

Programme

Master's degrees

Health Care, Sports, and Social Services

YSOTES18

PROGRAMME

Master of Health Care

- Clinical Expert
- Social Services
- Management and Leadership in Health Care
- Health Promotion

Degree

Bachelor of Health Care (midwife, public health nurse, emergency nurse, nurse, socionom, physiotherapist, occupational therapist, dental hygienist, dental technician, X-ray nurse, bioanalyst, elderly care professional, rehabilitation counsellor), a higher education degree in medicine, social sciences, education, political sciences or health sciences, or an equivalent higher education degree completed outside Finland.

The applicant must also have gained at least three years of practical experience in the field after completing his or her degree. The university of applied sciences also recognises practical experience that the student has acquired in the field after the completion of a Finnish vocational diploma or higher vocational diploma in social and health care and prior to the higher education degree.

Extent of the study programme

90 credits, 2 years

Study objectives

A Master's degree from a university of applied sciences offers broad and easily transferable competence, which enables degree holders to work in various duties and operating environments, depending on their backgrounds. Students may also deepen their professional skills through advanced professional studies. The degree programme develops students' ability to engage in life-long learning and to continuously develop their professional competence.

The Master of Health Care encompasses several alternative degree programmes: *Clinical Expert, Social Services, Management and Leadership in Health Care, and Health Promotion*. A Master's degree in health care raises the quality of competence and provides the skills required for various supervisory and expert positions in the social and health care sector. The advanced professional studies provide competence for the development of working life and for demanding expert duties. The curriculum includes studies common to all the degree programmes, which support research and development skills. In addition to the common studies, each degree programme contains advanced professional studies, which form the core of the

degree. The general goal is to provide the competence needed in the changing operating environments of the social and health care sector. The curriculum has been drawn up with an eye on the major revamp taking place in the Finnish system of social and health services. The objective of the health, social services and regional government reform is to secure equal, customer-driven and high-quality social and health services in all of Finland. The reform aims to strengthen basic social and health services, support the narrowing of health differences and help control service costs. It will affect the work of social and health care professionals, the services of all citizens, funding, supervision, the digitalisation of public administration and services, as well as the related ICT operations. All the Master's degree programmes in social services and health care treat the reform as a continuing process from the perspective of their core competencies.

The objective of studies

The objective of studies leading to a Master's degree is to provide graduates with:

- 1) Broad and profound skills and the theoretical knowledge required to develop working life in demanding expert and managerial duties
- 2) A clear understanding of their profession, its social significance and position in the labour market, as well as the ability to follow and analyse developments in professional practices and research in the field
- 3) The ability to engage in life-long learning and the continuous development of their professional competence
- 4) Good communication and language skills for duties in their field and for international activities and cooperation

(Decree 1129, section 5/2014)

The curriculum work is based on, e.g. the basic mission of education as defined in the legislation on universities of applied sciences (Act on Universities of Applied Sciences 932/2014), the Decree on Universities of Applied Sciences (1129/2014), the Bologna declaration, the European Qualification Framework (EQF) (table 1), the 2007 competence classification produced in the ECTS project by ARENE ry (www.ncp.fi/ects), the 2015–2025 “Excellence in Action” strategy of Turku University of Applied Sciences, the results of the Ministry of Culture and Education's project focused on Master's degrees from universities of applied sciences and their role in RDI, as well as ideas for curriculum work gained from international cooperation networks. The curriculum is organised into study modules.

The advanced professional studies also include **studies common to all the degree programmes**. They are offered in the modules of *Research development activities* (10 cr) and *Development and communication* (10 cr).

The thesis, with a scope of 30 credits, is a project that develops working life practices and continues throughout the studies. The development project will be planned in cooperation with working life and carried out in the RDI projects of the university of applied sciences or as part of a development project linked to the strategy of the student's supporting organisation.

The elective studies (10 cr) enable students to deepen their expertise in line with their own study plan and as best suited to their needs.

Pedagogical foundation

From a pedagogical perspective, teaching is based on a socio-cultural learning concept and on innovation-boosting learning and development practices. Innovation refers to the building of competence based on the principle of continuous improvement. As for innovation pedagogy, Turku University of Applied Sciences believes that the idea of knowledge being produced and accumulated in the learning environment will challenge traditional concepts of knowledge. Expertise is described as competence based on high-quality insight, which grows and develops through continuous self-reflection. Knowledge is an object that learners use to build cognitive models. The importance of tacit knowledge and intuition becomes clear in professional activities. Knowledge is not imparted as such to students. Instead, students are considered to be goal-oriented and self-directed learners, as well as active processors of knowledge and actors producing new innovations. Students are encouraged to engage in active, critical thought, to deepen their field-specific competence and to systematically build their fundamental knowledge regarding development.

Teaching arrangements

Instruction consists of contact lessons and different forms of independent study. Contact teaching is offered on average once a month in periods of one to two days. It comprises, for example, individual study guidance for students and small groups, introductory lectures by experts and seminar work. Electronic communication is an important method in study counselling. Independent work as well as online study and counselling account for a major part of studies. Independent study can include getting acquainted with literature, research and articles, completing learning assignments, carrying out small-group work and participating in freely selected seminars and conferences. Part of the teaching is offered in English.

Students plan their studies based on their own learning process. Their competence and the results of their learning processes take on an important role in studies. Learning can take place in all kinds of situations, through formal and informal learning or at work. The scope of studies is based on the student-oriented European Credit Transfer System (ECTS). According to it, the scope is defined based on the average workload required to achieve the learning objectives, which is 1,600 hours/60 credits (cr) a year. One credit is equivalent to a workload of approximately 27 hours.

Students can complete elective studies or opt for studies offered jointly with the Satakunta University of Applied Sciences' Master's degree programme, as separately indicated.

Students of Turku University of Applied Sciences can apply for a fixed-term right to complete flexible studies offered by the University of Turku, Åbo Akademi University, Diaconia University of Applied Sciences, the Novia University of Applied Sciences and Humak University of Applied Sciences, which they can incorporate in their degrees.

Working-life cooperation

Close cooperation with working life throughout the studies helps students progress systematically towards their target. The operating and learning environment is broad, flexible and open. Students learn and build their knowledge while working in different operating environments. Research, development and innovation projects carried out with employers, as well as other working-life development projects, multiprofessional expert communities and digitalisation, enable student-centred study options in which students, the teaching staff, labour experts and the stakeholders of other organisations form extensive cooperation networks.

Situated activities, collaboration and development-oriented applied research form the foundation for a professionally relevant learning process. Students expand their expertise by critically evaluating questions posed by members of the learning community, concepts and theories they formulate, as well as the evidence-based knowledge they accumulate.

RDI projects serve as learning environments linking RDI activities, theses and other studies in a project learning environment. In addition to doubling as a teaching and study method, the thesis provides substance for studies and functions as a tool for developing work and the work community. Students are encouraged to link their studies to RDI projects carried out at Turku University of Applied Sciences as well as by their own supporting organisations or other cooperation partners.

Students as their own study planners (ISP)

Students draw up an individual study plan based on the studies described in the curriculum. During this dynamic process students select studies that meet their learning needs. The individual programme and plan take into account students' previous education, working-life experience, personal life situation and capability for self-directed learning. Students begin working on their individual study plan at the very beginning of studies. Tutor activities, peer tutoring and working-life mentoring support their learning process. Internationalisation, regional development and research, development and innovation competence are taken into account in supervision.

Structure of studies and study contents

The curriculum was drawn up to accommodate individual needs and study paths. The study process is flexible, enabling students to draw up a personal study plan based on their field of specialisation, work experience and career development expectations. The curriculum encompasses the alternative degree programmes leading to the Master of Health Care, which are: *Clinical Expert* (cancer treatment), *Social Services, Management and Leadership in Health Care* and *Health Promotion*. Students may also put together an individual study path by combining elements from different programmes.

The curriculum is structured so that all the degree programmes consist of core competences: *advanced professional studies and complementary studies: Research and Development Activity and Development and Communication, elective studies* and the *thesis* (Decree 1129, section 2/2014).

The advanced professional studies provide profound expert competence and teach the content and methodological skills that students need for their thesis.

The curriculum contains 30 credits of advanced professional studies (depicted as field-specific studies in the curriculum structure) for each programme: *Clinical Expert* (self-care and national diseases or radiography), *Social Services, Management and Leadership in Health Care* and *Health Promotion*. The degree programmes are built of 10-credit modules, which in turn are composed of 5-credit courses. The modules are:

Clinical Expert - SELF-CARE AND NATIONAL DISEASES

Module 1: Finnish National Diseases and Their Treatment

Module 2: Self-care and Patient Counselling

Module 3: An Expert as a Developer

Clinical Expert – radiography

Module 1: Developing Quality Management and Safety Culture

Module 2: Developing Radiographic Imaging, Treatments and Procedures in Clinical Radiography

Module 3: Developing Patient Care and Safety

Social Services

Module 1: Customership and changing well-being services

Module 2: Advanced expertise, social work or early childhood care and education

Module 3: Leadership in well-being services

Management and Leadership in Health Care

Module 1: Service management in the social welfare and health care sector

Module 2: Strategic management and finance

Module 3: Management in the social welfare and health care sector

Health Promotion

Module 1: Health promotion skills

Module 2: Health promotion practices and procedures

Module 3: Management and development of health promotion

Choosing a main subject or field of specialization, qualifications

The degree gives student the opportunity to apply for jobs that require a higher degree education of health care /social services.

Thesis

According to the Ministry of Education and Culture, universities of applied sciences have the mission of influencing regional development, which takes place through education but also through applied research, development and innovation (RDI) that serves education, promotes employment and regional development and renews the region's business structure. The goal is to form expert communities containing units that provide degree education and are capable of carrying out research and development work that benefits their region. To achieve this goal, education should focus on increasing collaboration between students and working life and developing connections between research and development activities and teaching. Work- and employer-related needs and competence requirements along with stronger research and development have guided the choice of study methods (see the Act on Universities of Applied Sciences, 14 Nov.

2014/932). RDI projects serve as learning environments linking RDI activities, theses and other studies in a project learning environment.

The thesis for the Master in Health Care is to be carried out in a project learning environment in accordance with the tripartite mentor model. Students are encouraged to participate in RDI projects carried out at Turku University of Applied Sciences or by their own supporting organisations or other cooperation partners. Students' development projects take the form of planned projects conducted in collaboration with working life and approached with appropriate applied research methods. The development projects aim to create a regional impact by developing working life practices and generating new innovations and new competence.

Evaluation and feedback

Learning assessment

The continuous assessment of studies leading to a Master's degree is of a guiding and developing nature. It targets the different stages of students' learning as well as the learning outcomes.

Assessment is based on the students' career and study plans and on the descriptions of professional growth. Skills assessment is based on the target descriptions in the curriculum. The choices regarding course content, pedagogical approaches and assessment methods help students achieve the objectives of education. Assessment focuses on the development of students' professional expertise. It also targets the learning process and learning outcomes related to the thesis development project. Overall assessment comprises the self-assessments of students and groups, peer assessments, feedback from employers and instructors' assessments. The teachers in charge of course provision decide on the assessment and approval criteria. The supervising teachers personally provide oral and/or written feedback for individual courses. The instructors are responsible for compiling and integrating assessment results.

For a course to be approved, the student must complete all the course components in accordance with the curriculum. The grades for approved studies are Excellent (5), Good (4–3) and Fair (2–1) or, if indicated in the implementation plan, Pass or Completed. Completed courses are registered in the Turku University of Applied Sciences student records.

Recognition refers to the student's right to have studies completed in Finnish or foreign higher education institutions or other educational institutions recognised in his or her degree. Recognition takes place either by replacing degree studies with studies completed elsewhere or by including studies completed elsewhere in the degree. Students also have the right to apply for the recognition of competence acquired elsewhere through a demonstration. Previously completed studies may be recognised in accordance with the degree regulations of Turku University of Applied Sciences. (Degree regulations of Turku University of Applied Sciences 16th of October 2017.) Students are responsible for providing proof of the scope and content of prior studies. Applications for recognition must be submitted via SoleOps. Decisions on the approval of applications are made by the degree programme leader.

Assessment of studies

Regularly collected feedback is used to develop studies. Assessment consists of feedback from students and working life, assessment of theses completed as work-related development projects and of the impact of development projects, benchmarking, as well as the degree programme's self-evaluation and analysis.

Students assess their learning and provide different types of feedback, either alone or in groups, on the planning and implementation of teaching regarding individual courses, semesters and, towards the end of their studies, the entire degree programme. The collected feedback is used to develop studies.

Internationalization

Students have the opportunity to complete part of their studies outside Finland at higher education institutions with which Turku University of Applied Sciences has signed a cooperation agreement. International studies can be included in the degree completed in Finland without extending the duration of studies, as separately agreed upon. Studies completed abroad will be recognised in full in your degree. The regional focal points of studies leading to a Master in Health Care have been defined in line with the internationalisation strategy of Turku University of Applied Sciences.

Students can also engage in internationalisation by participating in intensive events organised by international networks, as well as in international conferences, projects and internationalisation at home. Our international week, organised twice a year, is just one of the different options for internationalisation at home.

Career opportunities

The Master's degree programme in health care provides the competence to work in expert, supervisory and managerial positions or handle research and development duties at companies, in the public and third sectors or in other organisations. The majority of graduates have found employment in supervisory and development positions in social and health care organisations.

Possible jobtitles after graduation

The Master's degree programme in health care awards you a Master's degree. Among other things, you may work in expert or supervisory duties or as a project manager or development manager.

Postgraduate study opportunities

A Master's degree from a university of applied sciences provides the same formal qualifications for further education as a Master's degree completed at a university. "Eligible for studies leading to an academic or artistic postgraduate degree shall be a person who has completed [...] an applicable higher polytechnic degree (Universities Act, 24 July 2009/558, section 37).

The degree qualifies you to apply for vocational teacher education.

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