational qualifications, the students demonstrate vocational competences which exceed the requirements of further vocational qualifications, or multidisciplinary competences. There are over 50 specialist vocational qualifications.

The structure of vocational education is continuously developed to meet the needs of the working life. New qualifications are formed and obsolete ones are retired. The task of the Finnish National Agency for Education is to collect predictive data, follow statistics, and analyse the feedback from colleges, students, and companies. This data is used to evaluate the changes required in the structure of education.

“Vocational education is funded by the state of Finland.

Vocational education is funded by the state of Finland. This means the education is, for the most part, free of charge for the students. The Ministry of Education and Culture gives funding to the education providers annually. The colleges decide how to use the funding effectively and how they ensure meeting the goals and developing their actions. The funding decisions emphasise efficiency and impact. In addition, educational institutions take part in development projects, which offer additional funding.



