

Legislation: Act on Vocational Education and Training 531/2017

Finland

DESCRIPTION

Finnish legislation promotes peaceful conflict resolution, respect for diversity, openness to expressing and to listening to different opinions, commitment to decisions being made by majorities, protection of minorities and their rights, and to respect cultural differences. The **Act on Vocational Education and Training reformed in 2018 in Finland** defines VET's goal to support students grow into respectful educated individuals and members of society, provide them with the knowledge and skills required for engaging in further studies, occupational development, and leisure activities as well as to further their versatile personal development.

According to the law, students have the **right to a safe learning environment**. VET providers are required to develop a plan outlining the application of disciplinary measures and related procedures. They must also establish rules or issue regulations to ensure **internal order, unhindered progress in studies and a safe and supporting learning environment**. Teachers and principals must address any incidents of harassment, bullying, discrimination, or violence that has occurred in the learning environment or school-related activities. The law also requires that students must refrain from bullying or discriminating against others, and act in such a way that they do not endanger the safety or health of fellow students, the educational institution community, or the study environment.

The VET providers shall establish a **student association** consisting of students from the educational institution. Multiple institutions under the same VET provider may also have a **shared student association**. The mission of the student associations is to foster student cooperation, enhance opportunities for participation and influence, and strengthen collaboration between students and the VET provider. In addition to supporting student associations, VET providers must also ensure that students have other meaningful opportunities to participate and have their voices heard.