

Taking into account the language of school education and mother tongue in the language and communication studies of the degree

1. Degree programmes taught in Finnish

1.1 How the language and communication studies are determined in a degree programme taught in Finnish if the student's language of education is Finnish or Swedish

	Finnish as the language of education	Swedish as the language of education
Ammatillinen viestintä/ Professional Communication	Compulsory	Compulsory
Finnish / B1 level in Finnish	-	Not required
Svenska i arbetslivet	Compulsory	If Swedish is the student's language of education, they apply for an exemption based on the language of education.*
Työelämän englanti/English for Working Life	Compulsory	Compulsory
Maturity exam	In Finnish	In Swedish

* The mother tongue means the language in which the student completed the mother tongue syllabus at a comprehensive school or upper secondary school.

1.2 How the language and communication studies are determined in a degree programme taught in Finnish if the student's mother tongue is English or some other foreign language:

	English or some other foreign language as mother tongue*
Ammatillinen viestintä/Professional Communication	Compulsory
Finnish / B1 level in Finnish	Not required
Svenska i arbetslivet	Swedish according to the curriculum, if the language of education in Finland is Finnish. If Swedish is the student's language of education, they apply for an exemption based on the language education. Similarly, if a student hasn't studied Swedish previously, they apply for an exemption.
Työelämän englantia/English for Working Life	English according to the curriculum. If the student's mother tongue is English, they apply for an exemption.*
Maturity exam	If the student's language of education is Finnish or Swedish, they write the maturity exam in the language in question. In other cases, mostly in English.

* The mother tongue means the language in which the student completed the mother tongue syllabus at a comprehensive school or upper secondary school.

2. Degree programmes taught in English

2.1 How the language and communication studies are determined in a degree programme taught in English if the student's language of education is Finnish or Swedish:

	Finnish or Swedish as the language of education
Professional Communication	Compulsory
Finnish / B1 level in Finnish	If the student has received secondary education in Swedish in Finland, level B1 in Finnish is required following the Universities of Applied Sciences Act. **
Svenska i arbetslivet	Swedish according to the curriculum, if the student's language education is Finnish. If Swedish is the student's language of education, they apply for exemption based on the language of education. If the student's mother tongue is Swedish, they apply for an exemption based on the mother tongue. *
English for Working Life	English according to the curriculum
Maturity exam	Maturity exam in the language of education

* The mother tongue means the language in which the student completed the mother tongue syllabus at a comprehensive school or upper secondary school.

** If the language of education is Swedish, Finnish level B1 is required for degrees in English according to Finnish Law. Level B1 is equivalent to the National Language Proficiency (YKI) test, level 3 and the satisfactory level in the Civil Service Language Proficiency test. (<https://www.oph.fi/en/education-and-qualifications/comparability-between-national-language-proficiency-certificates-and->)

2.2 How the language and communication studies are determined in a degree programme taught in English if the student's language of education is English or some other foreign language:

	English or some other foreign language as mother tongue*
Professional Communication	Compulsory
Finnish / B1 level in Finnish	Finnish according to the curriculum, if the student's mother tongue is English or some other foreign language. If the student's language of education is Finnish, the student chooses Swedish instead of Finnish. If the student's language of education is Swedish, Finnish level B1 is required following the Universities of Applied Sciences Act.**
Svenska i arbetslivet	If the student hasn't studied Swedish previously, they apply for an exemption.
English for Working Life	English according to the curriculum. If English is the student's language of education, they apply for an exemption.
Maturity exam	If the student's language of education is Finnish or Swedish, they write the maturity exam in the language in question. In other cases, mostly in English.

* The mother tongue means the language in which the student completed the mother tongue syllabus at a comprehensive school or upper secondary school.

** If the language of education was Swedish, Finnish level B1 is required for degrees in English according to Finnish Law. Level B1 is equivalent to the National Language Proficiency (YKI) test, level 3 and the satisfactory level in the Civil Service Language Proficiency test. <https://www.oph.fi/en/education-and-qualifications/comparability-between-national-language-proficiency-certificates-and->

3. Determining the language of education

The language of education means the language in which the student completed the mother tongue syllabus at a comprehensive school (vocational education path) or upper secondary school (upper secondary path).

Note! A student whose language of education is not Finnish or Swedish but whose maturity exam is approved in Finnish or Swedish has reached a good written and oral level of a language (A481/2003, § 16). This serves as a proof of language skills when applying for the Finnish citizenship, for example.

Government decree on the demonstration of proficiency in Finnish and Swedish in the Civil Service 481/2003.

Section 20 Language of education (unofficial translation)

A person's language of education is deemed to be the language in which they have received an approved grade in Finnish or Swedish as a mother tongue in a school-leaving certificate of studies conducted under the Basic Education Act (628/1998) or the Act on General Upper Secondary Education (629/1998) or equivalent.

A person who has passed the matriculation examination in a language other than the language of education referred to in paragraph 1 shall, however, be deemed to have received their education also in the language that they have passed the matriculation examination of the mother tongue or obtained at least the grade magna cum laude approbator in Finnish as a second language or Swedish as a second language examination.

1129/2014 Government Decree on Universities of Applied Sciences

Section 7 Language proficiency (unofficial translation retrieved from Finlex)

Students shall demonstrate attainment of the following standards in the studies included in the programme for a Bachelor's or Master's degree, or some other manner:

1) proficiency in Finnish and Swedish which, under the Act on the Knowledge of Languages Required of Personnel in Public Bodies (424/2003), is required for public posts in bilingual administrative districts where the eligibility requirement for the post is a tertiary degree and which is necessary for the practice of the profession and professional development; and

2) written and oral skills in one or two foreign languages necessary for the practice of a profession and professional development.

The provisions of subsection 1 do not apply to students who have been educated in a language other than Finnish or Swedish or students who have been educated abroad. The language proficiency requirement of such students is determined by the universities of applied sciences.

Universities of applied sciences may either wholly or partly exempt a student from the language proficiency requirement laid down in subsection 1 where there are special reasons

for doing so.

The language proficiency demonstrated by students is included in the degree certificates. When recording language proficiency, section 19 of the Government Decree on the Demonstration of Proficiency in the Finnish and Swedish Languages in Civil Service (481(2003) shall be taken into account.

4. A special remark related to students with Swedish as the language of education

If the language of education was Swedish, Finnish level B1 is required for degree programmes taught in English according to Finnish Law. Level B1 is equivalent to the National language proficiency (YKI) test, level 3 and the satisfactory level in the Civil service language proficiency test. <https://www.oph.fi/en/education-and-qualifications/comparability-between-national-language-proficiency-certificates-and->

5. Exemption from language proficiency requirements

The grounds for exemption: A student may get a total or partial exemption from the language proficiency requirements (decree 1129/2014, section 7) for special reasons.

Such grounds are:

- a) no previous studies of the language in question
- b) the language in question is the student's mother tongue* or language of education, or
- c) other reason, e.g. diagnosed dyslexia or other learning difficulty hindering language learning.

The exemption means that the student is exempt from the course of compulsory foreign language and/or the other national language. However, the granted exemption doesn't decrease the amount of credits required for completing a degree, so the student has to take other studies corresponding to the extent of this course. These studies should, as far as possible, support language skills. However, if the student has a clear difficulty in learning languages, the credits can be replaced by other studies following the objectives of the degree programme. The exemption is written down on the diploma.

* The mother tongue means the language in which the student completed the mother tongue syllabus at a comprehensive school or upper secondary school.