



# HOW TO GET STARTED?

PRACTICAL INFORMATION FOR DEGREE STUDENTS



**STUDENT SERVICES**

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Unigrafia

## Welcome

Welcome to Helsinki and to the University of Helsinki (UH). The Student Services wishes to welcome you as a new degree student. This booklet gives you practical information to help you organise your move to Finland smoothly.

In addition to this booklet, you should receive greetings and information from your Faculty explaining in detail your enrolment, studies, and courses at your Faculty and Department.

Once you have arrived in Helsinki, you will be given a detailed guide book to the University, the City of Helsinki and student life.

The information given here is presented in the order you should proceed to avoid any delays in settling down and obtaining a permanent address and a municipality as well as student benefits you are entitled to.

- More information available on the website for accepted students:

[http://www.helsinki.fi/admissions/for\\_accepted\\_students.htm](http://www.helsinki.fi/admissions/for_accepted_students.htm)

## Check list for new degree students

### Before arrival

1. Confirm your acceptance of the place of study offered to you.
2. Fill in the Student Registration Form and pay the Student Union membership fee.
3. Mail all forms to the Faculty; they have to be at the Faculty no later than August 2, 2011, at 16:15 local time (GMT +2) or on the date specified by your Faculty in the acceptance letter.
4. Non-EU students: Apply for a residence permit as soon as possible. The processing time for the permit can be over a month.
5. Apply for housing as soon as possible.

### After arrival

1. Attend the Orientation Course and visit the Welcome Desk at the University. (Exact dates and times are available at [http://www.helsinki.fi/orientation/.](http://www.helsinki.fi/orientation/))
2. Apply for the student card at [https://www.lyyra.fi/.](https://www.lyyra.fi/)
3. EU-students: Register your right to reside in Finland at the local police office.
4. All students: Register at the municipal register office (maistraatti) to receive a place of domicile (kotikunta).
5. Obtain a Travel Card after you have received your Finnish ID-number from the Register office -> a student discount certificate for the travel card is available from the Student Services.

## New Student Enrolment

There are three steps to get enrolled as a new degree student at the University of Helsinki.

First, you should confirm your acceptance of the place offered by the University. Your Faculty has sent you a form for that.

Second, you should carefully fill in the Student Registration Form. You receive this form from the Faculty.

Third, you have to pay the Student Union (HYY) annual fee (approximately 90 euro) and mail a receipt of the transaction to the Faculty. You can download the payment form (available at the end of April-early May) from the Student Union's website at <http://www.hyy.helsinki.fi/english/61/>, but you should also receive one from the Faculty. Take a copy of the receipt – you will need it again in Finland. Please note that the **fee has to be paid by bank transfer**, do not send a check or money order to the Faculty.

It is strongly recommended that you make this transaction as soon as possible and submit all these three documents together to your Faculty as soon as you can: absolutely no later than August 2, 2011, at 16:15 local time (GMT +2) or on the date specified by your Faculty in the acceptance letter. There are over 4000 new students enrolling in August, which causes inevitable delays. Therefore you should hand in the enrolment documents to your Faculty as soon as possible.

The completion of the enrolment is crucial because no official certification of your studies can be issued by the University before that. The official certification of your studies is mandatory when you are applying for a permanent address

in Helsinki. All students whose degree study lasts at least for two years, can be registered as permanent residents of the municipality.

### Enrolment documents:

- Confirmation Form of Acceptance
- Student Registration Form
- Bank slip of the Student Union (HYY) fee payment.

These documents must be delivered to your Faculty by **August 2, 2011, at 16:15 local time (GMT +2)** or on the date specified by your Faculty in the acceptance letter.

## Visas and Residence Permit (FEBRUARY 2011)

- <http://www.migri.fi/>

### Non-EU

As a non-EU/EEA student you must acquire a residence permit if your studies in Finland last for more than three months. Normally the residence permit application must be submitted in your home country. Please note that you are required to have health insurance when applying for the residence permit. For students studying in Finland for at least two years, the insurance must cover the cost of medical treatment up to 30 000 euro (primarily medication costs). If the studies last less than two years, then the insurance must cover medical treatment up to 100 000 euro. Please note that the right to use the Finnish Student Health Service (FSHS) does not exempt a student from having to take out health insurance.

A residence permit issued for studies entitles you to work maximum 25 hours a week during the teaching periods. During the Christmas and summer holidays there

is no restriction on working hours.

- More information on the residence permit: <http://www.migri.fi/netcomm/content.asp?path=8,2474,2515>
- Finnish diplomatic missions abroad: <http://formin.finland.fi/public/default.aspx?nodeid=15131&contentlan=2&culture=en-us>

## EU

EU citizens and citizens of Liechtenstein and Switzerland must register their right to reside in Finland at a police department if their stay lasts for longer than three months. Citizens of the Nordic countries (Denmark, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden) are registered at a Register Office. Your right of residence is granted upon that:

- the main reason for your stay in Finland is to study at a Finnish educational institution
- you have sufficient means to support your stay in Finland during your studies (you can choose the way how you prove this).

As an EU/EEA citizen, you have the right to work in Finland without any work permit or restrictions on hours. Your right to reside in Finland is valid until further notice.

- <http://www.migri.fi/netcomm/content.asp?path=8,2474,2514>

## Housing

Please note that the University of Helsinki does not arrange housing for its degree students. Below are listed some options where you can look for housing.

### HOAS

As a degree student, you can apply for housing in a student flat from the Foundation for Student Housing in the Helsinki Region (HOAS). On offer are single rooms, shared or family apartments and studio flats. Normally you would be offered a housing that is close to your home campus. **You really should apply as soon as possible.** HOAS operates on a first-come, first-served basis and there are plenty of other students, both international and Finnish alike, who are in need of housing.

Rents for a single room is approximately 300 euro and for shared or family flats from 400 to 850 euro a month, depending on the location and equipment in the apartment.

**Flats are unfurnished.** The rent includes water and electricity (in most cases) and a fixed Internet broadband connection. For detailed information on HOAS apartments, locations and the application process, see:

- <http://www.hoas.fi>
- [vuokrausneuvonta@hoas.fi](mailto:vuokrausneuvonta@hoas.fi) (customer service)

You can leave your application online at

- <https://www.hoas.fi/> > Applying

### LYYRA Housing Service

The Lyyra Housing Service is available online and you can search for apartments, rooms or flatmates at the site. The service is free of charge for all users registered to Lyyra:

- <http://www.lyyra.fi/> > Lyyra Rentals.

## More information on accommodation

More information on finding accommodation in the Helsinki area can be found on the Student Union's website at

- <http://www.hyy.helsinki.fi/english/36/>.

For a short stay, there are several reasonably priced hostels. Check out for instance these hostels in the City Centre:

### Stadion Hostel

- <http://www.stadionhostel.fi/>
- [info@stadionhostel.fi](mailto:info@stadionhostel.fi)

### Eurohostel

- <http://www.eurohostel.fi/>
- [eurohostel@eurohostel.fi](mailto:eurohostel@eurohostel.fi)

## Arrival

### Academic year - when to be here?

The academic year in Finland is divided into two terms (August 1 to December 31 and January 1 to July 31). At the University of Helsinki the terms are further divided into seven-week teaching periods. An orientation course in English for new international students will be held in early September. It would make sense to arrive in Helsinki a few days before the orientation course starts.

In most Faculties the teaching periods, for the 2011-2012 academic year, are:

- September 5 to October 23
- October 31 to December 18
- January 16 to March 4
- March 12 to May 20\*

\* Includes Easter week and a two week optional intensive teaching period at the end of the period.

In the Faculties of Biosciences, Law, Medicine, Veterinary Medicine, Pharmacy

and Behavioural Sciences the teaching periods might vary from the dates above. Please check the exact dates from the Faculty.

### Arriving by plane

The Helsinki-Vantaa Airport is well connected to the University: bus 615 takes you directly to the City Centre. It is a five-minute walk from the bus terminal to the University's City Centre Campus and about ten minutes to the local HOAS office. The bus ticket costs 4.00 euro and the bus trip takes about a half an hour. From the bus terminal you can take a bus to other Campuses at Viikki, Kumpula and Meilahti. Check the Journey Planner website below!

- Journey Planner:

<http://www.reittipas.fi/en/>

- Map of Helsinki:

<http://kartta.hel.fi/opas/indexen.html>

### Arriving by train, ferry or coach

The central railway station, long-distance coach station in Kamppi and the harbours are all close to the City Centre and a walking distance from the University. If you arrive at Länsisatama harbour, take bus 15A to the central railway station.

### Campus maps

You can find maps of the different campuses of the University of Helsinki on <http://kampuskartat.helsinki.fi/map/map.php?&language=3>.

### Orientation Course and Welcome Desk

The orientation course in early September is a not-to-be-missed opportunity to get to know the Campuses and the University. You get a lot of practical information about the University, bureaucratic necessities and student benefits. Also, you meet other international students.

You are introduced to the Finnish student life by degree students who act as your tutors. They will also give you the latest tips and tricks at the Departments and Faculties. Another orientation course is organised in January.

There is a Welcome Desk for new international students at the University. At the desk you can pick up a bag of materials, different certificates and ask questions.

The preliminary programme for the Orientation course and the dates and opening hours of the Welcome Desk are available at:

- <http://www.helsinki.fi/orientation/>.

## Register your permanent address in the Metropolitan Area!

As you will stay in Finland for a longer period of time, you will have to register at the municipal register office. Acquiring a permanent address and place of domicile (kotikunta) entitles you to enjoy municipal benefits, including, if your studies last for over two years, also the right to use municipal health care. To register at the municipal register office (<http://www.maistraatti.fi/en/>) you need to have a proof of:

- Right to reside in Finland. For non-EU/EEA citizens this is the residence permit; for EU-citizens this is obtained from the police as a certificate of residence (Unionin kansalaisen oleskeluoikeuden rekisteröintitodistus).
- Certification of the duration of your studies from the Student Services (opiskelijaneuvonta).

It is extremely important that you accomplish the enrolment procedure at the University as soon as possible because no official certification of your studies can be given before that.

## Metropolitan Travel Card - you need a permanent address

Degree students under the age of 30 are entitled to a 50 percent discount on public transportation in the Metropolitan Area. To be eligible, you must have a permanent address in the Metropolitan Area. So it is advisable to get registered at the Police (EU/EEA citizens) and the Municipal Register Office (EU/EEA and non-EU citizens) as soon as you have received a certification of your degree studies at UH from the Student Services of the University of Helsinki. A student discount certificate for the travel card is also available from the Student Services. You are eligible for the student discount once you have received your Finnish ID-number from the Register office. Students aged 30 or over must receive Student Financial Aid from the Finnish social security institution (Kela) in order for them to be granted the student discount on the travel card.

The Travel card is valid on buses, trams, metro, and local trains and you can get a ticket for a fixed period of time, e.g. for a month (recommendable, if you use the public transportation regularly) or you can load money on the card and get single tickets. A municipal single ticket (2.50 euro) is valid for one hour and a regional ticket (4.00 euro) for 80 minutes.

- Ticket fares and other information: <http://www.hsl.fi/EN/ticketsandfares/Pages/default.aspx>
- Online journey planner for the Metropolitan Area: <http://www.reittiopas.fi/en/>

## Coaches and Trains

Your student card entitles you to receive a 50 percent student discount on long-distance coaches and trains. You have to show your student card when buying the ticket as well as to the ticket inspectors.

- Trains: <http://www.vr.fi/en/>
- Long-distance coaches: <http://www.matkahuolto.fi/en/>

## Student Union (HYY) Membership and Fees

The Student Union (HYY) is an active community of about 30,000 students. Every undergraduate and graduate student enrolled at the University of Helsinki automatically becomes a member of the Student Union by paying the Student Union's annual membership fee. For undergraduate and graduate students, the HYY membership is obligatory.

- <http://www.hyy.helsinki.fi>
- Secretary for International Affairs at the Student Union:

[international@hyy.fi](mailto:international@hyy.fi)  
tel. +358 (0) 50 543 8450

## Lyyra - your student card

Students at the University of Helsinki can apply for a national Lyyra Student Card. The card functions as a discount card at the University and certifies your student status outside the campuses. You can leave your application as soon as you have been enrolled at the University and you have received your student number. Apply on-line at

- <http://www.lyyra.fi/> (click on "Register and Order Lyyra Card").

## FSHS – Finnish Student Health Services

As members of the Student Union (HYY) all undergraduate and graduate students are entitled to use the inexpensive health

care services at the Finnish Student Health Services (FSHS/YTHS). FSHS services cover regular doctor's and dentist's services but no hospitalisation. If you are covered by the European (Union) Health Insurance Card, bring it along from your home country. Otherwise you should have a health insurance that covers emergency treatment and hospital care. According to law, if your studies last at least two years, a proof of a valid health insurance that covers medication is required for your residence permit application. According to the same legislation, other medical expenses e.g. hospital care would be covered by the State irrespective of your country of origin.

- FSHS: <http://www.fshs.fi/>

## Tsemppi

There are many student organisations at the University – but only one especially catering for international degree students. Tsemppi is run by international degree students and they can tell you all about settling in in Finland and getting by in the winter darkness and cold weather.

- <http://www.tsemppi.com/>

## Language Courses

### Learning Finnish

Although it is easy to get by in English, to really integrate into Finnish society it makes a lot of sense to learn Finnish. Knowledge of Finnish is also extremely helpful if you seek a job here. Language courses either in Finnish or Swedish are also a part of degree requirements in some faculties. Please check the requirements from your faculty.

### Where and when - free of charge

Finnish language tuition is organised by the Department of Finnish, Finno-Ugrian

and Scandinavian Studies. There are specially designed courses for international degree students who need the credits for their degree. Normally, registration for the courses takes place in late August - early September. The University's Language Centre offers Swedish for foreigners courses. For more information:

- Finnish courses: <http://www.helsinki.fi/fus/>
- Swedish courses: <http://www.helsinki.fi/kksc/english/intstud.html>.

## Useful Information

### Cost of Living

Varies from 700 to 900 euro a month including rent (in student housing).

### Drinking water

Tap water is fresh, safe and drinkable throughout Finland. Much better than expensive bottled water, say surveys.

### Electricity

Current is 230 V.

### Get a mobile phone

In Finland, your mobile phone is not attached to your operator. Basic models are cheap, using them is even cheaper. A mobile phone is essential in Helsinki. In the beginning it might be easier to get a prepaid SIM card from e.g. R-Kioski shops, because a regular contract often requires a proof of a permanent residence in Finland.

### Climate

Helsinki daytime temperatures

- autumn 5°C to 15°C
- winter -4°C to -20°C
- spring 5°C to 16°C
- summer 15°C to 25°C

High winds blowing on a cold day lower the temperature even further. Helsinki is

a windy city! During the summer it never gets really dark in Helsinki; during the winter months the days are mere six hours long.

### Clothing, shoes and boots

Bring with you warm, rain- and windproof outdoor clothing as well as some lighter clothing for warmer seasons. At least one pair of comfortable walking shoes is a must. In order to withstand slush, snow, sleet and rain as well as the sand and salt used on icy sidewalks and roads, winter boots should be waterproof, warm, lightweight and stain repellent.

## Contact Information

### Student Services - City Centre Campus

Main Building  
Fabianinkatu 33 (P.O. Box 3)  
00014 University of Helsinki  
[studentinfo@helsinki.fi](mailto:studentinfo@helsinki.fi)  
Tel. +358 (0)9 191 22244  
Fax +358 (0)9 191 22662  
Mon 10:00-16:30, Tue 10:00-15:30,  
Wed 9:00-16:30; Thu and Fri 10:00 - 15:30\*

### Student Services - Kumpula Campus

Jyrängöntie 2 (B.O.Box 44)  
00014 Helsinki University  
[sci-info@helsinki.fi](mailto:sci-info@helsinki.fi)  
Tel. +358 (0)9 191 50065,  
Fax +358 (0)9 191 50070  
Mon to Fri 10:00 - 15:00\*

\* For updated information on the opening hours, please see <http://www.helsinki.fi/neuvonta/english/index.htm>.

## Faculty Study Offices

### Faculty of Agriculture and Forestry

mmtkd-international@helsinki.fi

Tel. +358 (0) 9 191 58247

### Faculty of Arts

hum-international@helsinki.fi

Tel. +358 (0) 9 191 22348

### Faculty of Behavioural Sciences

kaytt-intl@helsinki.fi

Tel. +358 (0) 9 191 20504

### Faculty of Biological and Environmental Sciences

#### Faculty of Pharmacy

bio-sci@helsinki.fi

Tel. +358 (0) 9 191 57567

### Faculty of Law

law-international@helsinki.fi

Tel. +358 (0) 9 191 22148

### Faculty of Medicine

med-studentaffairs@helsinki.fi

Tel. +358 (0) 9 191 26627

### Faculty of Science

sci-info@helsinki.fi

Tel. +358 (0) 9 191 50065

### Faculty of Social Sciences

soc-sci@helsinki.fi

Tel. +358 (0) 9 191 24807

### Swedish School of Social Sciences

sskh-international@helsinki.fi

Tel. +358 (0) 9 191 28406

### Faculty of Theology

theology@helsinki.fi

Tel. +358 (0) 9 191 24016

### Faculty of Veterinary Medicine

int-vet@helsinki.fi

Tel. +358 (0) 9 191 57156

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