



**aalto-yliopiston ylioppilaskunta**  
**aalto-universitetets studentkår**  
**aalto university student union**

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# **Aalto University Student Union's Policy Paper**

## Table of contents

Introduction.....	4
Society.....	5
2.1. Livelihood.....	5
2.2. Student health care & FSHS.....	7
2.3. Wellbeing.....	8
2.4. Sustainable development.....	9
2.5. Metropolitan area.....	10
2.6. Arts policy.....	11
2.7. Other matters.....	12
Aalto community.....	12
3.1. Student housing.....	12
3.2. Public transport and mobility.....	13
3.3. Campus.....	14
3.4. Orientation and tutoring.....	15
3.5. Alumni activities / Aalto alumni activities.....	16
3.6. Volunteers and associations.....	16
3.7. Equity.....	16
3.8. International activities.....	17
4. Education policy.....	18
4.1. Decision-making at Aalto University.....	18
4.2. Teaching.....	19
4.3. Feedback.....	19
4.4. Course arrangements.....	20
4.5. Workload and flexibility of studies.....	20
4.6. Study mobility.....	21
4.7. Languages.....	22
4.8. Structure of higher education system.....	23
4.9. Funding of education.....	23
4.10. Degrees.....	24
4.11. Student admissions.....	25
4.12. Learning facilities.....	25
4.13. Working life.....	26
4.14. Technology and analytics.....	27

4.I5. Digital safety and ethics.....	27
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## Introduction

This document outlines the student union's position on various issues. Unlike the strategy or plan of action, it does not create operational activities but rather guides them. Policies may also be established on issues that AYY does not actively address. The policy paper is divided into three sections: society, the Aalto community and education policy. The society section addresses all issues related to external interest groups, such as the city's decisions and goals requiring legislative changes. The Aalto community section addresses advocacy goals directly concerning Aalto University and the academic community. The education policy section is divided into thematic areas.

Each section starts with a general description of the topic and also serves as a summary for that section. After the main text, advocacy goals are listed in bullet points. The policy paper is specifically designed to support the student union's advocacy work and is applied across all student union operations. The student union is a community of values. AYY is a courageous forerunner, a builder of community spirit, a defender of equity, and a promoter of wellbeing. These values form the foundation for the student union's positions.

## Society

This chapter compiles the social goals, aspirations, and opinions of Aalto University Student Union. Many decisions that profoundly impact students' lives are social, such as livelihood and student health care.

Student politics are also generational politics, given that the majority of our student union members are young adults. Issues of great concern for our generation include, in particular, global warming and biodiversity loss, but also the mental health crisis and a society where people face pressure to perform. In today's globally unpredictable world, we should not rigidly develop society by deferring problems into the future.

Aalto University Student Union aims to actively participate in building a more humane and healthier society. Our vision is an ecologically, socially and economically sustainable Finnish society. The challenges facing our generation are not unavoidable or inevitable but the result of dysfunctional social and cultural structures. The ill-being of young people and the environmental crisis can be solved with concrete actions.

Education, science, arts and the sense of community should be at the heart of the academic community.

We believe that studying should always be profitable. However, current financial aid for students is complex, inadequate in terms of amount and duration, and poorly compatible with other forms of social support. The best form of support for students would be basic income: a flexible, liberating social security system that considers different situations in life. We aim to reduce bureaucracy and actively participate in creating a simple and humane social security system.

### 2.1. Livelihood

#### 2.1.1. Student financial aid

- Student financial aid is social security.
- Overall level of financial aid for students should be sufficient and allow full-time studies without taking out a loan. The level and duration of support should be adequate.
- Financial aid for students should be flexible, considering different studies and situations in life during student years.
- Purpose of the state-guaranteed student loan is to serve as an additional source of income, but not as a part of the support required for living.
- The security and interest rate protection of student loans should be strengthened.
- Repayment of student loan instalments should be fair and flexible.
- Student loan compensation should be phased.
- Student social security should allow working during studies.

- Financial aid for students should not be based on assumed future income.
- Student financial aid should be coherent, ensuring that higher education students under the age of 20 receive the same level of support as other higher education students.
- Provider supplement to the study grant should consider the number of children in the family.
- Maximum period of student financial aid should be restored to 54 months for degrees with 300 credits.
- Grounds for granting additional months of discretionary support should be made less strict; a reasoned explanation of the delay in studies and a plan for completing studies should be a sufficient ground for granting the additional support.
- Limit for receiving student financial aid after discontinuation should be lowered from 20 credits to 10 credits.
- Degree-specificity of student financial aid should be discontinued for students who have been granted the right to pursue both a bachelor's and master's degree at one time.
- Compatibility of student financial aid and the sickness allowance should be improved.
- Each student financial aid month reimbursed by a student should be compensated, including those recovered by Kela.
- Financial aid for students should be developed into a simpler, more flexible and less bureaucratic direction.
- Kela services should be equally accessible in Finnish, Swedish and English.
- Finland should create urgent social security for students from the EU countries and beyond.
- In the longer term, the student's social security is granted to all degree students studying in Finland, including international students from the EU and EEA countries and beyond.
- The level of student meal subsidy should be increased as the cost of living rises, in order to maintain the quality of meals.
- The student meal subsidy should be expanded to cover two meals per day.
- The student meal subsidy should equally apply to take away food.

#### 2.1.2. Housing subsidies

- Students are covered by the general housing allowance.
- Students' housing subsidies should be available year-round.
- The maximum rental costs that determine students' housing subsidies should reflect the actual housing costs in the area.
- Students' housing subsidies should be allocated on an individual basis.
- Students' housing subsidies should enable shared housing.

### 2.1.3. Basic income

- Finnish social security should be renewed into a monthly, gratuitous and universal basic income paid to citizens, which covers the expenses necessary for living.
- Transition to basic income aims at a simpler, more flexible and adequate social security.
- Basic income can be implemented in many ways. AYY supports discussion on different schemes and possible experiments.
- Transition to gratuitous basic income should be promoted, for example, by conducting a broader experiment involving students.
- Basic income can be supplemented with other forms of support for students.

## 2.2. Student health care & FSHS

- Student health care should continue to be provided by the Finnish Student Health Service specialising in the unique group of students.
- FSHS services should be accessible in accordance with treatment time guarantee.
- Assessment of the need for treatment is not regarded as meeting the treatment time guarantee.
- FSHS should develop preventive forms of treatment.
- More investments are needed for e-services and the assessment of the need for treatment.
- International exchange and degree students should be guaranteed the same level of health care services as Finnish students.
- All people living in Finland should be offered free contraception.
- Kela's rehabilitative psychotherapy should be free of charge for students.
- Access to Kela's rehabilitative psychotherapy should be simplified and made easier.
- Shortage of psychotherapists should be tackled by making education free of charge and by making it easier for international experts to practice their profession in Finland.
- Students should be covered by a therapy guarantee.
- At the level of society, mental health services should particularly focus on prevention and the accessibility of services.
- International students should also be covered by mental health services, and their special needs should be considered in service provision.
- FSHS funding should primarily be strengthened by increasing the share of the state, rather than by raising students' fees.
- AYY's voice should be heard in the decision-making of FSHS, both at the local and national level.
- FSHS should have a service unit on Otaniemi campus.

- All FSHS services should be reasonably accessible both in terms of time and location relative to the student's place of study.
- Specialized healthcare services should be reincluded in FSHS services.
- Transition from FSHS services to other health and mental health services should be smooth for students. Access to treatment should adhere to the treatment time guarantee, and the treatment should be affordable.
- Students with the European Health Insurance Card remain within the scope of FSHS services.
- International degree or exchange students are entitled to use FSHS services.
- Health insurance policies offered to those coming from outside the EU and EEA countries should be affordable.
- Student health care paths between FSHS and public health care should be smooth and unbroken.
- The FSHS fee should be optional for students during the exchange period abroad.
- The FSHS fee should be invoiced from students.
- Public health care should be preventive, affordable and timely.

### 2.3. Wellbeing

- In addition to treating symptoms, students' mental health crisis should address underlying causes. Social structures, such as livelihood insecurity and inadequacy, should not be underestimated as part of the problem.
- Society should actively foster an environment where young people can develop at their own pace.
- Students' performance stress should be reduced both at the university and within society.
- The importance of peer support and the sense of community for overall well-being is recognized, and their implementation is improved.
- Graduating within a specific timeframe should not cause unreasonable pressure.
- Taking shorter and longer absences is facilitated without impacting studies.
- Recommendations for higher education sports outlined by the Finnish Student Sports Federation should be followed at Aalto University.
- Campus should have a wide range of accessible and affordable sports facilities, both indoors and outdoors.
- Campus and teaching should encourage students to engage in daily exercise.
- Renovation of Otahalli should begin during the 2020s.



- Primary purpose of support services provided for students by the university should be preventive and maintain the ability to study.
- University's well-being work should be developed and integrated into strategic activities, with special attention paid to minority perspectives. Information on the well-being of students should be collected on a regular basis.
- Third-sector and easily accessible therapy options should be developed as part of preventive measures.
- Adequate resources should be allocated to study psychologist services to ensure swift and easy access to a study psychologist.
- Transition between university study psychologists and FSHS mental health services should be effortless.
- Study psychologist services should be prescribed by law.

## 2.4. Sustainable development

- All decision-making processes should consider the environmental aspect.
- The university, metropolitan area and society at large, should establish both quantitative and qualitative goals for implementing sustainable development. The UN's sustainable development goals should be integrated as a cross-cutting theme for all activities.
- Development cooperation activities should enhance people's opportunities to improve their living conditions and foster societal fairness.
- Finland should establish goals to reach the UN's recommended 0.7% of GDP for development cooperation funding.
- Major operators such as nations, transnational organisations, and companies bear the greatest responsibility to act responsibly. Compensation should be provided for the use and pollution of natural resources.
- The EU-wide system of harmful taxation should be developed.
- Finland's nature and its diversity should be valued and protected.
- Society should encourage its members to live in an ecological, socially sustainable, and responsible way.
- Finland should adhere to its 2035 carbon neutrality target, taking sufficient action to attain this goal.
- The Climate Change Act should be legally binding, and Finland should ensure its effective enforcement.
- Emissions-free energy production and its research should be consistently supported to achieve Finland's climate objectives.

- Urban planning and development should prioritize emission-free and low-emission modes of transport, particularly walking, cycling, and public transport.
- New construction and renovation projects aim at sustainable and energy-efficient solutions. Building production and zoning policies should prioritize the environmental friendliness of the entire life cycle of buildings, starting with building materials.
- Housing production in the metropolitan area should consider urban nature and biodiversity.
- Circular and sharing economy, sustainable recycling and minimising food waste should be promoted in the activities of cities, residents and businesses.
- Ecologically sustainable and plant-based food is prioritised in public meals.

## 2.5. Metropolitan area

- Metropolitan area should be an internationally appealing place to study, work and live while evolving into a centre of growing expertise. The development of the metropolitan area should be sustainable and foster equality.
- Metropolitan area should engage in progressive urban policy that attracts young people.
- Multilingualism and multiculturalism in the metropolitan area should be seen as strengths. Integration of international talent is promoted through accessible and equal services.
- Student perspective should be recognized and included in urban development. Students' opinions should be heard in municipal decision-making.
- When designing public services, the specific needs of students, including international students, should be considered.
- Public services should be easily accessible, considering physical, social, cognitive, and linguistic diversity.
- Cities should support students with families with flexible and affordable services.
- Student organisations in the metropolitan area collaborate to create a more student-friendly metropolitan area.
- Local nature is protected in the metropolitan area and cities are developed with natural diversity in mind.
- Cities are designed to support an ecologically sustainable lifestyle.
- Cities should promote active citizenship and contribute to enhancing local democracy.
- Uniqueness of the Otaniemi district should be valued and protected.
- Students are consulted on all aspects of regional development in Otaniemi.
- Cities are designed to be accessible to all.

## 2.6. Arts policy

Art is valuable in itself. The intrinsic value and the unique social status of arts are prerequisites for the freedom and development of arts. The value of arts or culture cannot be measured only by economic indicators. Arts and culture are regarded as valuable for the development and well-being of society.

Aalto University Student Union is the largest student union in Finland in terms of the number of arts students. The Student Union supports the aspirations of its members in the fields of arts and culture. The Student Union actively participates in arts and culture policy, utilizing its expertise for the benefit of its members. The Student Union also plays a key role in national and international networks of arts students.

Aalto University School of Arts, Design and Architecture serves as an active social debater and a forerunner in the field of arts and design.

- Visibility and understanding of diversity within arts and design should be increased both in the academic community and society as a whole.
- Arts, culture and education are valued and this is also reflected in decision-making. Evaluation systems for culture should be based on expertise within the arts field.
- Economic importance of investments in the arts and cultural sector is understood and supported without expected short-term revenue.
- As experiencers, students, and creators, we should invest in making arts and culture economically, regionally, physically and psychologically accessible.
- Creative professionals and students retain the copyright to their own work and the right to decide on the use of their work. This right also applies to the use of works in the teaching of artificial intelligence.
- In addition to the construction sector, the 'percent for culture' principle should also be implemented in other fields, including social welfare and healthcare. One percent for culture support should also be extended to fields beyond visual arts. In addition to the public sector, the private and third sector extensively use the 'percent for culture' approach in their projects. Arts professionals should be involved in the decision-making in projects governed by the 'percent for culture' principle.
- Share of arts and culture in the total expenditure of the state budget should be increased to at least 1 per cent.
- Adequate funding for arts and culture should be secured. Funding should be public, private and funded by the third sector.
- The private funding of arts should be promoted and its continuity ensured.
- Aalto University School of Arts, Design and Architecture should continue to receive special funding for artistic research as before.
- Professionals working in the arts and culture sector are highly valued in society.

- Well-being of professionals in the field is supported by structural changes, utilizing both public support and actions in the sector.

## 2.7. Other matters

- The gender-based conscription should be changed to an equal model.

### Aalto community

The autonomous Aalto University needs by its side a financially and operationally independent Aalto University Student Union that represents all students. The Aalto community is an inclusive and international community where everyone should feel welcome and safe.

Otaniemi campus is a central location for the entire Aalto community, including university operations, facilities, urban services, and a large number of student housing units. Otaniemi campus is designed for students and reflects its students.

## 3.1. Student housing

- Efficient construction of student housing should be enabled in the central areas of the campus and student housing is the primary form of housing in Otaniemi.
- The amount of student housing on campus should be increased taking into account the needs of future students.
- The volume and construction of student housing in the metropolitan area should meet the increasing number of students. Student housing should be focused near campuses.
- In addition to student housing, other affordable housing in the metropolitan area should be supported.
- Parking spaces should not be considered a necessity in student housing if public transport connections are sufficient.
- In the planning of student housing, minimum parking space standard should be taken into account.
- The planning of student housing should allow the construction of studios and small apartments only.
- In the construction of student housing, attention should be given to the transformability, versatility and comfort of housing.
- In the construction of student housing, new types of housing solutions are tried out broad-mindedly, without compromising on the comfort of living.
- Student housing should include an adequate number of accessible apartments.

- Student housing is developed in various ways to meet students' needs by influencing regulations and the development of land use plans for student housing construction.
- The state should support the construction of student housing.
- Ecological and sustainable alternatives are favoured in housing solutions.
- Affordable temporary housing solutions should be available to students at the start of the academic year, for example.
- Owner-occupied housing for young adults should be facilitated by improving the state-guaranteed ASP loan.
- International students should have equal access to student housing.
- Everyone has the right to safe and sensible student housing.
- When planning complementary building, student housing should be promoted in the vicinity of campus areas.

### 3.2. Public transport and mobility

- Public transport should be functional, flexible and affordable.
- The starting points for the development of transport are emission-free mobility and transport safety and equality.
- Public transport should be accessible in all forms.
- Pedestrian and bicycle paths are developed to enable easier, safer and smoother mobility in the metropolitan area.
- Public transport should be developed in a more extensive and functional direction.
- The metro and light rail line should run around the clock, and its automatization should be promoted. In addition, other 24-hour forms of public transport should also be supported.
- Public transport should be priced as an attractive and preferred mode of transport, along with walking, cycling and other pedestrian traffic.
- Student discount on public transport should be at least 50% of normal prices.
- In the long term, public transport in the HSL area should be developed to be more affordable for everyone.
- Public transport tickets should be accessible and possible to use without a smartphone.
- Long-distance traffic should invest in rail transport. Train ticket prices should be reasonable and cheaper than domestic air fares.
- City bikes should remain a part of affordable public transport.
- Winter maintenance of pedestrian and bicycle paths should be prioritized.
- Ecology, sustainable development and support for biodiversity are taken into account in all transport development.
- The core area of the campus is an area for public transport, cyclists and pedestrians. Parking spaces on the campus are reduced in relation to the floor area, and parking spaces are focused on the edges of the campus.

- Campus roads and routes are developed extensively, taking into account the needs of walking and cycling. Mobility within the campus encourages incidental exercise.
- Mobility on the campus should be effortless and smooth also for people with disabilities.
- Temporary parking spaces on the campus are primarily available to all members of the Aalto community.
- Student discount on HSL single tickets should be reintroduced.
- Students should be listened to in the development of the light rail line.
- Light rail line I5 should run around the clock at least between Otaniemi and Leppävaara.

### 3.3. Campus

- The Otaniemi campus is designed for students and reflects the students. Wide-ranging student activities in all forms are taken into account and enabled on campus.
- The Aalto community encourages creative and student-oriented activities on campus. The study fields of Aalto are a visible part of the campus and highlight the special characteristics of the Otaniemi campus culture.
- The campus is safe and comfortable around the clock.
- University facilities are continuously developed to better meet the needs and preferences of users. The needs of students from various backgrounds and situations in life are taken into account.
- The campus area is developed in close cooperation with the Aalto community. Students are consulted on both major and minor development plans.
- The campus should have silent rooms catering to various needs for relaxation and tranquility.
- Outdoor areas on campus are designed to be comfortable and encourage people to spend time and move around the campus.
- Outdoor areas on campus are designed to foster social encounters, support leisure activities, and facilitate event organizing on the campus.
- Usability and mobility in winter, as well as winter maintenance, are taken into account in outdoor areas.
- Student-friendly, affordable and accessible services that meet the needs of campus users are prioritized on campus.
- Otaniemi shore areas should be specifically developed for recreational and leisure use.
- Student dining on campus is convenient and diverse. The opening hours of student restaurants are long enough, not only at lunchtime, but also at dinnertime and on weekends.

- Student meal selection is ethically and ecologically sustainable and favors plant-based solutions.
- Campus development is guided by ecological sustainability and biodiversity, as well as user-oriented planning and equity.
- Aalto University should adhere to the 2030 carbon neutrality target, and sufficient action should be taken to achieve the target. The guidelines of Aalto for sustainable development should be developed on a regular basis.
- Unique local nature of the campus should be protected.
- Biodiversity on campus should be developed by converting lawn areas into meadows, for example.
- Recycling on campus is encouraged and should be made as easy as possible.
- Bathrooms and changing rooms on campus should accommodate all genders and include gender-neutral bathrooms. All genders should have equal access to bathrooms.
- All students should have the opportunity to live on campus during their studies.
- The campus has facilities rented on a one-off basis that enable diverse student culture.

### 3.4. Orientation and tutoring

- The goals of the orientation of new students are equity among all new students and the best student life in the world since the first academic year, regardless of degree level.
- There is a process for the integration of Aalto University's incoming Master's, doctoral and international students, which makes students feel part of the community.
- As a result of successful orientation, new students feel that they are part of the academic community and full members of the Aalto community. They also know where to find information on matters related to studies and coping with everyday life.
- All new students have a competent and responsible tutor, regardless of their age, mother tongue, degree level and other issues.
- Where applicable, all tutors receive joint training, which serves as a basic course for group guidance.
- Both Aalto University and the Student Union are visible in the orientation and reception of the Aalto schools.
- Aalto University is responsible for organizing the orientation and plans the schedules and content with other parties.
- Aalto University offers additional support to students starting their studies after orientation.

### 3.5. Alumni activities / Aalto alumni activities

The spirit of Aalto is eternal. Alumni activities should aim at connecting alumni and students. The spirit of Aalto is a shared identity that unites students and graduates from different fields throughout their lives. Associations within AYY should have the opportunity to organize their own high-quality alumni activities.

- Alumni organizations operating in the Aalto community are able to utilize the alumni register maintained by the university to reach their own alumni.
- Aalto University's alumni activities should connect alumni from different backgrounds as well as possible.
- High-quality and diverse alumni activities are ideal for developing a culture of giving back, which includes mentoring or support in various projects, for example.
- The university supports the alumni organizations of the Aalto community with facilities, training and financial support.
- Recent graduates should be informed of alumni activities and know how to get involved.

### 3.6. Volunteers and associations

- Participation in student activities should be possible regardless of a person's background or language skills.
- Aalto community volunteers feel well. Volunteers work in a community where they take care of themselves and others. They are also provided with training to take care of their own well-being.
- Volunteering is regarded as valuable for learning, networking, and cultivating skills for working life.
- Participation in student activities should be meaningful also without intoxicants.
- Subject associations in various fields have free facilities at university. The facilities are located as close as possible to students' study facilities. Students should have accessible and effortless entry to the facilities. The facilities should be available to students 24/7 and their size should correspond to the number of users. When undergoing changes, associations are offered facilities that are at least equivalent to their current ones.

### 3.7. Equity

Equity among all Aalto students is one of AYY's core values. AYY embraces the differences of individuals and promotes equity regardless of people's nationality, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, physical and mental abilities, age, religious or political stance or any other matter pertaining to the person. AYY is an anti-racist and intersectionally feminist organization. The aim of advancing equity is to ensure that in the future,



everyone has an equal opportunity to express themselves fully as they are and to enjoy the best and safest student life in the world as offered by AYY and Aalto University.

- A clear set of practices should be established for intervening in harassment occurring in the Aalto community, whether the harassment occurs between students and staff or two or more students in their leisure time. Information about harassment-related processes should be easily accessible and communicated to students.
- Racism, sexism, ableism, bullying, harassment, discrimination or any inappropriate behaviour is not condoned in the Aalto community. All inappropriate conduct is addressed in an appropriately manner.
- Aalto University has harassment contact persons. Persons from different backgrounds are appointed as harassment contact persons.
- Aalto's EDI (Equality, Diversity & Inclusivity) Committee oversees and evaluates the implementation of harassment prevention measures, as well as safer space policies through regular questionnaires and other assessment methods directed at Aalto students and staff. EDI committees are formed from diverse groups of people.
- Safer space guidelines should be implemented everywhere in the Aalto community, including, but not limited to events, classrooms, and other official and unofficial gatherings.
- Minority rights should be protected both at Aalto University and at the national level.
- Aalto should provide equity-related resources such as training sessions, for the entire community.

### 3.8. International activities

AYY believes in the power of international cooperation and promotes the active role of universities and Finland in international networks. The free movement of people, thoughts and businesses is a prerequisite for world-class educational and research cooperation. Finland, for its part, is an open and attractive destination for international talents and invests in the quality of their integration. Aalto University is the forerunner of internationality and student mobility in Finland.

- Students from Finland, EU countries, and non-EU countries should be treated equally in the Aalto community.
- Aalto University students and staff should be trained about multiculturalism, anti-racism, and multilingualism.
- Banking services should be available trouble-free, and each international student can open a bank account without additional fees, as well as receive a debit card and online banking rights attached to their account within a reasonable time.

- Strong identification should be easily accessible to international students.
- International students should be offered a chance to purchase reasonably priced health insurance with a broad range of coverage. The availability and functionality of the health insurance required by the immigration legislation should be improved.
- The residence permit process should be expedited and simplified, and each student with a Finnish higher education degree should be offered an opportunity for permanent residency.

## 4. Education policy

The Student Union supports and influences Aalto University and national education policy keeping in mind the core duties of universities: teaching and research, which mutually reinforce each other. The societal impact of scientific and artistic activities arises from broad-based education rather than from the fastest possible graduation. All university activities should be smooth, clear and flexible for students without compromising the characteristic multidisciplinary interaction of Aalto. In addition, students' participation in the development of teaching is highly regarded.

### 4.1. Decision-making at Aalto University

- Decisions are made as close as possible to the people affected by the decision.
- Aalto University's decision-making bodies should have student representation in addition to staff representatives to ensure that the student perspective is considered. Student representatives have deputy members and their access to information is secured. Students are also involved in preparation work outside the bodies.
- The University Board should have student representation.
- The Academic Affairs Committee should adopt equal tripartite representation.
- The Student Union appoints student representatives in administration to bodies established by the Universities Act and other bodies set up by the university.
- Nomination working groups of the University Board and management should have an official student representative.
- When making decisions for the university as a whole, their impact on all fields of study is considered. The content of decisions should not depend on the fields of the members in the body.
- Recruiting and hiring staff at Aalto is transparent and equal and students are also heard on this matter.
- The representatives of decision-making bodies are elected in a transparent and equal manner and the representation of minorities is considered.
- The financial compensation system for student representatives in administration is extended.

- The university should offer student representatives orientation on the operations of the past term.
- Attendance at the meetings of university bodies should be an acceptable reason for absence from teaching.

## 4.2. Teaching

- A bachelor's degree gives students the competence for completing a master's degree in their field.
- A master's degree gives students the competence for working as an expert in their field.
- Master's degree studies highlight opportunities to participate in research teams and develop capabilities for further studies in the field.
- Teaching that develops study skills and ability is included both in the beginning of studies and in courses throughout the degree.
- The latest research data is used in courses and course material is up to date. Course materials are appropriate, of high quality, clear and responsible.
- The university should engage in collaborative teaching with external parties, such as businesses. The collaboration should meet the learning objectives defined by the university. The quality of education should not suffer because of cooperation. In cooperation related to courses, a company cannot require a student to have an unreasonably long non-compete term or claim copyright on the student's work.
- All university teachers undergo pedagogical studies throughout their careers.
- Pedagogical training and orientation are provided to course assistants. Assistants are also trained in assessment and providing feedback. The salary of assistants is proportional to the difficulty level and amount of work.
- Teaching promotes students' growth into influential members of society and guides them to take responsibility for oneself and other people. Ethicality, sustainable development and societal impact are considered in the competence objectives of each degree program.
- The university should establish goals for the development of students' international competence and define measures to promote the development of these capabilities. The development of international competence should be considered in curricula and learning objectives and be supported with financial resources.

## 4.3. Feedback

- Feedback is vital in development work. Students should be encouraged to provide course feedback and the university should arrange feedback sessions.

- The received course feedback is reviewed. The summary of the feedback and the development measures based on feedback are presented to students next time when the course is arranged, and they are publicly available in the course brochure, for example.
- Students should receive regular feedback in addition to course grades.
- Dialogic feedback discussion takes place already during the course between the organizers of teaching and students.
- Students reflect on their own performance and learn to give and receive peer feedback that supports learning. Peer feedback should not be the primary form of feedback, and the assessment of course assignments should not be primarily based on peer review.
- Exam and assignment answers are easily available to students afterwards, even if they are unable to attend an assignment or assessment review session. All fields have electronic exam archives.

#### **4.4. Course arrangements**

- Criteria for the assessment of study attainments are transparent and clear at the start of a course. Different assessment methods suitable for the purpose are used at Aalto. Schedules for the assignments to be assessed are available three weeks before the start of the course.
- Students are always informed about alternative course arrangements.
- Teaching situations where attendance does not bring significant added value (such as mass lectures) should be videotaped to be used at least during the course.
- Interaction is the starting point for teaching that requires attendance. Remote teaching should serve learning goals.
- All software used in the courses should be available to students free of charge. Where possible, programs licensed as free software are used in teaching.
- The university provides students with professional and diverse, modern tools.
- Students know their own rights and are able to seek help in problem situations.
- Students mainly have all copyrights to their coursework.
- The assignment of copyright related to courses and contests is well communicated and there are clear written conditions for it.

#### **4.5. Workload and flexibility of studies**

- Studies should be planned so that an adequate number of courses can be completed at a normal study pace. The accumulation of credits should not be hindered by overlapping compulsory courses, miscalculated workload of assignments, difficulties in receiving study guidance, or inflexibility with due dates in difficult situations in life.

- The workload required for one credit is uniform and independent on the field or teacher.
- In general, it is possible to pass courses with compensatory assignments.
- Teaching that requires attendance should not lead to a situation where a student has to study while ill. Absences due to illness and other weighty reasons should not unreasonably hinder the completion of courses, and compensatory assignments should be offered flexibly.
- Online courses and automatically checked electronic exams should be available year-round.
- Free summer studies to be included in the degree should be available for students in each degree program.
- Teaching times, facilities, assignment deadlines, course assessment criteria, learning objectives and the methods of completion are published on MyCourses or a similar platform before the course starts.
- Preliminary assignments should be avoided. Any preliminary assignments should be available during the enrolment period.
- Course workload corresponds to the number of credits awarded for the course. Too laborious course contents are either reduced or the number of credits is increased.
- It should be possible to renew exams.
- If a student discontinues a course or other study module, it should not affect the student's grade the next time they participate in the course.
- When aiming for a normal study pace and graduation within the target time, priority should be given to the planning of teaching and support services.
- The individual needs of a student are recognized. Information about individual study arrangements should be easily accessible and communicated to students. All teaching staff should treat all students equally regarding individual study arrangements.

#### 4.6. Study mobility

- Dialogue between university fields should be promoted in order to make it easier to take courses from other schools.
- Students should have the opportunity to take courses from other higher education institutions throughout Finland. This requires smooth mobility and cooperation between higher education institutions.
- Credit transfer of exchange studies should be simplified. Cooperation with exchange universities enables a sufficiently diverse and high-quality selection of study modules. Studies completed abroad should not be required to be fully compliant with the course contents of the home country.

- Courses should be open to all students who meet the prerequisites, regardless of the student's home university or degree program. If participants need to be limited for resource reasons, priority can be given to major and minor students in the field.
- The university encourages academic staff to combine their expertise and to collaborate across school boundaries.
- The university offers courses and study modules open to all members of the Aalto community, the completion of which does not require previous knowledge of the field.
- Students are encouraged to combine different study modules based on their own interests.
- Master's studies have as much freedom of choice as possible.
- Changing one's major and degree program within the university is easy.
- Students should be guaranteed an actual opportunity to choose meaningful minor courses. The adequate resourcing of minor subjects is a prerequisite for genuine multidisciplinary.
- International mobility should be as accessible as possible for both incoming and outgoing students.
- Outgoing students should be guaranteed personal study arrangements and necessary adjustments, and they should be informed of these before leaving for exchange. This should not create additional bureaucratic burdens for students.
- Degree programs in English are designed and marketed in various ways for both local and international students from within and outside the EU.

#### 4.7. Languages

- The university's language policies are fully implemented, and study paths in Finnish and Swedish are made available.
- Guidance and counselling services are available in Finnish, Swedish, and English.
- It is possible to participate in the university's development and decision-making processes in Finnish, Swedish, or English.
- When teaching is conducted in Finnish or Swedish, Swedish-speaking students have the option to take exams or complete study assignments in Swedish. Aalto University determines how the education of a sufficient number of persons proficient in Swedish, required by section 12 of the Universities Act, is considered in university operations.
- Teaching, guidance, and counselling offered in all languages should maintain consistent quality standards.
- Teachers' language proficiency is considered in curriculum work. The university invests in multilingual approaches and offers language training for teachers.

- The university should take necessary language skills into account when recruiting teachers.
- University-level, field-specific language offerings should be diverse.
- Field-specific terminology is developed at the university and in collaboration with other operators (universities, the Helsinki Term Bank for the Arts and Sciences, etc.) recognizing the importance of terms in study paths in Finnish and Swedish.
- The conditions for teaching domestic and foreign languages should be ensured.
- The course offerings in foreign languages should reach a level that enables using the language as a working language.

#### **4.8. Structure of higher education system**

- The Student Union supports separate universities and universities of applied sciences, which have clearly different duties. The Student Union supports voluntary cooperation between higher education institutions.
- University degrees and university of applied sciences degrees continue to have a different profile.
- High-quality degree studies should be available in the applicants' home regions in proportion to the number of young people. The Helsinki-Uusimaa region, in particular, needs more of fully funded, available student places.
- The participation of Finnish students in European university networks should be secured by bringing together the student representatives of different networks and by actively discussing the policies concerning them with SYL and the student unions.

#### **4.9. Funding of education**

- Public core funding covers most of the costs of universities. In addition, collected, competitive research funding and corporate funding should not compensate for core funding.
- Funding encourages the production of high-quality degrees and does not only reward for quantity or the time required to take the degree.
- Each completed credit is financially productive, regardless of whether the person is a degree student of a higher education institution or someone else.
- Higher education and the pursuit of higher education should be free of charge for all students, so that everyone has access to higher education, regardless of their background.
- The current application fee for non-EU/EEA applicants should be refunded to students who have accepted a place of study.
- Universities should neither prepare nor implement expensive pathway programs aimed at international students.

- Tuition fees for non-EU/EEA students are unequal and should be discontinued. University funding should not be based on student fees.
- The current, unequal tuition fees for non-EU/EEA students should not affect student admission or the acceptance of study attainments, and those obliged to pay tuition fees should not be treated differently from others.
- Possible field-specific tuition fees within Aalto should not be many times higher than in other fields. Joint higher education programs should not have different fee categories, and they should not be priced mainly according to the most expensive option.
- The maximum payment limit tied to the normative duration of studies should be introduced for tuition fees.
- Grants for those who are liable for tuition fees are mainly awarded to cover the entire fee. Grants are awarded on the basis of clear and equal, predefined criteria.
- A national grant system should be created for Finland, while preserving the autonomy of higher education institutions.
- In addition to academic criteria, grants should also be awarded on humanitarian grounds.

#### 4.10. Degrees

- Universities will continue to grant students the right to complete both a bachelor's and master's degree at once.
- Eternal right to study should be restored. Limiting the completion time of the degree leads to stress and the interruption of studies. Those admitted to study for both a lower and higher degree should be granted a study right which is at least two years longer than the normative duration of studies.
- Students should have the flexibility to have extra time to complete their degree, and non-attendance terms should not shorten the right to study. Applications for extensions should be free of charge.
- Applying for and admission to a degree program, as well as completing a degree should be possible and free of charge for students, regardless of previous studies. The second higher education degree should not be subject to fees.
- Open University should not have the authority to grant degrees. The university awards degrees to students after they have been admitted to study through the open university path, for example. It should not be possible to complete entire degrees at the Open University.
- Parts of degrees may be offered as commissioned education, but entire degrees may not. Commissioned education should be implemented responsibly.



#### 4.II. Student admissions

- It should be possible to apply for university studies with comprehensive school qualification from both upper secondary school and vocational education and training. In addition, there are ways to be admitted to university without general eligibility to apply to higher education.
- There should be various, free of charge admission routes to the university.
- The extent of the open university route should not exceed 60 credits, and the share of the open university path in admission remains reasonable.
- Study success in upper secondary education should not solely determine access to higher education.
- The entrance examination should remain an application pathway along with certificate-based admission, and the applicant has the opportunity to prepare for more than one entrance examination.
- Students are informed of all the study programs for which they have been admitted before the deadline for accepting the place of study.
- Quotas for first-time applicants are discontinued.
- Admission criteria are transparent and equal.
- Applying for university education with an upper secondary education degree other than a Finnish matriculation examination is smooth and fair.
- Criteria for the transfer application procedure are clear and credit transfer related to the transfer application does not require additional work.
- Master's admissions should ensure a realistic opportunity for career chance when the student has the prerequisites to succeed in studies in the field. The criteria for Master's admissions should be transparent.

#### 4.I2. Learning facilities

- When building or renovating the premises, there should be facilities suitable for both quiet work and group work. In addition, it is important to have facilities for rest and quieting down on campus. Accessibility of facilities is considered.
- Students can book campus facilities as diversely as possible through an up-to-date booking system. The system is functional and serves a variety of purposes.
- Students have a sufficient number of 24-hour facilities available.
- Workstations are available in study spaces with software required by different fields.
- It should be possible to store personal coursework material in the vicinity of study facilities.
- Students' learning spaces support independent studies, the sense of community and artistic activities. The use of learning spaces for teaching or entrance examinations should be discussed with facility users well in advance.
- Group workspaces are diverse and there are enough workspaces. The facilities should have functional soundproofing.

- Teaching facilities should have opportunities for working in a standing position by acquiring standing desks and designing lecture halls in such a way that it is possible to stretch one's legs during the lecture.
- When choosing furniture for teaching facilities, work ergonomics and acoustics should be the priority.
- Teaching facilities should allow the use of various teaching methods.
- The availability, working hours and guidance of workshops and laboratories are sufficient and working is safe. Workshop masters support teaching, research and artistic work.
- The quality of the university's indoor environment, particularly air quality and thermal conditions, is good, measured and adjustable.
- Services of Aalto Studios are diverse and support studies and artistic activities in various fields.
- Student support services are centrally located and easily accessible to students.
- There should be 24/7 access to learning facilities.

#### 4.13. Working life

- In addition to studies, the valuable role of working, entrepreneurship and organizational and voluntary activities in terms of learning is recognized as credits for degrees.
- Accrediting previously acquired skills for a degree is smooth. Principles of credit transfer should be based on transparency. Upon request, students should be told which courses or what kind of competence have been accepted as part of the degree.
- Special attention should be paid to the employment opportunities of international students. International students' degrees should include the networking and working life skills needed in Finnish working life.
- International students and recent graduates should be enabled to study domestic languages during work hours. Measures include considering language studies in the learning goals of internships, as well as providing study rights for language courses after graduation.
- Higher education institutions and municipalities should collaborate closely with employment services to support the employment of international students.
- Working is an important part of students' development as professionals in their field, and that is why the pace of studies should enable it.
- Aalto University should offer alumni flexible education opportunities that complement their competence.
- Students should have the opportunity to complete an internship that is included in their studies.
- Students receive credits for internships completed at the university.

- University career services are extensive and support students from different fields.
- Students should be guaranteed the language skills and vocabulary required in their field.
- Appreciation for education is reflected in salaries.
- The appreciation of the arts and culture sector is reflected in the terms and conditions of employment, as well as fees and wages.
- In the arts sector, it should be possible to find employment, including freelance work. Publicly funded organizations should provide employment and avoid necessity entrepreneurship.

#### **4.14. Technology and analytics**

- Course materials are available electronically and free of charge without compromising the quality of the materials. There is free and easy access to article databases and other sources.
- Teaching material is diverse, and the opportunities brought about by new technology are utilized broad-mindedly and purposefully. The staff receive training and assistance in the use of technology.
- Students are aware of the use of the data collected about them and can regulate it.
- Learning analytics is a tool that is used with good reason. Analytics are interpreted on a case-by-case basis and no automated decisions are made based on analytics.
- Increasing the workload of students by increasing the number of exams or other assignments is not an acceptable way to avoid using artificial intelligence or other tools.
- All electronic services of the university have a one-time login option, and a login session is valid for a reasonable period of time.

#### **4.15. Digital safety and ethics**

- Artificial Intelligence systems available in Finland should be trained in a sustainable and transparent manner, where the training data is acquired consensually.
- There should be a constant effort to educate residents of Finland about data security and their rights to their data.
- The university should offer education to its students and staff about the ethical, social, personal, environmental and technical implications of systems that utilize our data and input to train themselves, such as artificial intelligence systems.
- Strict regulations should be in place on a state and EU level to ensure that people's personal data as well as their intellectual property is protected from

being used as training data for artificial intelligence systems or similar machine learning technologies.

- Finland and Aalto University should promote the development of artificial intelligence systems that have a narrow well-defined use-case, and where its training data is public and transparent.
- AI should not be used in the translation of course material unless its quality and correctness is validated by a fluent speaker of the language before handing it out to students.