



The Union for University Teachers and Researchers in Finland (YLL)

Letter from the Chair 1/2017

10 March 2017

Dear YLL member,

In this letter, you will find information about changing your work plan during the academic year, the evaluation of personal performance for spring 2017, the effects of sick leave on your occupational duties as well as higher education politics: increasing teaching co-operation between establishments of higher education and making use of the Finnish Matriculation Examination in student selections for higher education. Towards the end of the letter, there is also information regarding the agreements discontinued by the Confederation of Finnish Industries and member benefits.

Changing your work plan during the academic year

At many workplaces, it has been necessary to adjust work plans during the academic year. Organisational changes, dismissals and the use of substitutes have resulted in situations that were not planned when the work plans were completed before the academic year began.

The work plan helps to allocate the 1,600 annual working hours (in future 1,624) between occupational duties. The annual working hours will be reached when tasks in the work plan are completed. If necessary, the work plan can be changed during the academic year. If new tasks or occupational obligations are assigned to employees, a corresponding amount of old tasks or obligations should be removed from the work plan. If this is not the case, the employee will be responsible for the new tasks without salary.

The following compensations can be paid to the employee for work that is not included in the work plan. The employee's annual salary is divided by 1,600. The result is multiplied by the number of hours allocated for the task.

Example: annual salary EUR 40,870 is divided by 1,600 = EUR 25.54. Additional work covering 23 hours is agreed upon (including, for instance, 6 hours of teaching and 17 hours of preparations and practical supervision for the teaching). EUR 25.54 multiplied by 23 = EUR 587.42.

However, the work exceeding the 1,600 working hours (in future 1,624) also requires the employee's consent. When agreeing on teaching not included in the work plan, the divisor of the annual salary will be 1,600 also in the future, not 1,624.

Evaluation of personal performance

In spring 2017, the evaluations of personal performance will be carried out as stated in the collective agreement. We recommend having the evaluation discussion regarding your work performance separately from your development discussion even though



The Union for University Teachers and Researchers in Finland (YLL)

they would be discussed during the same meeting. The personal performance discussion will be documented in an electronic system used in the university.

The evaluation of personal performance applies to the tasks the employer has assigned to the employee by recording them in the work plan. Not increasing the employee's performance level cannot be justified by the employee not having certain tasks.

The evaluation criteria can be found from the collective agreement's appendices 3–4. You can find a link to the collective agreement from the website www.yll.fi/en under the section 'About employment'.

Uncompleted tasks and work during sick leave

In some places, employees have been obligated to complete tasks and occupational obligations that were left unfinished because of the employee's sick leave. Sick leave is time comparable to working time, which means no unfinished tasks or work that wasn't done (e.g. teaching that couldn't be arranged) should be compensated outside of regular working hours or in addition to normal tasks.

When returning from sick leave, the work plan can be changed, if necessary. With regular working hours, employees continue working within working hours. The employer is responsible for organising a substitute as well as for deciding not to get one.

Using common sense is allowed. For instance, if lessons are missed, it may be justified to adjust the content of the lessons that are left.

Increasing teaching co-operation between establishments of higher education

As of 1 August 2016, establishments of higher education have had the opportunity to acquire the teaching of language and communications studies from another establishment of higher education (university or university of applied sciences). Since then, the Ministry of Education and Culture has prepared draft legislation that would make it possible to outsource also other teaching. An establishment of higher education wouldn't be required to organise all mandatory studies of a degree themselves as they could buy some of the teaching from another establishment. However, the establishment granting the degree should provide more than half of the studies pertaining to the degree.

The draft legislation has some limitations on outsourcing teaching. Teaching could only be acquired when the learning objectives of the studies are similar in the establishment providing the education and the establishment acquiring it. The establishment providing education to other establishments must also provide the same teaching for their own students. The definitions for whether the learning objectives are the same would be assessed by the establishments of higher education. The establishment acquiring education would still be responsible for the content and



The Union for University Teachers and Researchers in Finland (YLL)

quality of the education included in its degrees.

According to the official view, the purpose is to expand teaching co-operation and thus improve the quality of teaching and cost-efficiency. Personnel organisations are very skeptical about the draft, especially as no assessments on the effects on degree quality or personnel have been made. These will obviously be required. So far, the Ministry of Education and Culture does not see that the reform includes any threats. The ministry's starting point is that after the legislation becomes effective, education is organised in an establishment that is best in the given subject.

The draft legislation has not been sent out for consultation yet, and nothing can be said of its becoming effective.

The unions have raised the following critical issues. What kind of competence would the proposed co-operation create? Doesn't the reform include a threat that the learning outcomes of universities and universities of applied sciences will become uniform? The threat that savings are sought at the expense of learning outcomes is real. If the establishment chooses the place where the student will study for him or her, doesn't the reform in fact decrease students' freedom of choice? What effects will the possible outsourcing have on university and university of applied sciences personnel? Could developing the identification and recognition of prior achieve reach similar or the same synergy benefits without the risks?

Making use of the Finnish Matriculation Exam in the student selections of establishments of higher education

Both OAJ and YLL have given their statements on the Ministry of Education and Culture's report that proposes using the Finnish Matriculation Exam more extensively in the student selections of establishments of higher education. The Matriculation Examinations will, however, be used in a more extensive manner, but our statements have included perspectives that the unions feel should be taken into consideration. Here are some points made in the statements.

Improving the motivation of upper secondary school students and a smooth transition to higher education studies are things we support. Entrance exams in their current form take up both the establishments' and applicants' resources.

On the other hand, it's easy to get carried away with the other extreme in the reform. Even with current regulations and legislation, it's possible to get a study place with grades from upper secondary school. Taking the Matriculation Exam as the only criteria in the application process presents new kinds of issues. Upper secondary school should have functions other than just serving as an entrance exam to higher education. Also, choices made at the start of upper secondary school would affect access to higher education; how many have made their minds up on future careers when starting upper secondary school? Weak success in school shouldn't close the doors to higher education establishments for good. It must be possible to apply to higher education from working life without having to improve the grades you once got in your matriculation exam. This means we also need another application channel.



The Union for University Teachers and Researchers in Finland (YLL)

Preparation courses for entrance exams are said to increase inequality, and for a reason. Inequality also affects studying at upper secondary school and taking the matriculation exam, only with different emphases. For instance, the difference between municipalities in schools and course selections can be immense.

Where entrance exams are needed to evaluate skills, suitability and industry-related motivation, entrance exams should be developed, lightened and standardised so that the applicant can apply to several locations through one exam. The YLL and OAJ statements emphasise evaluating the effects on equality and applicants' parity.

You can read the entire YLL statement in Finnish from YLL's website under the section's 'Edunvalvonta' subsection YLL:n lausunnot. You can find the OAJ statement in Finnish at <http://www.oaj.fi/cs/oaj/Lausunnot> > helmikuu. (YLL always influences OAJ's statements regarding the university sector and always presents YLL's opinion on matters. We do not always write a paper of our own.)

Agreements discontinued by the Confederation of Finnish Industries

The Confederation of Finnish Industries has discontinued agreements with labour market central organisations. The discontinuation is related to the confederation's withdrawal from centralised settlement. JUKO is responsible for negotiating corresponding agreements for its members with the union representing the employer, The Association of Finnish Independent Education Employers AFIEE (Sivistystyönantajat). JUKO represents all YLL members, among others.

OAJ member benefit: discount on the Museum Card

The Museum Card is a joint ticket to Finnish museums that grants access to more than 240 museum destinations all over Finland. The price of the card is EUR 64.90.

OAJ has agreed upon a campaign benefit on the Museum Card for its members. OAJ members get an additional month when buying a new Museum Card, which means the card is valid for 13 months from the first use. The member website includes a campaign code that is valid until 30 April 2017. You can collect it at <http://www.oaj.fi/cs/oaj/MuutOAJEdut> (requires logging in).

You can find all OAJ member benefits in Finnish from www.oaj.fi > **jäsenyy**s > **jäsenedut**.

You can find all YLL member benefits from www.yll.fi/en > **Membership** > **Membership Benefits**.

Enjoy the rest of the spring term!

Seppo Sainio

Chair

Tel. +358 40 86 55 479