Welcome to study languages at the University of Helsinki Language Centre!

The world of work requires experts with good language skills. At the Language Centre you can attain good and varied language proficiency in a flexible manner. In addition to studies in a foreign language and Swedish or Finnish as the second national language, as well as studies in Swedish or Finnish as a native language studies included in your degree, it is worthwhile to take advantage of what else the Language Centre has to offer.

It is recommended that you plan your language studies early on in your studies. Learning a totally new language should be started immediately during your first year, so that you will have time to attain a level of proficiency that supports your studies, the world of work and internationalisation.

Communication and language studies included in a bachelor’s degree

1. Studies in the second national language (Swedish/Finnish), 3 cr
2. Studies in one foreign language (e.g., English, Spanish, Italian, French, German or Russian), 4 cr
3. Communication skills in the native language (Finnish/Swedish), at minimum 3 cr.

Some degree programmes may include studies in a second foreign language.

The aim of language studies is to provide you with a sufficient communications and language proficiency for positions in your field as well as international activities and cooperation. Studies can be completed with a course or exemption examination. Courses in English, Swedish and native language are organised on each campus. Courses in other languages are organised, as a rule, in the City Centre Campus.

The CEFR starting skill levels for foreign languages are: English B2, other languages B1. The recommended timing of foreign language studies varies according to degree programme. If you choose Spanish, Italian, French, German or Russian as your foreign language, please contact the teachers in the languages immediately in the early stages of your studies to plan your language studies: Mirjami Matilainen (Spanish, French), Tia Patenge (German, Russian), Leena-Maija Åberg-Reinke (Italian).

Students pursuing a master’s degree must complete studies in the second national language and a foreign language if these are not included in a prior degree.

How do I register?
Registration is compulsory for all Language Centre examinations and courses. Information related to the language examinations and instruction for the academic year 2020–2021 is available in the Language Centre’s electronic course catalogues in WebOodi. You need a user account for the University of Helsinki to register. Instructions for getting a user account are available on the Instructions for Students website.

Registration for language courses and examinations:

1st period: 17–23 August 2020
2nd period: 12–18 October 2020
3rd period: 4–10 January 2021
4th period: 15-21 February 2021
Intensive period: will be announced later

Don’t worry, if you have no time to register for a course in the first teaching period, since new courses begin in all periods. If you cannot attend a course for which you have registered, please
remember to cancel your registration so that as many students as possible can attend the course.

Teacher tutor provides advice
Teacher tutors will provide you with answers to your possible questions related to language studies. Teacher tutors are Language Centre teachers and they also provide supervision for studying certain courses independently. You may also study languages online. Online material for language studies and language links are available on the Instructions for Students website.

Learning a language together with international students
International students support you in learning a language in Language Centre courses. They work as Language Centre course assistants, i.e., provide peer support, in their native language and help, for example, in pronunciation, discussions and groupwork. Course assistants are available for almost all teaching languages of the Language Centre. The activities provide local students with an opportunity to internationalise at home and international students with an opportunity to get to know Finnish students. Course assistants also run the Language Centre’s Asian Language Clubs (Chinese, Japanese and Korean). The clubs are a way to maintain and develop language skills in a relaxed atmosphere. These informal clubs provide an opportunity to meet new people. Clubs convene at the Language Centre or other spaces during teaching periods. Big multilingual workshops are also organised at the Language Centre, which discuss cultural issues from a variety of perspectives. Two workshops will be organised every academic year.

More information
You can learn more about registration, recognition of prior learning, teacher tutor activities and other issues related to language studies as well as other Language Centre activities by asking from Student Services, reading the Instructions for Students or sending email to kielikeskus-neuvonta@helsinki.fi.

Welcome to the Language Centre!
See also: Language Centre’s summer orientation!