

# EDUCATION

*Here are some facts about the Finnish education system. Please discuss these in your group and compare to your home countries. You do not need to discuss everything – concentrate on the ones that interest you.*

## General info

- Schools are public schools. There are almost no private schools at all.
- All teachers (also in primary school and pre-school) have a university / higher education degree.
- National teaching & syllabus plans, but no national testing.
- Teaching, textbooks and teaching materials, school transport and school meals are free in basic education and upper secondary education.

## Basic education

- Children begin school in the year they turn 7 years old. Every child can attend one year of free pre-school before that.
- The concept of “local school”: The local school primarily admits pupils from its own area.

## Upper secondary education

- In upper secondary education you can choose studies either in general education (high school) or in vocational studies.
  - General education: 2–4 years general education, which provides the students with the diploma to enter higher education.
  - Vocational school: Education in a specific field plus some general education. Length of studies ca. 2-4 years.

## Higher education

- No tuition fees.
- General eligibility is provided by the matriculation examination plus a field-specific entrance exam: nowadays emphasis is on matriculation examination.

## Equal student aid for everyone

- In studies after basic education.
- Amount of aid can vary, but e.g. if you are over 18 and live on your own it is 253,69 euros per month (regardless of parents' income). This money is not a loan so you do not pay it back.
- You can also get housing aid and a student loan.