



FINNISH NATIONAL
BOARD OF EDUCATION

**NATIONAL CORE CURRICULUM FOR
PREPARATORY EDUCATION FOR
GENERAL UPPER SECONDARY
EDUCATION 2014**

Publications 2014:7

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Content

1	The Objective of preparatory education for general upper secondary education	5
2	Provision of education and structure of studies	5
2.1	Structure of studies	8
2.2	Studies in the basic education syllabus	8
2.3	Studies in the general upper secondary education syllabus	9
3	Curriculum	9
4	Implementation of education	10
4.1	Basic values	10
4.2	Conception of learning	11
4.3	Operational culture	11
4.4	Learning environment and methods	11
5	Guidance counselling and support	12
5.1	Provision of guidance counselling	13
5.2	Individual study plan	13
5.3	Student welfare services	14
5.4	Learning support	14
5.5	Cooperation between home and school	14
6	Learning objectives and core contents of education	15
6.1	General objectives of education	15
6.2	Objectives and core contents of language instruction	15
6.2.1	Mother tongue and literature (Finnish as a second language and literature)	15
6.2.2	Other languages	21
6.3	Mathematics and natural sciences	27
6.4	Civic education and cultural knowledge	28
6.5	Guidance counselling	30
6.6	Optional studies	33
7	Assessment	33
7.1	Objectives of assessment	33
7.2	Course assessment	34
7.3	Assessment of subjects/subject groups	34
7.4	Completing the basic education studies during preparatory education for general upper secondary education	35
7.5	Preparatory education studies for general upper secondary education	35
7.6	Certificates and marks	35

1 The Objective of preparatory education for general upper secondary education

Preparatory education for general upper secondary education is aimed at immigrants and foreign-language speakers. The objective is to provide them with linguistic and other capabilities required for the transfer to general upper secondary education. A further aim is to support the students' preconditions for lifelong learning and personal development throughout their lives. This will promote social equality and improve the opportunities for immigrants and foreign-language speakers to complete general upper secondary education. The preparatory education can be provided for young and adult immigrants and foreign-language speakers alike.

“Immigrant” refers to a person who has moved to Finland, resides in Finland on a permit granted for reasons other than tourism or comparable short-term stay, or whose right of residence has been registered or who has been issued a residence card referred to in section 161 of the Aliens Act (301/2004). “Foreign-language speaker” refers to a person who has registered a language other than Finnish, Swedish or Sámi as their mother tongue in the Population Information System referred to in the Act on the Population Information System and the Certificate Services of the Population Register Centre (661/2009).

Preparatory education for general upper secondary education follows a curriculum prepared on the basis of this national core curriculum. The Finnish National Board of Education determines the core contents and objectives of instruction for various subjects and subject groups in this national core curriculum. It also lays down the key principles steering cooperation between home and school and the objectives of student welfare under municipal educational administration.

2 Provision of education and structure of studies

Admission to preparatory education for general upper secondary education is open to people

1. who are immigrants or foreign-language speakers
2. who have completed the basic education syllabus or a corresponding syllabus or who otherwise possess corresponding skills and knowledge
3. who do not have sufficient language skills to complete general upper education studies in Finnish or Swedish
4. who wish to continue studies in a general upper secondary school after the preparatory education for general upper secondary education
5. who have not completed any of the qualifications referred to in section 37, subsection 1 of the Universities Act (558/2009) or a higher education degree.

In accordance with section 20 of the General Upper Secondary Schools Act (629/1998), education providers make further decisions concerning student admission. Equal selection criteria must be applied to all applicants. On justified grounds, education providers can also accept returnees into preparatory education for general upper secondary education. Preparatory education for general upper secondary education is not available for students who have completed a qualification referred to in the Act on the Organisation of the Matriculation Examination (672/2005); a vocational upper secondary qualification with a duration of at least three years or corresponding earlier studies; a vocational upper secondary qualification, a further vocational qualification, a specialist vocational qualification or a corresponding earlier qualification referred to in the Vocational Adult Education Act (631/1998); or have obtained a qualification abroad that qualifies for admission to corresponding higher education; or have completed a higher education degree.

The preparatory education for general upper secondary education does not confer a qualification or provide admission to general upper secondary education. Instead, the student must apply to a general upper secondary school through the joint application system. Students who have already been admitted to a general upper secondary school can be admitted to preparatory education for general upper secondary education, provided this is expedient for successful completion of general upper secondary education.

The scope of preparatory education for general upper secondary education is 25 courses. The preparatory education syllabus must be completed in one year. It is possible to divide studies in preparatory education for general upper secondary education into two successive school years, provided there are justified reasons for doing this. The education has nevertheless been planned as a coherent entity. For this reason, it is not possible to complete individual courses separately as subject studies.

Preparatory education for general upper secondary education is a study module that extends over one school year and contains studies in the Finnish or Swedish language in particular, studies in another language where necessary, studies included in the general upper secondary education syllabus, and skills and knowledge required to study in a general upper secondary school. Students in preparatory education for general upper secondary education must be provided with guidance counselling. The purpose of studying Finnish or Swedish is to improve the students' ability to attend general upper secondary education where the language of instruction is Finnish or Swedish. A specific aim is to reinforce the students' multiliteracy, which refers to the skills of interpreting, producing and evaluating various kinds of messages. This creates a basis for their ability to think and acquire, adapt, produce, present and evaluate information in various multimedia learning environments and contexts. Multiliteracy is practised as a part of all subjects included in preparatory education for general upper secondary education. Learning progresses from the attainment of basic skills to acquiring comprehensive skills in understanding and producing texts. Students are guided to understand and command the methods typically employed in various subjects to conceptualise and express information. They are equipped to convey information they have acquired, look for solutions and produce new information in various formats, using various tools. Teaching enables students to develop their communication

skills in multimedia and technology-supported learning environments, and to interpret, use and produce a range of texts, individually and together with others.

The “other languages” subject group is divided between foreign languages, the second national language (Finnish or Swedish) and possibly the student's own native language. For this reason, the number of courses reserved for studying other languages can be divided between foreign languages, the second national language and/or, where possible, the student's own national language, depending on the student's needs. Studies in other languages are defined in greater detail in the student's individual study plan.

The “mathematics and the natural sciences” subject group includes mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology and geography, while the “civic education and cultural knowledge” subject group includes history and social studies.

The aim of preparatory education for general upper secondary education is to develop learning skills required in general upper secondary education and increase the students' knowledge of Finnish society and culture. A specific goal is to improve the students' mastery of the concepts and the ways of thinking and expressing ideas used in various disciplines. In addition, the preparatory education aims to strengthen the students' ability to acquire and apply information, along with their ICT skills. Civic education and cultural knowledge studies familiarise the students with the Finnish education and social system. Guidance counselling helps students to understand the operational models within Finnish general upper secondary education and the education system in general. They will also learn to set realistic goals for their own education and development.

Optional studies may include courses referred to in sections 8 and 9 of the Government Decree on the General National Objectives of General Upper Secondary Education and the Distribution of Lesson Hours (955/2002, amended by 51/2014) or other studies offered by the education provider that promote the student's ability to attend general upper secondary education. Such studies may also be intended for revising basic education content and improving the marks in a student's basic education certificate. Depending on the range of studies offered by the educational institution, students during preparatory education for general upper secondary education may also take studies included in the basic education and/or general upper secondary education syllabus. Such studies can be completed as optional studies (6 courses) or arranged in addition to the minimum number of courses (25 courses).

Preparatory education for general upper secondary education can be provided by educational institutions authorised to provide general upper secondary education. The Ministry of Education and Culture may grant a municipality, joint municipal authority, registered association or foundation a permission to provide general upper secondary education. Such permission can be granted for education provided abroad. This includes the right to provide preparatory education for general upper secondary education for immigrants and foreign-language speakers. With respect to students participating in preparatory education for general upper secondary education, unit prices used as the basis of funding granted to providers of general upper secondary education are determined by staggering the average unit price for general upper secondary education laid down in section 24. Cooperation with schools providing basic education enables students in preparatory education for gen-

eral upper secondary education to complete studies from the basic education syllabus and improve marks from basic education.

2.1 Structure of studies

The scope of preparatory education for general upper secondary education is at least 25 courses. The amount of teaching for young people is an average of 38 hours per course, and for adults an average of 28 hours per course. In contact teaching, lesson duration should be at least 45 minutes. In teaching aimed at adults, the duration is a minimum of 40 minutes.

Distribution of lesson hours in preparatory education for general upper secondary education provided for immigrants and foreign-language speakers:

Subject and subject group	Compulsory courses
Mother tongue and literature *	10
Other languages	3
Mathematics and natural sciences **	2
Civic education and cultural knowledge ***	2
Guidance counselling	2
Optional studies	6
Total	25

* Teaching in mother tongue and literature is provided in accordance with the syllabus for Finnish or Swedish as a second language and literature.

** Mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, geography

*** History and social studies

There is no fixed order for completing the courses. During preparatory education for general upper secondary education an opportunity is provided to complete studies from the basic education syllabus or general upper secondary education syllabus as specified in the student's individual study plan. These studies can be included as optional studies or completed in addition to the minimum number of courses required for preparatory education for general upper secondary education. When students take a minimum of 25 courses, preparatory education for general upper secondary education is considered full-time education.

2.2 Studies in the basic education syllabus

During preparatory education for general upper secondary education, students may take studies included in the basic education syllabus and include them as optional studies in preparatory education for general upper secondary education or complete them in addition to the minimum course requirements for preparatory education. After successfully completing studies in the basic education syllabus, the student can participate in a separate examination referred to in section 38 of the Basic Education Act (628/1998) to obtain a certificate. By taking the separate examination, it is possible to complete the entire basic education syllabus for a given subject. Alternatively the student can complete parts of the syllabus, such as the syllabus for one grade. Alternative methods of completing the

basic education syllabus during preparatory education for general upper secondary education are specified in the curriculum.

In order to provide the opportunity to take studies included in the basic education syllabus, the education provider for preparatory education must agree with the basic education provider on the methods of completion if students wish to take studies in the basic education syllabus. They must also agree on the required teaching arrangements and on how the separate examination will be arranged.

2.3 Studies in the general upper secondary education syllabus

Optional studies within preparatory education for general upper secondary education may include compulsory, specialisation and applied courses specified in the Government Decree on the General National Objectives of General Upper Secondary Education and the Distribution of Lesson Hours (955/2002). Optional studies in subjects included in the general upper secondary education syllabus but not in the basic education syllabus may be provided within preparatory education for general upper secondary education. General upper secondary education courses completed as optional studies will be recorded on the certificate in accordance with the general upper secondary education curriculum.

3 Curriculum

The curriculum for preparatory education for general upper secondary education is prepared by the education provider. Drafting of the curriculum is based on the National Core Curriculum for Preparatory Education for General Upper Secondary Education and the general objectives and national objectives concerning preparatory education for general upper secondary education, specified in the Government decree 955/2002 (amended by 51/2014). In addition, all provisions of the General Upper Secondary Schools Act (629/1998) and Decree (810/1998) apply. The curriculum will be drafted in accordance with this national core curriculum document.

The curriculum for preparatory education for general upper secondary education must include

- general objectives of the education
- teaching arrangements
- a guidance counselling plan describing the objectives for counselling, alongside the duties and division of duties for those participating in counselling
- practices for preparing the students' individual study plans and methods for identifying their initial situation, documenting this information and following up the students' studies
- objectives and core contents for studies in the Finnish language, other languages, mathematics and the natural sciences, civic education and cultural knowledge, guidance counselling and study skills, and for the optional studies offered, as well as possible restrictions concerning the order of completion of the courses

- taking studies included in the basic education syllabus and improving marks obtained from basic education during preparatory education for general upper secondary education
- taking studies included in the general upper secondary education syllabus, cooperation and participation in the general upper secondary school's activities
- cooperation between home and school within preparatory education for general upper secondary education
- methods and practices of assessment and provision of feedback; certificates and certificate information to be recorded.

4 Implementation of education

4.1 Basic values

Preparatory education for general upper secondary education is aligned with the broader basic values of the Finnish education system. The Constitution of Finland guarantees democratic and equal rights for immigrants. From the perspective of education provision, equality refers to equality between men and women and between regions, as well as equality irrespective of the student's financial status or other personal qualities. According to the Non-Discrimination Act (21/2004), nobody may be discriminated against on the basis of age, ethnic or national origin, nationality, language, religion, belief, opinion, health, disability, sexual orientation or other personal characteristics. Under the Non-Discrimination Act, authorities are required to be active in promoting equality.

Preparatory education for general upper secondary education is based on the values of respect for life and human rights. The educational ideal comprises the pursuit of truth, beauty and goodness. Such education promotes social justice, creates the preconditions for open democracy and wellbeing and prevents social exclusion. Preparatory education for general upper secondary education also helps young and adult immigrants to practise a sustainable lifestyle and the skills required in everyday life.

Preparatory education for general upper secondary education guides students to identify values and principles common to a good life in various cultures. Studying supports immigrants' own cultural traditions and helps them to evaluate and reformulate them in case of conflict with Finnish legislation. It also reinforces students' ability to function in a culturally diverse society and builds their intercultural competence. Preparatory education for general upper secondary education encourages interaction between various cultural groups and the original population and promotes good ethnic relations. Discrimination, racism, violence or bullying is not tolerated in any form or on anyone's part.

Students are encouraged to evaluate potential conflict between their stated values and the reality, and reflect critically on the opportunities offered by Finnish society, as well as its flaws. Where possible, these values and principles are rendered in language during preparatory education. The goal is to implement the values in the provision of education, in teaching and in the education's ethos and operational culture.

4.2 Conception of learning

Learning is perceived as an active, goal-oriented process where students build on their existing knowledge. They measure new information against their existing knowledge base, which is simultaneously restructured on the basis of new information. Construction of knowledge involves selection, comparison, analysis and organisation of information, as well as its interpretation, evaluation and application in new situations. Preparatory education for general upper secondary education emphasises learning in social interaction with the teacher and other students.

Language plays an essential role in learning. Students construct and shape their knowledge through language. Instead of being merely a tool for learning, language creates meaning and information regarding the physical world. Studies in general upper secondary education require that students master the language used in various disciplines. Students will learn the language and linguistic conventions of the various disciplines and the textual skills required.

Multiliteracy, which refers to the skills of interpreting, producing and evaluating various kinds of messages, is a key objective of preparatory education for general upper secondary education, and required in all studies. In the context of multiliteracy, the concept of text is understood in a broader sense to cover not only written, but also spoken and visual texts.

4.3 Operational culture

The operational culture of a community refers to its way of operating that has been shaped over time. As students in preparatory education may come from greatly varying cultural backgrounds and school culture, it is vital to foster and develop a common operational culture from the beginning. Within preparatory education for general upper secondary education, the operational culture is based on the principles of a learning community. It supports the wellbeing and learning of all community members and sees continuous development as part of the general upper secondary school's operational culture.

4.4 Learning environment and working methods

While preparatory education for general upper secondary education is linked to general upper secondary schools' operations and their operational culture, it also contributes to the development of the schools' operational culture and practices. During preparatory education, students become familiar with the methods of study used in the school. The aim is for students to be able to structure their studies, develop strategies for studying in a course-based school with no specified year-classes, and improve their skills of learning to learn.

Preparatory education for general upper secondary education focuses especially on the learning of generic skills. Such skills include the ability to work independently, team working skills, ICT skills, information search skills, critical literacy and, in particular, the

skills of learning to learn. Students must be encouraged to perform self- and peer assessment.

Since learning is tied to the student's previous knowledge and learning strategies, it is always individual. For this reason, versatile learning environments, teaching methods and channels must be used in teaching.

As all students are learning Finnish, the literacy practices of various school subjects and textual skills required in the subjects form an essential part of studies within preparatory education. This requires that the working methods employed in all subjects reflect linguistic awareness. Key skills are related to reading, understanding, interpreting and producing various texts. The working methods used require cooperation among teachers and a shared understanding of the importance of language in preparatory education.

Working methods must be versatile; they must activate students and allow differentiation, for example work in groups, pairs and project work alongside independent work. The methods used must inspire the students' motivation to learn and take responsibility for their own learning. They must develop the students' learning strategies and ICT skills.

Teaching can be arranged as contact teaching or as a flexible combination of contact teaching and independent work and/or distance teaching. Teaching takes advantage of the various opportunities provided by information and communications technology. As the students' own learning skills and textual skills improve, the share of independent work is increased. Partial co-teaching can be used in the provision of Finnish language courses and courses from other subject groups, as this contributes to the improvement of students' multiliteracy and language skills. In such cases, it must be ensured that the objectives for both courses are met and both their contents covered. This can be achieved, for example, through independent work by students, distance learning assignments and project work. Co-teaching can also be used in the teaching of courses in other subject groups.

Contact teaching supports peer learning among students, encourages them to support each other and reinforces their sense of belonging in the community of students and the entire general upper secondary school. It is vital that students in preparatory education participate in the general upper secondary school's common events and activities. In this way, preparatory education becomes a part of the school's operational culture.

The role of the teacher in guiding learning is accentuated. Students are actively involved in course planning, the planning of exams or other demonstrations of learning, as well as the assessment process.

5 Guidance counselling and support

Students are guided and supported in completing the preparatory education and applying for admission to general upper secondary education. With guidance counselling, students learn to plan their studies, make individual choices, monitor the progress made in studies and assess their own learning. Guidance counselling is provided by guidance counsellors and teachers of preparatory education for general upper secondary education.

5.1 Provision of guidance counselling

Guidance counselling within preparatory education for general upper secondary education is intended to support students at all stages of their studies. Students are guided in evaluating their earlier studies or competences acquired through other means, planning the content of their studies and making appropriate choices giving consideration to their own goals. They receive counselling on how to find information on the choices to be made during general upper secondary education and on the implications these have for further education. During preparatory education, students should learn to search for information using information networks and find suitable general upper secondary schools to which they can apply after completing the preparatory education.

Guidance counselling within preparatory education for general upper secondary education is provided as individual and group guidance. Guidance counselling is provided by guidance counsellors and subject teachers. Guidance counsellors are responsible for comprehensive student guidance counselling during the studies, while subject teachers familiarise students with the concepts and ways of processing information in their own discipline. During individual guidance sessions, discussion covers questions related to the student's studies, future and life situation. In group guidance sessions, all requirements and opportunities related to general upper secondary school education are discussed with the students. The aim of guidance counselling is for students to learn to make appropriate and suitable choices with respect to subjects studied and courses taken.

5.2 Individual study plan

At the start of preparatory education, students prepare an individual study plan based on their previously acquired skills and knowledge. For this reason, the students' level of language skills and learning history are surveyed at the outset and learning objectives determined on this basis. Individual study plans specify the student's learning objectives, study programme, methods and order of completion for the studies, assessment of studies and possible support measures.

As part of preparatory education for general upper secondary education, students can undertake studies in subjects included in the basic education syllabus. They can also improve the marks in their basic education certificate by taking a separate examination. During preparatory education for general upper secondary education, students improve their skills in the language of instruction, along with their learning-to-learn skills and mastery of various subjects in the language of instruction. Students may also take courses included in the general upper secondary education syllabus. Therefore the individual study plan may include studies under this national core curriculum as well as studies included in the basic education and general upper secondary education syllabus. Implementation of the individual study plan is monitored and updated regularly as part of guidance counselling (see chapter 6.5).

5.3 Student welfare services

Student welfare refers to looking after the students' physical, psychological and social well-being. Activities within student welfare are aimed at creating a safe and healthy learning environment for students, promoting their wellbeing and preventing the emergence of learning difficulties and other problems. All employees of the educational institution are responsible for student welfare. Student welfare services are not provided within preparatory education for general upper secondary education which is intended for adults.

Sections of the curriculum that concern student welfare and cooperation between home and school will be prepared in cooperation with the authorities responsible for the municipality's social and health services.

The curriculum for preparatory education for general upper secondary education must specify

- principles of home-school cooperation and cooperation with the students' parents and guardians (applies to preparatory education for general upper secondary education aimed at young people)
- support and guidance offered to students with physical, psychological and social difficulties related to their studies
- the educational institution's plan for promoting health and safety among the community of students and procedures when encountering problems, accidents or crisis situations.

5.4 Learning support

The students' level of competence may vary in preparatory education for general upper secondary education due to the diversity of their educational backgrounds or to weakened ability to study because of illness, injury or other disability. Students may also be experiencing problems related to their life situation that require support.

The curriculum for preparatory education for general upper secondary education specifies how other learning support measures are arranged for students in need of support.

5.5 Cooperation between home and school

For young students, it is important that their parents and guardians support their studies. The educational institution must take the initiative in launching and maintaining cooperation with parents and guardians.

Parents and guardians must be invited to joint meetings to discuss the Finnish education system, preparatory education for general upper secondary education and the requirements for studying in a general upper secondary school. During these joint meetings, it should be emphasised that the parents' and guardians' interest in their children's studies and performance is vital for the students' success. Parents and guardians should be informed of the course-based studies in general upper secondary education and the period system, language studies in general upper secondary schools, and the opportunity for native language studies. In addition, they should be told about the opportunities for students to participate in the planning of their own studies.

The curriculum drafted by the education provider must describe the forms of cooperation between home and school. Sections of the curriculum that concern co-operation between home and school can be prepared jointly with the authorities responsible for the municipality's social and health services in particular.

6 Learning objectives and core contents of education

6.1 General objectives of education

The aim of preparatory education for general upper secondary education, aimed at immigrants and foreign-language speakers, is to improve the students' skills in the language of instruction used by the educational institution, along with their learning skills. A further aim is to prepare them for contributing to Finnish society as active citizens. In addition, the purpose of preparatory education is to support and promote the students' mastery of their own native language, where possible.

6.2 Objectives and core contents of language instruction

6.2.1 Mother tongue and literature (Finnish as a second language and literature, minimum of 10 courses)

Objectives of instruction

Teaching in the Finnish language is aimed at achieving multiliteracy that allows the student to understand, produce, evaluate and analyse various texts written and spoken in Finnish, in the context of day-to-day interactions, school work and society in general. Multiliteracy will be developed throughout preparatory education for general upper secondary education and is not limited to Finnish language instruction.

The emphasis in Finnish language instruction is on the communicative use of language and its functionality, in other words how to act in various communicative situations and what language is used for. Preparatory education for general upper secondary education consolidates contents covered during basic education and equips the students for general upper secondary education. Instruction supports the development of the various language skill areas and the mastery of language used within various disciplines.

Preparatory education for general upper secondary education ensures that the student has achieved the objectives set for Finnish as a second language within basic education. A basic prerequisite for teaching of the Finnish language within preparatory education for general upper secondary education is that students have developing basic language skills, i.e. they can use the language in an appropriate manner in various situations, are able to interpret spoken and written texts critically and use the language in a versatile, creative manner. They should also be familiar with Finnish literature and culture, constructing their plurilingual and multicultural identities, and be able to evaluate and use their linguistic abilities in support of all learning. During preparatory education, these skills are further deepened and reinforced.

The students' language skills are mapped at the start of preparatory education for general upper secondary education and their learning objectives set accordingly, to achieve even development in the students' language skills profile. Language skills comprise interpretation skills, i.e. comprehension of written and spoken language, and production skills, i.e. speaking and writing. Each of these areas encompasses mastery of vocabulary and linguistic structures. Upon completion of preparatory education, students should have functional or fluent basic proficiency in Finnish (level B1 on the language proficiency scale). There might nevertheless be student-specific variation in the language skills profile illustrating the student's proficiency in the various language skill areas.

Learning environment and working methods

When students are learning a second language, the entire target-language environment supports the development of their language skills. For this reason, Finnish language teaching in particular makes use of environments outside the classroom, as well as digital environments. Students are encouraged to use various interactive learning environments that can be accessed online. Particular attention is paid to a critical approach in searching for information, and to the student's active participation.

Overall development of the student's language skills is supported by the instruction taking account of materials used in other subjects where possible. These can be used for singling out linguistic material that will help to reinforce the comprehension and production of texts in various genres.

Assessment

Students are given a variety of oral feedback on their progress in the various language skill areas so that they can form a realistic view of their own language skills. The proficiency level achieved by the student in reading comprehension, writing, listening comprehension and speaking in the Finnish language will be recorded on the certificate for preparatory education for general upper secondary education, in accordance with the reference levels on the language proficiency scale. Preparatory education for general upper secondary education uses the language proficiency scale included in the National Core Curriculum for General Upper Secondary Education. The courses are assessed on the scale *pass-fail*.

Courses

Language structures from a functional perspective (LVS1)

Objectives

Objectives of the course are for students to

- be aware of the strengths in their language skills and the areas requiring development
- revise core contents of Finnish language instruction within basic education and develop their mastery of linguistic structures
- strengthen morphological and word- and sentence-level competence
- master the sentence-level skills that will strengthen their writing skills.

Core contents

- determining the student's language proficiency
- key morphological features
- strengthening syntax and writing skills
- practising various sentence types, word order and case government (rection)
- morphological and syntactical differences between spoken and written language and their influence on language usage.

Assessment

pass – fail

Text structures from a functional perspective (LVS2)

Objectives

Objectives of the course are for students to

- revise core contents of Finnish language instruction within basic education and develop their mastery of linguistic structures
- strengthen the mastery of text grammar
- become familiar with structural characteristics of various genres.

Core contents

- written language structures at text level
- construction of texts in various genres and methods used in their construction
- metatexts and cohesion
- main clause, coordinate and subordinate clauses
- focusing on phrases in support of reading comprehension.

Assessment

pass – fail

Language used within various disciplines (LVS3)

Objectives

Objectives of the course are for students to

- develop their mastery of language of various disciplines
- develop their mastery of conceptual language
- understand the varying ways texts in each subject describe/present phenomena and structural characteristics
- master the literacy practices used in various subjects
- be familiar with the genres typical to various subjects.

Core contents

- concepts, definitions and genres typical to various disciplines
- structural characteristics of texts within various disciplines

- conceptual content of informational texts in one's own speech
- understanding and active use of concepts used in informational texts.

Assessment

pass – fail

Writing texts (LVS4)

Objectives

Objectives of the course are for students to

- write texts related to studying various disciplines
- understand and interpret texts typical to various disciplines, orally and in writing
- practice collaborative writing.

Core contents

- producing various everyday texts, for example blog posts or other web texts, opinions, comments, critiques, formal and informal emails
- producing texts related to studies, for example papers, exam answers, essays, definitions of concepts, use of sources or presenting information visually (e.g. diagrams and tables)
- precise description and detailed narration
- varying and idiomatic use of vocabulary
- definition of concepts and systematic derivation of words
- collaborative writing
- proofreading of one's own and other people's texts and grammatical correctness, e.g. use of capital letters, punctuation, division into paragraphs.

Assessment

pass – fail

Listening and speaking 1 (LVS5)

Objectives

Objectives of the course are for students to

- develop their articulatory skills
- develop their ability to comprehend and produce spoken language.

Core contents

- practising listening and speaking skills in the Finnish language
- practising articulatory (in pairs and groups), role plays, fictive texts, poems and rhymes
- giving a speech on a freely chosen topic
- reacting in an idiomatic manner
- focusing attention on situation-specific variation in spoken language
- focusing on pronunciation, sentence stress and rhythm of speech throughout the course.

Assessment

pass – fail

Finnish literature and culture (LVS6)

Objectives

Objectives of the course are for students to

- familiarise themselves with contemporary Finnish literature and culture
- familiarise themselves with key concepts used in literary analysis.

Core contents

- basic concepts related to contemporary Finnish literature and culture
- brief overview of some important contemporary writers
- literary genres, e.g. novels, short stories, poems, plays
- becoming familiar with various genres through reading
- concepts used in literary analysis and various methods of analysis.

Assessment

pass – fail

World literature and cultural diversity (LVS7)

Objectives

Objectives of the course are for students to

- become aware of cultural diversity
- strengthen their cultural identity.

Core contents

- cultural diversity and multifaceted identities
- the experience of otherness
- a multimedia presentation related to literature, on the basis of a book read
- produce fictive texts
- cultural diversity: diverse, changing ways of life of various groups of people, for example current youth subcultures: various online communities and fan fiction.

Assessment

pass – fail

Listening and speaking 2 (LVS8)

Objectives

Objectives of the course are for students to

- develop their cooperative and negotiating skills
- develop their skills in informative and persuasive speaking
- strengthen their skills in analytical listening.

Core contents

- focus on language used in various disciplines: discussion, interaction and argumentation
- practising of precise descriptions and detailed narrative: varying and idiomatic vocabulary; practising definition of concepts within various disciplines when listening and speaking
- practising negotiating skills
- giving an informative speech and a persuasive speech
- focusing on the components of factual speech, i.e. how speech is sequenced
- communication in media: comprehension of speech in a fast-paced discussion with many speakers
- focusing on pronunciation, sentence stress and rhythm of speech throughout the course.

Assessment

pass – fail

Digital textual skills (LVS9)

Objectives

Objectives of the course are for students to

- become familiarised with media culture as part of their own lives
- produce various media texts using different technological devices
- contemplate the importance of social media in their own lives.

Core contents

- strengthening digital textual skills
- focusing on the language used in social media through analysis and practice
- practising the comparison of various websites for their reliability
- evaluating web texts
- producing various digital texts, taking account of images, videos, links and moving images
- students as active producers of information: students' access (bringing texts of their own choice to class), involvement and agency vis-à-vis the texts.

Assessment

pass – fail

Media culture (LVS10)

Objectives

Objectives of the course are for students to

- become familiarised with media culture from a societal perspective
- contemplate the significance of social media as a social phenomenon.

Core contents

- the media and their expressive devices
- news values
- magazines
- a nalysis of the components of persuasive communication (e.g. language used in advertising)
- images and reading images
- methods of analysis for videos online, selected by students.

Assessment

pass – fail

6.2.2 Other languages (at least 3 courses)

Studies in other languages within preparatory education for general upper secondary education can comprise courses in one or several languages. Courses available include courses in the second national language, in foreign languages and, where possible, in the student's own national language. Out of these, the education provider must offer at least three courses.

6.2.2.1 Language commenced in basic education

Objectives of instruction

The main objective of instruction is to strengthen the student's skills in the second national language or foreign language, acquired in basic education or otherwise.

Further objectives are for students to

- know how to communicate in a manner characteristic of the target language and its culture
- be able to assess their language skills against the objectives
- be aware of their own strengths and development needs as communicators and language learners
- be able to apply appropriate strategies in developing their language skills
- understand the significance to their own future of the language studied, as well as its significance to Finland and on an international level.

Target levels

- Syllabus A commenced in basic education, B1.1
- Syllabus B commenced in basic education, A2.1

Learning environment and working methods

The learning environment and working methods employed must support construction of knowledge based on previous experiences, and support students in achieving the objectives set. The learning environment must provide students with opportunities to experiment with and discover suitable working methods for themselves. Various aids, such as digital

dictionaries and source materials, can be used during lessons and in exams. Particular attention will be paid to the use of authentic material, searching of information and its evaluation, and encouraging feedback.

Assessment

Assessment is based on ongoing demonstration of skills as well as versatile methods of assessment, for example written and oral exams, oral communication or other methods of demonstration of learning. Assessment in support of learning is carried out through self-assessment and peer-assessment by students and assessment and development discussions. Use of source material and aids is recommended during exams or in corresponding situations. The courses are assessed on the scale *pass–fail*.

Courses

Language skills as part of studying and other areas of life (LVKA1)

Objectives

Objectives of the course are for students to

- prepare an evaluation at the outset of the course, together with the teacher, of their own starting points and, in particular, their own learning skills
- take responsibility for developing their own language skills
- be able to discuss topics related to the course themes and prepare a written presentation on them.

Core contents

- strengthening basic structures and practising the conventions of spoken and written language
- practising written and oral communication related to studies and other areas of life important to the student
- preparing and editing one's own presentation, also on the basis of peer feedback.

Assessment

pass – fail

Everyday situations (LVKA2)

Objectives

Objectives of the course are for students to

- be able to use the language in various everyday situations
- be able orally to present a narrative, description, instructions and an opinion with justification
- speak and write in a style appropriate to the situation
- develop their interaction skills
- be able to assess their peers.

Core contents

- interaction and taking care of errands in various face-to-face communicative situations and situations involving various media, e.g. shopping, the bank, the post office, a doctor's appointment, transport, accommodation and use of restaurant services.
- various oral exercises individually and in a group
- adjusting one's own performance based on feedback.

Assessment

pass – fail

Media (LVKA3)

Objectives

Objectives of the course are for students to

- master basic knowledge of various media and to be able to use communication media in a versatile manner
- know how to search for information from various sources
- be able to utilise ICT in studying.

Core contents

- a short research paper, project or portfolio on a topic related to civic education, cultural knowledge or the natural sciences.

Assessment

pass – fail

6.2.2.2 Language studies commenced during preparatory education for general upper secondary education

Objectives of instruction

The main objective of instruction is to introduce the student to a new language commencing in general upper secondary education, including its language areas and cultures.

Further objectives are for students to

- become acquainted with the language's basic vocabulary and structures
- be able to manage simple interaction situations and tell about themselves and their daily lives
- be able to write short messages in familiar everyday situations.

Target level

- Syllabus A1.1 commencing during preparatory education for general upper secondary education

Learning environment and working methods

The learning environment must provide students with opportunities to experiment with and discover suitable working methods for themselves. Various aids, such as digital dictionaries and source materials, can be used during lessons and in exams. Particular attention will be paid to the use of authentic material, searching of information and its evaluation, and encouraging feedback.

Assessment

Assessment is based on ongoing demonstration of skills, as well as versatile methods of assessment, for example written and oral exams, oral communication or other methods of demonstration of learning. Assessment in support of learning is carried out through self-assessment and peer-assessment by students and assessment and development discussions. The use of reference works and other resources are recommended during exams or in corresponding situations. The courses are assessed on the scale *pass–fail*.

Courses

Introduction to the language (LVKB1)

Objectives

Objectives of the course are for students to

- learn the phonemes, intonation and basic vocabulary and structures of the language
- understand informal speech and use ordinary expressions in common everyday situations
- understand the main idea of a simple written message and be able to write simple messages.

Core contents

- providing personal details and basic information about oneself
- greetings, starting a conversation, explaining or asking and responding to questions about health or circumstances when meeting people
- reading and writing simple messages.

Assessment

pass – fail

Errands and hobbies (LVKB2)

Objectives

Objectives of the course are for students to

- learn key vocabulary and expressions used in everyday life
- become familiar with simple sentence structures and texts
- learn to work in pairs or in groups
- learn to use language in various social situations.

Core contents

- making inquiries and taking care of errands over the telephone
- using various everyday services, going to stores, using public transport
- interaction situations related to hobbies and leisure activities
- reading easy texts.

Assessment

pass – fail

Living environment and social networks (LVKB3)

Objectives

Objectives of the course are for students to

- learn to tell about their living environment, family and friends, orally and in writing
- learn to observe the bilingual environment in Finland
- learn to make simple information searches in the target language.

Core contents

- practising comprehension and production of texts
- becoming familiar with bilingual phenomena in various environments
- a written or oral presentation on the student's living environment.

Assessment

pass – fail

6.2.2.3 The student's own native language

Objectives of instruction

The main objective of instruction is for the students to maintain and develop their native language proficiency and obtain an overall view of their own language community's cultural characteristics.

Students' skills in their own native language are tested and the results used as a basis for drafting an individual study plan for each student. During the courses, students become familiar with a cultural work from their own country.

Learning environment and working methods

Instruction involves a task-based approach to language skills, which sees students as using their native language in a versatile manner for their own communication needs. Authentic study materials and natural usage situations are employed during instruction.

Assessment

Assessment is based on ongoing demonstration of skills, as well as versatile methods of assessment, for example written and oral exams, oral communication or other methods of demonstration of learning. Assessment in support of learning is carried out through self-

assessment and peer-assessment by students and assessment and development discussions. The courses are assessed on the scale *pass–fail*.

Courses

Language and identity (LVMAI1)

Objectives

Objectives of the course are for students to

- become familiar with the stages of development in their own language area
- value their own linguistic culture and understand its significance to themselves and their future
- know key works and themes in their language area
- understand the significance of bi- and multilingualism to their own identity and development.

Core contents

- practising reading and listening comprehension using authentic materials (for example films, newspaper articles, literature, news)
- acquainting oneself with a cultural work from one's own cultural sphere and describing it orally or in writing.

Assessment

pass – fail

Writing and contemporary culture (LVMAI2)

Objectives

Objectives of the course are for students to

- familiarise themselves in a variety of ways with the contemporary culture of their language community, while developing their writing skills in their own native language
- be able to express themselves orally and in writing
- identify various genres and familiarise themselves with key concepts in various subjects in their own native language.

Core contents

- using authentic material to become familiar with cultural phenomena within the language community
- preparing a written summary or analysis on the student's topic of choice.

Assessment

pass – fail

Deepening oral communication skills (LVMAI3)

Objectives

Objectives of the course are for students to

- develop their self-confidence in expressing themselves when giving a presentation and working in groups
- be able to assess the significance of oral communication in relationships and studies
- achieve natural pronunciation and intonation.

Core contents

- characteristics of various interaction situations
- various interaction and peer-assessment situations (interview, debate, (commenting)
- giving an oral presentation, giving and receiving peer feedback.

Assessment

pass – fail

6.3 Mathematics and natural sciences (at least 2 courses)

Objectives of instruction

Studies in mathematics and natural sciences deepen knowledge included in the basic education syllabus. Particular emphasis is placed on the mastery of concepts and vocabulary of each discipline. In terms of knowledge, mastery of core contents in the basic education syllabus is ensured and students are prepared for the learning techniques required to study mathematics and natural sciences in a general upper secondary school. During the studies, the appropriate scope of the syllabus to be completed in mathematics, physics and chemistry is evaluated from the student's point of view.

The courses in geography and biology are executed in cooperation with courses 3 and 4 in Finnish as a second language. Studies must be differentiated in accordance with the students' skill levels.

Learning environment and working methods

Linguistic awareness related to working methods used in mathematics refers to explaining the instructions and speech used in teaching and analysing verbal problems. In chemistry and physics, this refers to practising definition of concepts, writing reports and other genres typical to these subjects (e.g. texts in textbooks). In geography and biology, linguistically aware methods include exercises in defining concepts, interpreting maps, diagrams and charts and producing one's own texts under guidance.

Assessment

The student's initial level and capabilities are taken account of in assessment. Various assessment methods are employed. Students become acquainted with assessment methods typically used in general upper secondary schools, such as course tests. The courses are assessed on the scale *pass–fail*.

Courses

Mathematics, physics and chemistry (LVLUMA1)

Objectives

Objectives of the course are for students to

- strengthen mathematical skills acquired in basic education and revise key concepts used in the subjects
- be able to select a syllabus in general upper secondary school that corresponds to their skill levels.

Core contents

- numbers and calculations, algebra, functions, geometry, probability and statistics
- motion and force, vibrations and waves, heat electricity, natural structures
- air and water, raw materials and production, nature and society
- skills in studying nature.

Assessment

pass – fail

Biology and geography (LVLUMA2)

Objectives

Objectives of the course are for students to

- become acquainted with key phenomena in the subjects and concepts used to describe such phenomena
- become familiar with the special characteristics of nature and the environment.

Core contents

- research and study skills in biology, nature and the ecosystem, life and evolution, the human species, our common environment
- geographical skills, analysing and understanding the world, Europe and Finland, our common environment
- skills in studying nature.

Assessment

pass – fail

6.4 Civic education and cultural knowledge (at least 2 courses)

Objectives of instruction

Courses in civic education and cultural knowledge deepen the students' knowledge of Finnish society and equip them with tools for independent evaluation and study of various societal phenomena. Civic education and cultural knowledge studies are related to Finnish

history and its examination in European and international contexts. Studies in cultural knowledge focus on the diversity of cultures and their multifaceted qualities. The courses deepen knowledge acquired during basic education and introduce the students to the objectives and contents included in social studies and history courses in general upper secondary school. Teaching includes exercises for practising learning and textual skills required for social studies and history studies.

Learning environment and working methods

Working methods that reflect language awareness strengthen the students' multiliteracy. Suitable working methods to be used in history classes include simultaneous, textcentred practising of reading and writing, practising of test answers and self-assessment, definition of concepts, preparing one's own glossaries, discussion exercises and exercises in drawing conclusions based on various sources. Working methods and study visits within the arts are suitable for cultural knowledge studies.

Assessment

Flexible, versatile methods are used in assessment. Learning diaries, process assignments on various topics, presentations, summaries, essays and short research papers are suitable methods of assessment for civic education and cultural knowledge studies. Exercises for defining concepts can form a part of assessment that supports learning. End-of-course tests typically taken in general upper secondary schools are used as learning assignments. The courses are assessed on the scale *pass–fail*.

Courses

Introductory history (LVHY1)

Objectives

Objectives of the course are for students to

- familiarise themselves with basic concepts of culture
- become familiar with key turning points in European and world culture and to be able to examine current phenomena in relation to their historical context
- be aware of the various reasons that have led to migration – economic and political reasons, conflicts, environmental reasons
- know genres typical to history and cultural history

Core contents

- main periods and turning points in cultural history, from hunting and gathering to the post-industrial era and individualisation
- migration as part of the history of humankind
- reading and writing texts in history: explaining concepts and preparing one's own glossaries, structural features of texts, reading and interpreting images, maps and statistics in connection with various contents.

Assessment

pass – fail

Finnish society and cultures (LVHY2)

Objectives

Objectives of the course are for students to

- understand the diversity of cultures and interaction between cultures, building their intercultural competence
- know basic concepts related to the Finnish social and economic system, enabling them to handle and evaluate information concerning societal matters and to be active citizens
- know the language and cultural groups in Finland, and their history
- familiarise themselves with the basics of international relations and operations of international organisations
- be able to read and interpret methods of presenting information typical to social studies and to produce such texts themselves.

Core contents

- power and influence: power and the various ways of exercising power, democracy in Finland, the political system and active citizenship
- citizens' knowledge regarding the economy and financial affairs
- the rule of law: fundamental rights, separation of powers (doctrine) and citizenship
- Finnish cultural history and construction of the nation state in the 19th century
- Finnish traditions and customs and their shaping in interaction with other cultures
- Finland as part of the Nordic countries, Europe and the world
- Finnish diversity: minorities in Finland
- explaining concepts related to society and practising the definition of concepts in connection with all contents.

Assessment

pass – fail

6.5 Guidance counselling (at least 2 courses)

Guidance counselling is intended to support the students in their studies at all stages of their preparatory education for general upper secondary education. Guidance counselling helps students to plan their studies and make choices and decisions regarding general upper secondary education in accordance with their own goals.

Objectives of instruction

Objectives of guidance counselling are for students to

- obtain information on preparatory education for general upper secondary education and the related options

- familiarise themselves with the specific features and studying culture of Finnish general upper secondary education
- form a realistic understanding of studies in general upper secondary education and their chances of being accepted into a general upper secondary school
- develop learning skills required in general upper secondary education
- learn to assess their own performance.

Learning environment and working methods

The students' previously acquired competences and personal interests are taken account of in guidance counselling by connecting the skills and knowledge taught to the experiences and types of activities that are meaningful to the students. Students are provided with guidance counselling in accordance with their individual needs and are guided to take responsibility for their own learning and to pursue the learning objectives.

Students are encouraged and activated to cooperate and apply collaborative working methods. During guidance sessions, students are encouraged to contemplate study-related matters together and contribute their own views and experiences to the mutual discussion. This will reinforce the students' shared understanding, as peer support and the group's support are an important factor in learning.

Learning spaces and tools in the learning environment must enable the use of versatile learning and working methods. Students are guided in making efficient use of new technology in planning their studies, searching for information and using the application services when applying for education. Technologically supported learning environments enable expansion of activities beyond the educational institution's physical boundaries.

Assessment

Self- and peer assessments performed by students are used in overall assessment of the student's study performance and motivation for attending general upper secondary education. The courses are assessed on the scale *pass–fail*.

Courses

The student's studies, educational choices and wishes regarding choice of occupation and career are discussed with the student during individual guidance sessions. Learning objectives are defined together with the student during individual guidance, based on the student's earlier studies and competences acquired by other means.

Guidance counselling 1 (LVOP1)

Objectives

Objectives of the course are for students to

- become familiar with the Finnish education system, particularly general upper secondary education
- learn to prepare an individual study plan and monitor and evaluate its fulfilment
- learn to use information sources and application systems in a diverse manner when planning their studies and applying for further education.

Core contents

- the Finnish education system
- applying for general upper secondary education
- studying in course-based general upper secondary education
- the student's earlier studies and initial level of Finnish language skills
- study modules of preparatory education for general upper secondary education
- assessment of the necessity to improve marks in and the possibilities to complete the basic education
- opportunities for taking courses included in the general upper secondary education syllabus
- an individual study plan
- preliminary planning of one's own studies in a general upper secondary school.

Assessment

pass – fail

Guidance counselling 2 (LVOP2)

During this course, students learn to evaluate their own learning styles. They are guided to become aware of and experiment with other learning styles that they can take advantage of while studying. Guidance counselling provides students with tools for acquiring and producing information and for assessing its reliability. Students are guided in making use in their studies of ICT and services offered by libraries. They become accustomed to working independently as well as in cooperation with other students. Students understand that learning cumulative skills and knowledge requires persistence.

Any needs for developing a student's learning skills are evaluated during individual guidance sessions. Opportunities and challenges related to the studies and learning are discussed with students. They are encouraged to expand and improve their learning methods.

Objectives

Objectives of the course are for students to

- learn to evaluate their own learning styles
- acquaint themselves with learning skills and various learning styles needed in general upper secondary education
- venture to try out new working and learning methods
- understand the nature of learning as a goal-oriented process
- operate in a flexible and supportive manner in interaction situations
- take responsibility for their own learning and know how it can be influenced.

Core contents

- learning skills
- information searching skills and use of multimedia learning environments
- monitoring, assessing and updating the execution of the individual study plan

- collaboration and interaction skills
- self-assessment skills
- taking initiative and seeking support in problems related to studies.

Assessment

pass – fail

6.6 Optional studies (at least 6 courses)

Optional studies may include optional courses from subjects groups included in preparatory education for general upper secondary education, as specified above. They can also include other studies that promote the student's prerequisites for studying in a general upper secondary school, arranged by the same or a different education provider. Optional studies may include compulsory, specialisation and applied courses specified in the Government Decree on the General National Objectives of General Upper Secondary Education and the Distribution of Lesson Hours (955/2002). Primarily students are instructed to select the first courses in the general upper secondary education syllabus for each subject as optional courses.

Optional studies in subjects included in the general upper secondary education syllabus but not the basic education syllabus may be provided within preparatory education for general upper secondary education. General upper secondary education courses completed as optional studies will be recorded on the certificate in accordance with the general upper secondary education curriculum.

Optional studies may also comprise studies included in the basic education syllabus. After successfully completing studies in the basic education syllabus as optional studies, the student can participate in a separate examination referred to in section 38 of the Basic Education Act (628/1998) to obtain a certificate. By taking the separate examination, it is possible to complete the entire basic education syllabus for a given subject. Alternatively the student can complete parts of the syllabus, such as the syllabus for one grade.

7 Assessment

7.1 Objectives of assessment

"Student assessment aims to guide and encourage learning and to develop the student's self-assessment skills. Students' learning and work shall be assessed diversely." The purpose of assessing students' learning is to provide students with feedback on their progress and learning results both during preparatory education for general upper secondary education and upon its completion. Such feedback is intended to encourage and guide students in completing their studies. In addition, assessment provides information for the student or, in case of students under the age of 18, for the student's parent or carer, and for the needs of education providers, working life and other corresponding parties. Assigning marks is one form of assessment. Assessment is intended to provide students with positive encouragement for setting their own goals and review their working methods. Assessment must support learning.

7.2 Course assessment

Assessment is intended to provide students with feedback on how well they have achieved the course objectives and made progress with studies. Course assessment must be diverse and based not only on any written tests but also on oral tests and other methods of demonstrating skills. Further methods used include ongoing observation of progress made with studies and assessment of the student's skills and knowledge. In addition, self-assessment performed by students can be taken into account and made use of in course assessment discussions, for instance. Assessment methods and practices will be defined in greater detail in the local curriculum.

Courses taken by students will be assessed after their conclusion. The courses included in the National Core Curriculum for Preparatory Education for General Upper Secondary Education are assessed on the scale pass–fail. Marks can be complemented and specified by written verbal assessment and oral assessment given during course assessment discussions. Courses included in the general upper secondary education syllabus and completed during the preparatory education are assessed in accordance with the general upper secondary school syllabus.

Identified linguistic difficulties and other reasons that complicate the demonstration of competence must be taken account of in assessment by providing the student with an opportunity for special arrangement and demonstration of competence through other methods than writing. Such difficulties can be taken into account when determining the student's mark for a course. Methods of recording uncompleted courses can be specified on the local curriculum.

"Student assessment in each subject or subject group shall be decided by the teacher or, if there are several teachers, jointly by the teachers. Students shall be entitled to receive information about assessment criteria and how they apply to them." Providing information on assessment criteria will improve both the teachers' and students' legal protection and motivation. In addition to general assessment criteria, students must be informed of the assessment criteria applied during each course. These will be discussed with students at the beginning of the course.

7.3 Assessment of subjects/subject groups

The syllabus for a given subject group or subject comprises compulsory and/or optional courses included in the student's individual study plan. Students may take a different number of courses within the same subject group or subject. For students in preparatory education for general upper secondary education, the permitted maximum number of failed courses by subject group are as follows:

1–2 courses	0
3–5 courses	1
6–8 courses	2
9 or more courses	3

If the student has failed too many courses, he or she must be provided with the opportunity to complete the failed courses.

Optional courses within preparatory education for general upper secondary education specified in the curriculum are assessed in accordance with the curriculum.

7.4 Completing the basic education studies during preparatory education for general upper secondary education

A student can obtain a certificate from successfully completed studies in the basic education syllabus, included as optional studies in preparatory education for general upper secondary education, by participating in a separate examination referred to in section 38 of the Basic Education Act (628/1998). This separate examination determines in various ways whether the student's skills and knowledge correspond to the skills and knowledge included in the basic education syllabus for the subject concerned. The knowledge and skills of students participating in the examination are assessed against the objectives defined for various subjects in the National Core Curriculum for Basic Education and specified in the local curriculum. The student's level of competence is determined by applying the descriptions of good performance and final assessment criteria included in the National Core Curriculum for Basic Education. By taking the separate examination, it is possible to complete the entire basic education syllabus for a given subject. Alternatively the student can complete parts of the syllabus, such as the syllabus for one grade. Provisions on the certificates used for the separate examinations are included in the National Core Curriculum for Basic Education.

7.5 Preparatory education studies for general upper secondary education

Students are required to take courses included in their individual study plan at least in the extent defined in the Government decree. Students have completed the syllabus for preparatory education for general upper secondary education after successfully completing the syllabi for subject groups or subjects, as specified above, and achieving the minimum number of courses required (25 courses).

7.6 Certificates and marks

Students are awarded a certificate for studies completed within preparatory education for general upper secondary education.

The certificate must contain the following details:

- title of the certificate
- name of education provider
- name of educational institution
- the student's name and social security number
- completed studies within preparatory education for general upper secondary education
- courses completed from the general upper secondary education syllabus
- the certificate's date of issue and the principal's signature

- information on the educational institution's right to issue certificates
- clarification of letter codes used in the certificate
- mention of that the certificate complies with the decree 1/011/2014 issued by the Finnish National Board of Education for sections concerning preparatory education for general upper secondary education, and for sections concerning general upper secondary studies, with the valid National Core Curriculum for General Upper Secondary Education for young people or adults. The number of this National Board of Education decree must be included in the certificate.

The certificate will include subjects studied by the student, the number of courses completed or indication of successful completion of a subject group or subject (passed). For mother tongue and literature (Finnish/Swedish as a second language and literature), the level of proficiency attained by the student is recorded on the certificate for reading comprehension, writing, listening comprehension and speaking, in accordance with the language proficiency scale. Preparatory education for general upper secondary education uses the language proficiency scale included in the National Core Curriculum for General Upper Secondary Education.

No overall mark will be awarded for completion of preparatory education for general upper secondary education, either as an average of the marks for the various subjects or in any other way. The total number of courses completed by the student will be recorded on the certificate.

Courses included in the general upper secondary school syllabus will be assessed and recorded on the certificate as specified in the general upper secondary school curriculum. If the student has completed studies included in the basic education syllabus during preparatory education for general upper secondary education, the certificate awarded for these studies through the separate examination can be included as an appendix to the certificate of preparatory education for general upper secondary education.

The certificate also includes a section for further information. This section is used for indicating certification of additional proof of learning appended to and complementing the preparatory education certificate. Such additional certification includes, for example, completed general upper secondary school diplomas, oral language proficiency tests and a specification of studies which have been completed at other educational institutions as part of the general upper secondary school syllabus but are not included in the general upper secondary school courses recorded on the preparatory education certificate. Each general upper secondary education provider decides on the layout of the certificates that it awards.



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On 31 January 2014, the Finnish National Board of Education adopted the National Core Curriculum for Preparatory Education for General Upper Secondary Education 2014. The preparatory education is aimed at immigrants and foreign-language speakers. The purpose is to provide them with linguistic and other capabilities required for the transfer to general upper secondary education. Preparatory education aimed at immigrants and foreign-language speakers can be commenced on 1 August 2014.

The National Core Curriculum for Preparatory Education for General Upper Secondary Education constitutes a decree which education providers use as a basis for preparing their curricula.