Practices for tuition fees at the University of Helsinki

1. Basis for the tuition fee

1.1 Fee-based degree programmes for students from outside the EU/EEA

The University of Helsinki will charge tuition fees to students who study in Master’s programmes offered in a language other than Finnish or Swedish as well as to students who study in multilingual Master’s programmes and complete their degree in English. The rector of the University of Helsinki will decide on guidelines for the University’s tuition fees, and the vice-rector in charge of teaching and research will decide on programme-specific fees.

1.2 Payment liability

Tuition fees will be charged to students who are not citizens of an EU or EEA (Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway) country or Switzerland. Tuition fees will not be charged to non-Finnish students who hold a status A, P or P-EU residence permit. Also exempted will be the family members (i.e., spouses and underage children) of individuals who are citizens of an EU or EEA country or Switzerland as well as the family members of those with one of the above residence permits.

If necessary, students themselves are responsible for demonstrating that they are not liable to pay a tuition fee.

2. Tuition fees and the right to study

2.1 Non-attendance during the first academic year

Section 39 of the Universities Act stipulates that new students must register for attendance during the academic year following their admission. They can register as non-attending only in situations specified in the Act. These provisions will also apply to students liable to pay a tuition fee.

Students can register as non-attending during their first academic year only if they
1) are completing Finnish military service, non-military service, or voluntary military service for women;
2) are on maternity, paternity or parental leave; or
3) are unable to begin their studies owing to a medical condition.

If the reason for registering for non-attendance is the student’s inability to begin his or her studies owing to a medical condition, the student must present a doctor’s certificate of the condition, indicating the diagnosis and stating that it prevents the student from beginning his or her studies. The authenticity of the doctor’s certificate may be verified. The existence and gravity of the grounds for registering as a non-attending student will always be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

If a student is deemed to have a valid reason to register for non-attendance under the Universities Act, his or her liability to pay a tuition fee will be postponed to the beginning of the following academic year.

2.2 Relationship between payment liability and the duration of the right to study
Under section 40 of the Universities Act, the target duration of a Master’s degree is two years. Students are entitled to complete their Master’s degree within the target duration plus two additional years, i.e., in four years. Students are also entitled to register as non-attending for one year (section 41). In addition, they can apply for an extension of their right to study. The provisions of the Universities Act concerning the duration of the right to study will also apply to students liable to pay a tuition fee. This means that such students can also register as non-attending and will not be liable to pay the fee for the duration of their non-attendance. If necessary, non-Finnish students may apply for an extension on grounds equivalent to those provided to Finnish students by the law.

If a student fails to graduate within two years of study, he or she can register as attending for the following autumn term, in which case the student must pay half the tuition fee. The fee will be charged by term until the student has completed the degree.

If the graduation of a student who has submitted his or her thesis for examination and has completed all other studies is postponed until the following term for reasons attributable to the University, the student need not pay the fee for the additional term in order to graduate.

2.3 Payment of the tuition fee and consequences of non-payment

New students cannot enrol at the University until they have paid their tuition fee. Applicants admitted to a Master’s programme must first accept the offered place, pay their tuition fee for the first academic year, and then enrol at the University.

Admitted applicants will be informed of an awarded scholarship, if any, when they are informed of their admission.

If a student who is liable to pay a tuition fee does not pay it by the due date and does not register as non-attending by the registration deadline, he or she will lose the right to study on account of failure to register. To be readmitted, the student must pay the tuition fee and the re-enrolment fee.

Students must pay their tuition fee for the second year of study before they can register as attending. If a student is delayed in his her studies and must study for a third academic year so as to graduate, the fee for the additional time must also be paid before registering.

2.4 Postponement of payment

Students who receive a grant from a source other than the University of Helsinki and whose grant is not paid until after the term has begun may apply for a postponement of payment of their tuition fee. The written application for postponement must be accompanied by documents concerning the grant and its payment schedule.

2.5 Non-payment of the tuition fee

Admitted applicants or students cannot register as attending before they have paid their tuition fee. Only attending students can attend classes and complete studies.

3. Tuition fee and changes to students’ residence or citizenship status

Changes to the residence or citizenship status of students during their studies will be considered as follows:

1) If the change of status means that the student is no longer liable to pay a tuition fee, any fees covering the time after the change will be reimbursed to the student as of the following term.
2) If a student’s status changes so that he or she becomes liable to pay a tuition fee, the liability will begin as of the following term.

Students must inform the University about any changes to their residence or citizenship status.

Changes to the liability to pay a tuition fee will come into effect as of the beginning of the term following the change of status. In cases of such a change, the tuition fee will be divided for two terms so that one term equals half the tuition fee for the entire year.

When calculating the amount to be reimbursed, the half of the tuition fee grant that was awarded to the student from the University’s grant system for tuition fees will be taken into account.

4. Tuition fee and changes to students’ attendance status

If a student changes his or her registration status for the academic year from non-attendance to attendance, he or she must pay a tuition fee. If the change occurs in the autumn term, the student must pay the fee for the entire academic year, except if he or she intends to graduate during the term in question, in which case the student must pay half the tuition fee. If the change occurs in the spring term, the student must pay half the tuition fee.

5. Reimbursement of the tuition fee in other circumstances

The tuition fee will be reimbursed if

- a conditionally admitted student fails to meet the conditions for admission within the allocated time,
- a student’s application for a residence permit is rejected,
- the residence permit status of a student who has accepted a place changes before registration so that he or she is no longer liable to pay a tuition fee, or
- the degree programme is not offered or a force majeure event occurs.

If a student graduates in the autumn of the second academic year before the target duration of the degree has expired, he or she will be reimbursed for half the tuition fee for the second academic year.

If a student is delayed in his or her studies for reasons attributable to the University, no tuition fee will be charged for the extended duration of studies.

6. Students’ right to appeal

The general provision of the Universities Act under which university decisions can be appealed to the Administrative Court also applies to students liable to pay a tuition fee. However, section 84 of the Universities Act stipulates that university decisions on scholarships and grants cannot be appealed. Students liable to pay a tuition fee have access to the appeals provisions of the Universities Act as follows:

- Decisions on student admission can be appealed firstly within the university in question and then by appealing to the Administrative Court.
- The grading of studies and related appeals will be subject to the same provisions as those applied to other students.
- The revocation of the right to study based on legal provisions on restrictions to student admission as well as related appeals will apply to the fields defined in the relevant decree.
- Disciplinary provisions and the right to appeal against decisions on disciplinary action will apply to all students.

7. Supplementation of this decision

The director of development at Teaching and Learning Services can further specify this decision.

Rector 

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