

INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS WHEN STORING NON-FORMAL, NON-QUALIFICATION STUDY ATTAINMENT DATA ON LIBERAL ADULT EDUCATION BASED ON CONSENT

Background

The Act on the National Registers of Education Records, Qualifications and Degrees allows providers of liberal adult educational to store study attainment data on non-formal and non-qualification studies in the Koski National Registry and Data Transfer Service for Study Rights and Completed Studies (Koski service) with the consent of the students. Such data may be stored only if the following conditions are met:

When these conditions are met and once the student has completed the education, the educational institution transfers the data to the Koski National Registry and Data Transfer Service for Study Rights and Completed Studies maintained by the Finnish National Agency for Education¹. In the case of the transferred data, the Finnish National Agency for Education and the providers of the educational institutions are joint controllers. The Finnish National Agency for Education issues more detailed provisions on the data content of non-formal liberal adult education. As joint controllers, the providers of the educational institutions are responsible for making sure the data are accurate and for ensuring that the data subjects have the right to correct their data.

In broad terms, the data content to be transferred is as follows, the title of the education and its scope indicated in the form of credits, the end date of the education, assessment of competence.

Information in the national learner ID register maintained by the Finnish National Agency for Education is automatically generated by the Population Information System. When creating the national learner ID, the provider of the educational institution must supply the other information separately in cases where the student has no personal identity code. The Finnish National Agency for Education instructs the providers of educational institutions to create a national learner ID for those who do not have a personal identity code.

Data use and disclosure practices

Storing study attainment data on non-formal education aims to achieve the students' best interests by making their skills and competence transparent. The data on liberal adult education studies stored in the National Registry and Data Transfer Service for Study Rights and Completed Studies is primarily accessible only to the respective students through their MyStudyinfo service. Students may, by using the service and with their consent, share data on studies stored in the system with third parties, such as the educational institution, for the purposes of accreditation of prior learning, or with their employer. Students share information by creating a link to the MyStudyinfo service that they can send to whoever they choose. After activating the link, the recipient can see such information to which the student has granted access.

¹ <https://opintopolku.fi/wp/tietosuojaseloste/koski-palvelun-tietosuojaseloste/> (in Finnish and Swedish)

Data storage period

Upon receipt of a notification of the withdrawal of consent, the Finnish National Agency for Education examines it as follows: whether study attainment data have been used for the purposes of accreditation of prior learning, in which case it is not possible to fully erase the data; and if the study attainment data have not been further harnessed for such purposes, a process is initiated whereby the Finnish National Agency for Education deletes the data from the registry and informs the provider of the educational institution of the withdrawal of consent. In addition, the provider of the educational institution is also instructed on the measures to be taken to ensure that after consent has been withdrawn and the data have been deleted from the Koski data service, the educational information will no longer be transferred from the source system to the Koski data service. Even when the study attainment data are deleted from the national register, the consent must be retained and marked as withdrawn. Consent forms are stored permanently.

What is the National Registry and Data Transfer Service for Study Rights and Completed Studies (Koski)?

As joint controllers of the National Registry and Data Transfer Service for Study Rights and Completed Studies, the Finnish National Agency for Education and the providers of educational institutions for liberal adult education are responsible for storing the study attainments in non-formal liberal adult education. The Finnish National Agency for Education is responsible for maintaining the National Registry and Data Transfer Service for Study Rights and Completed Studies.

The purpose in storing studies in the National Registry and Data Transfer Service is to make the non-formal competence acquired in liberal adult education visible. Non-formal, non-qualification studies in liberal adult education provide students with a wide range of competence needed in working life and leisure activities. The Koski data repository helps in the identification and recognition of such competence. The information in the registry is available for access by the student through their MyStudyinfo service (<https://studyinfo.fi/oma-opintopolku/>).

Under the Act on National Registers of Education Records, Qualifications and Degrees, the providers of educational institutions as referred to in the Act on Liberal Adult Education shall store in the Koski data repository data on those study attainments that have been passed if the provider of the educational institution has decided to enable the storage of such information in the Koski data. Kokkolan kaupunki determines which education and courses and from when onwards it introduces the opportunity for data storage.

Data disclosure and students' opportunities to manage information

Information cannot be disclosed under the Act on National Registers of Education Records, Qualifications and Degrees, unless the students themselves do so. In the MyStudyinfo service, students can review their own educational information and send information to third parties if they wish to do so.

This is done in the MyStudyInfo service in such a way that the student creates in the MyStudyinfo service and sends the link to a selected person. By activating (clicking) the link, the recipient can see the educational information to which the student may select given study attainments from the data set in the Koski data repository and send the link to an educational institution or an employer, for example. The student can also deactivate the link in the service, which then affects the disclosure of the data. In practice, by removing the link the student ensures that the third party no longer has access to the information disclosed.

If students wish to make use of their study attainment data at another educational institution, they must personally ensure that the information is disclosed, as guidance counsellors do not automatically have the right to examine students' study attainment data stored in the Koski service. In addition, students can still request a separate certificate from the educational institution on the education completed in liberal adult education.

Students may also give their consent for the disclosure of information to a third party with whom the Finnish National Agency for Education has an agreement on the transfer of data. Under the Act on National Registers of Education Records, Qualifications and Degrees, if consent is not granted for disclosure, the information is available only to the student, the provider of the educational institution that stores the information and the Finnish National Agency for Education. However, in certain situations, the authorities

have the right to access information contained in the Koski service under other legislation. For example, under the Statistics Act (280/2004), Statistics Finland, and, under the Act on Student Financial Aid (65/1994), the Social Insurance Institution, have the right to access the same information in the Koski service that the provider of the educational institution could issue them.

In addition, service providers (processors of personal data) participating in maintaining and developing the Koski service have access to the personal data contained in the Koski service in information management tasks related to the duties of the controller of the Finnish National Agency for Education.

Retention period of personal data

The basic premise is that information on study attainments acquired in liberal adult education are stored permanently in the National Registry and Data Transfer Service for Study Rights and Completed Studies. However, by withdrawing their consent for whatever education at any given time, students may, if they wish, request that the data be deleted. The withdrawal of consent is made by notifying the Finnish National Board of Education of the withdrawal of consent through the MyStudyinfo service. If the study attainment has not been used for purposes such as the identification and recognition of competence in an educational institution or for jobseeking or receiving benefits, the Finnish National Agency for Education commences the withdrawal of consent process once it has received the measures for deleting the data. If the study attainment has already been used for any of the purposes mentioned above, it can no longer be deleted. However, the national learner ID and the identifying information on the basis of which the national learner ID was issued are always kept permanently. In addition, the Finnish National Agency for Education notifies the provider of the educational institution of the withdrawal of consent. The provider of the educational institution then records the information on the withdrawal.

Data subject rights

Students have the right to receive information on the processing of their personal data and to see the personal data stored in the National Registry and Data Transfer Service for Study Rights and Completed Studies (Data Protection Regulation, Article 15), the right to correct the data entered in the application (Article 16) and the restriction of the processing of personal data (Article 18). In addition, students have the right to object to the processing of data in accordance with Article 21 of the Data Protection Regulation and to withdraw their consent pursuant to Act on National Registers of Education Records, Qualifications and Degrees (884/2017) and possibly the right to delete data pursuant to Article 17 of the Data Protection Regulation. In addition, registered students have the right to lodge a complaint with the Data Protection Ombudsman. The same rights apply to the parents or custodians of students who are minors. Further instructions for the implementation of the rights can be found in the privacy policy, under the section 'Read more'.

Read more

- Information for data subjects: <https://www.kokkola.fi/en/city-of-kokkola/data-protection/>
- National Registry and Data Transfer Service for Study Rights and Completed Studies in the Finnish National Agency for Education's online service (in Finnish and Swedish): <https://www.oph.fi/fi/palvelut/koski-tietovaranto>