

LAB University of Applied Sciences SORA guidelines

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

PURPOSE OF SORA GUIDELINES.....	3
REVOCATION AND REINSTATEMENT OF A RIGHT TO STUDY IN HEALTH CARE AND SOCIAL SERVICES UNDER SORA LEGISLATION.....	3
LAB’S SORA COMMITTEE	4
PROTOCOL IN STUDENT ADMISSION SITUATIONS UNDER SECTION 26 OF THE UNIVERSITIES OF APPLIED SCIENCES ACT (932/2014).....	4
REVIEWS AND APPEALS RELATED TO STUDENT ADMISSION	5
INITIATING AND CARRYING OUT A SORA PROCESS.....	6
LAB’S SORA PROCESS FOR STUDENTS	7
REQUEST FOR REVIEW OF REVOCATION OF RIGHT TO STUDY	7
RIGHT TO OBTAIN INFORMATION / UNIVERSITIES OF APPLIED SCIENCES ACT, SECTION 65.....	9
PRESENTING A CRIMINAL RECORDS EXTRACT AT LAB.....	10
REFERENCES	11
ANNEX PROCESSING SENSITIVE STUDENT DATA AT THE LAB UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES	12

Purpose of SORA guidelines

These guidelines are based on so-called SORA legislation that has entered into force on 1 January 2012, and they aim to provide solutions to unsuitability for studies. The guidelines apply to all students of and applicants to health care and social services studies at the LAB University of Applied Sciences.

SORA provisions apply to the following degrees at the LAB University of Applied Sciences:

- Bachelor and Master of Health Care
- Bachelor and Master of Social Services

SORA refers to certain legislation concerning student admission and the revocation or reinstatement of a right to study.

The statutes and regulations that apply to these guidelines are the following:

- Universities of Applied Sciences Act (932/2014)
- Government decree on universities of applied sciences (1129/2014)
- Act on a student legal protection board (956/2011)
- Act on the amendment of section 6 of the Criminal Records Act 955/2011

SORA legislation increases the possibility of higher education institutions and education providers to intervene in situations involving unsuitability and safety. The particular aim is to improve safety in studies and at work, the legal protection of individual students, patient and customer safety, road safety and the safety of minors.

More information: https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/70341/URN_ISBN_978-952-00-3562-4.pdf

Drug testing

Provisions related to drug testing apply to all students in vocational and higher education. The education provider is responsible for the costs of testing.

More information: <https://thl.fi/fi/web/lapset-nuoret-ja-perheet/sote-palvelut/opiskeluholto/opiskeluterveydenhuolto/sora-saadokset>

Revocation and reinstatement of a right to study in health care and social services under SORA legislation

A university of applied sciences may revoke health care or social services students' right to study when students by endangering the health or safety of others prove unsuitable to perform practical tasks or work placements related to the studies. Revocation may also be justified if the student during application has withheld information on previous revocation decisions or if the student has been sentenced for crimes that prevent working with minors or it is obvious that the student's health or functional capacity do not meet admission requirements.

The board of the LAB University of Applied Sciences decides on the revocation or reinstatement of a right to study. Before a revocation decision, the board must receive a report on the matter and reserve the student a right to be heard in the matter. The university of applied sciences must, together with the student, find out whether the student could apply or transfer to other training.

The university of applied sciences is obliged to inform the National Supervisory Authority for Welfare and Health Valvira of revocations of rights to study and grounds for them within its purview.

A revoked right to study may be reinstated if the right has been revoked based on a matter related to health or functional capacity and the applicant proves the reason for the revocation no longer exists.

LAB's SORA committee

The LAB University of Applied Sciences prepares and handles applicant and student matters related to SORA legislation in a SORA committee appointed by LAB's president. The committee consists of the director of the health care unit, the degree manager in charge of the programme in question, the service manager of admission services, and the guidance counsellor of the health care unit. The secretary of committee is head of student services.

The SORA committee may at any time request additional reports and statements and further specifications to them. The SORA committee makes proposals concerning student admissions to the vice president for education, who decides on student admissions. The SORA committee makes proposals concerning admitted students to the president. Decisions to revoke a student's right to study are made by the board of the LAB University of Applied Sciences based on the president's proposal.

Protocol in student admission situations under section 26 of the Universities of Applied Sciences Act (932/2014)

SORA legislation applies to education leading to a university of applied sciences Bachelor's degree in health care and social services. The field involves requirements concerning the safety of minors, patients and customers, which restrict student admissions. Admitted students must have the health and functional capacity enabling them to carry out practical assignments and work placements related to the studies.

Factors related to the health and functional capacity of an applicant may not preclude admission if the impediment can be removed with reasonable measures, such as special arrangements. The aim is not to set unnecessary obstacles to the admission of applicants with disabilities or physical, psychological or social limitations. Admission may only be restricted if it is clear that an applicant cannot take part in education because of issues related to health or functional capacity. The severity of the impediment and care received by the applicant will be taken into account in assessing the applicant's suitability for the degree programme in question.

For example, the following may preclude admission:

- difficult dermatitis and/or allergy to e.g. pharmaceutical substances or detergents
- severe sensory disability that impairs functional capacity
- mental illness or serious mental disorder
- substance/drug addiction or substance abuse over the past two years
- limited social functioning that makes interactions with people difficult

- long-term illness or physical disability that limits the possibility to take part in studies.

The application form asks applicants the following:

- Has your right to study previously been revoked because of your health or for endangering the health or safety of others?
- Could any aspects of your health or functional capacity pose obstacles to the studies to which you are applying?

If an applicant responds "yes" to either or both of the questions and is admitted to studies, the right to study is conditional. If a student responds "no" to the questions but the university of applied sciences has otherwise found out that there is reason to initiate a SORA process, the applicant must give a further account on the matter if the university of applied sciences so requests.

If the university of applied sciences so requests, applicants must provide information on their health relevant to admission and on previous decisions to revoke their right to study. If the applicant has responded yes to the questions in the application form, the LAB University of Applied Sciences may at any time request the above-mentioned information. If the possible need to initiate a SORA process has come out otherwise, LAB's SORA committee will decide whether to request further information.

The university of applied sciences evaluates the information on the applicant's health and functional capacity required for admission. Based on the statements it has received, the SORA committee makes a proposal to the vice president for education, who decides on the student's admission. The SORA committee may request further details if necessary. The related documents will be kept secret.

The right to study will remain conditional until the university of applied sciences has processed and evaluated the information on the applicant's health and functional capacity required for admission and the vice president has made a decision on the matter.

The university of applied sciences may revoke an applicant's right to study

- if the applicant does not submit the required certificates within the timeframe given by the university of applied sciences
- if the applicant has provided false information
- if it is obvious that the student does not fulfil the admission requirements concerning health or functional capacity (Universities of Applied Sciences Act 932/2014)
- if the student has withheld information on a previous revocation of a right to study (Universities of Applied Sciences Act 932/2014).

Reviews and appeals related to student admission

Students dissatisfied with an admission decision may request a review in writing from the president of the LAB University of Applied Sciences within 14 days of the release of the admission results. When the results are released, applicants must be provided information on how the admission criteria were applied to them and how to request a review.

Decisions on the review request may be appealed in accordance with the Administrative Judicial Procedure Act (808/2019) by bringing the matter before the Administrative Court of Eastern Finland. No appeals may be made against the administrative court ruling.

Initiating and carrying out a SORA process

The university of applied sciences may order a student of health care and social services to undergo a health examination if there is reason to suspect the student has an issue related to health or functional capacity that constitutes grounds to revoke the student's right to study.

If a student's health or functional capacity raises concerns, if a student becomes seriously ill during studies, or if health issues that compromise a student's ability to study occur, the student must be guided towards relevant services, such as student health care, to evaluate the student's ability to study and to arrange necessary support.

Health care professionals decide what medical examinations and tests they consider necessary to evaluate the student's health and functional capacity. The examinations assess whether the student fulfils the health requirements for the degree in question. The university of applied sciences covers all costs related to the examinations.

The university of applied sciences has a right to access the medical statement evaluating whether the student's health and functional capacity meet the requirements to continue studies. The medical statement is requested with a referral that explains why the statement is requested and what support measures have already been taken. The referral is attachment 10 entitled *Opintojen aikana tehtävän terveydentila- ja toimintakykyarvion taustatietolomake* in the handbook *SORA-lainsäädännön toimeenpano terveydenhuollossa*.

If a student's capacity to study requires a medical examination by a specialist, student health care may refer the student to specialised health care or care in the private sector. Also other health care professionals (physical therapist, occupational therapist, psychologist) may be needed to assess the student's capacity to study.

Student health care records the statement on a T form, page 2 of which it will forward to the university of applied sciences. The statement indicates whether the student is suitable, suitable with certain limitations, or unsuitable to continue the degree studies. If the physician considers the student suitable with certain limitations, the statement must specify the prerequisites for continuing the studies.

If the student refuses a health and functional capacity examination, the university of applied sciences may suspend the student from the school until the student agrees to the examination. The revocation of a right to study is always the decision of the university of applied sciences board.

Valvira must be informed of impending processes concerning the revocations of rights to study in health care and social services programmes and decisions to revoke rights to study. Valvira recommends that information on the initiation of SORA processes be provided to them in connection with student health meetings. More information:

https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/70341/URN_ISBN_978-952-00-3562-4.pdf

LAB'S SORA process for students

- A student's health, prolonged studies, conduct or changes in functional capacity or suitability for studies starts to raise serious concerns. The initiative for a student health meeting may come from, for example, the student, an instructor, a degree manager, a student health care employee, a student counselling psychologist, or a pedagogical expert.
- When the educational institution requests the assessment of a student's suitability for studies based on SORA legislation, the assessment includes one to two student health meetings at the Finnish Student Health Service (FSHS). The first meeting takes place when the educational institution is considering requiring a medical statement to determine whether the student fulfils the health requirements of the field of study in question. The second meeting is held when the assessment is concluded.
- Before a student health meeting, the student has a chance to discuss what is hindering the progress of studies or what has impaired the student's functional capacity. In addition to the student, a teacher tutor, a guidance counsellor, the degree manager of the student's field of study, a study counselling psychologist, or a pedagogical expert may take part in the meeting.
- The student's health status is determined at an appointment at the FSHS. The guidance counsellor instructs the student to make an appointment with the FSHS. A nurse will contact the student and set an appointment with a nurse and/or physician.
- Before the student health meeting, the student and FSHS representatives agree on which health issues will be discussed in the meeting.
- The FSHS calls together a student health meeting as needed and assesses who to invite. The health and functional capacity requirements of the health care and social services field and a link to the FSHS guide "Student health meetings in institutions of higher education" are attached to the student's invitation to the student health meeting.
- The FSHS informs the student of the right to invite a support person to the meeting (e.g., a care provider, a friend or family member, or a representative of the student union KOE). The aim of the meeting is to address the concerns regarding the student's health and functional capacity and related events and to assess the need for a possible SORA process.
- The student health meeting is chaired by an FSHS physician. Minutes are taken by an FSHS nurse or psychiatric nurse. The aim is to encourage dialogue. The student's point of view will be heard. The chair will make a proposal based on which further measures and a schedule are agreed.
- The meeting will outline whether a SORA committee's process needs to be initiated. If a committee's process is not considered necessary, the student will be invited to a study guidance session with the teacher tutor and guidance counsellor. Together, they will review the student's personal study plan.

- If the student health meeting comes to the conclusion that a committee's process is needed, the meeting outlines whether the student will be suspended for the duration of the process or whether the student can, for example, continue theory studies.
- The FSHS representatives advise the student on which services to seek.
- If the student health meeting decides to initiate a process, the guidance counsellor informs LAB's SORA committee and Valvira of the matter.
- The minutes of the meeting are circulated to all participants of the meeting.
- LAB prepares an official referral to a certified health care professional's examination and tests (Ministry of Social Affairs and Health handbook: SORA-lainsäädännön toimeenpano terveydenhuollossa, attachment form 10: Opintojen aikana tehtävän terveydentila- ja toimintakykyarvion taustatietolomake). The referral is signed by LAB's president.
- When the student has received a medical statement, the student submits it to the degree manager of the field of study in question.
- If the student does not submit the medical statement to the degree manager despite requests, the FSHS has, under the Universities of Applied Sciences Act, section 34, the right to forward the statement directly to LAB. The student will be given the opportunity to submit the statement by a given date, after which the FSHS will send the statement directly to the degree manager of the programme in question.
- A second student health meeting is held after the assessment if necessary.
- The degree manager informs the secretary of the SORA committee about the statement, who then calls the committee to a meeting.
- The SORA committee decides whether to propose the revocation of the student's right to study to the LAB president. The student must be given the opportunity to make a written statement on the matter if the SORA committee is considering proposing the revocation of the student's right to study.
- LAB must, together with the student, explore possibilities for the student to apply or transfer to other training before making a revocation proposal to the president.
- The president may decide not to propose the revocation of the student's right to study to LAB's board. LAB's board decides on the revocation of rights to study if the rector proposes revocation.

Request for review of revocation of right to study

The national student legal protection board is the review authority of the first instance in matters related to the revocation or reinstatement of a right to study.

The aim is to ensure the establishment of unified application practices.

Issues related to the application of law are resolved based on presentations in the legal protection board's sessions, and the board's administrative issues are handled by the Ministry of Education and Culture.

Provisions on the composition of the legal protection board are issued in an act. The board consists of a chair, a vice chair and members, and the positions are all secondary occupations. The board is composed so as to ensure the representation of medical, legal and educational expertise and teacher and student representation. Revocations and reinstatements of rights to study are reviewed urgently.

Requests for reviews of decisions regarding the revocation or reinstatement of a study right may be made to the national student legal protection board within 14 days of the receipt of the decision.

Appeals regarding decisions of the legal protection board may be brought before the Helsinki Administrative Court. A revocation decision may be enforced despite an appeal if the national student legal protection board or an administrative court do not forbid the enforcement.

More information: <https://minedu.fi/opiskelijoiden-oikeusturvalautakunta>

Right to obtain information / Universities of Applied Sciences Act, section 65

In carrying out its duties, the university of applied sciences has the right to obtain statistical and other similar data necessary for the planning and provision of education from central government authorities and local authorities.

Upon request, the university of applied sciences shall furnish data required for the evaluation, development, statistics and monitoring of education as specified by the Ministry of Education and Culture.

Notwithstanding secrecy provisions, such information on a student's state of health and functional capacity as is necessary for the execution of duties may be supplied by the holder of this information to

- 1) the president of a university of applied sciences and those responsible for the security of the university of applied sciences for the purpose of ensuring the safety to pursue studies;
- 2) a person responsible for study guidance for the purpose of guiding the student to other studies or student support services;
- 3) a person responsible for student health care for the purpose of ensuring the student's health and safety and to guide the student to support services where necessary;
- 4) a person responsible for practical training for the purpose of ensuring the safety of the student and the safety of staff and customers at the place of training; and
- 5) the police and a representative of the university of applied sciences who is primarily responsible for investigating threats to security for the purpose of assessing if there is an imminent threat to safety or if, in a health assessment, the student's state of health is deemed to pose a danger to the safety of others.

Notwithstanding secrecy provisions, those responsible for executing the duties in the Universities of Applied Sciences Act have the right to inform the police of essential details for the purpose of assessing an immediate threat to life or health and to prevent a threatening act if they, in performing their duties, have obtained information about circumstances that leads them to believe that someone may be in danger of becoming the target of violence. (279/2015)

Criminal records extract for LAB health care work placements

If LAB students' work placements in educational institutions, places of employment or other learning environments essentially involve working with minors, the university of applied sciences should, before the placements start, verify that students have no criminal history referred to in SORA legislation. This refers to offences against children, sex offences, violent offences, offences against personal liberty, and narcotics offences under the Criminal Code. Students present a criminal records extract for the review of their criminal history.

If the student's practical work in an educational institution, place of employment or other learning environment essentially involve working with minors, the university of applied sciences may revoke a student's right to study if

- it is necessary to protect minors
- the student has been sentenced for an offence against children, a sex offence, a violent offence, an offence against personal liberty, or a narcotics offence.

Students who refuse to present a criminal records extract may be suspended until they agree to present one.

More information: <https://www.oph.fi/fi/koulutus-ja-tutkinnot/sora-ratkaisuja-soveltumattomuuteen>

Presenting a criminal records extract at LAB

LAB asks health care and social services students to present a criminal records extract before work placements that involve working with minors. A criminal records extract is also requested when the work placement takes place in the context of an employment relationship. The obligation to present a criminal records extract is based on the Act on Checking the Criminal Background of Persons Working with Children (504/2002) and the Criminal Records Act (770/1993).

Under the Criminal Records Act, section 6, students have the right to receive a criminal records extract referred to in subsection 2 to undertake study-related tasks that essentially involve working with minors in educational institutions, places of employment or other learning environments or work placement and where the extract must on request be presented to the education provider or higher education institution under the Act on Vocational Education and Training (531/2017), the Universities of Applied Sciences Act (932/2014) or the Universities Act (558/2009). The extract is free of charge. (555/2017)

Health care and social services students are advised to present their criminal records extract to the development manager at least four weeks before their work placement. At the beginning of each semester, students are given the dates and times when extracts are reviewed. Students choose the date on which they prefer to present their extract to the development manager.

Meeting in person: The guidance counsellor returns the extract to the student immediately after reviewing it.

Remote meeting: When the remote meeting starts, the guidance counsellor gives each participating student their own time to connect. Before reviewing the extract, the guidance counsellor makes sure no other participants are online. The student briefly shows the extract to the camera.

The following data from the extract is recorded in the Peppi information system: date of issue and expiration date (six months). Other data is not collected. The student must present an identification document in the review meeting in person or remotely. The criminal records extract remains in force for six months.

If the criminal records extract contains entries that may prevent working with minors in work placement, the matter is handled individually.

Criminal records extracts of students leaving for international exchange:

Students present their criminal records extract directly to their international work placement location or educational institution if the destination country so requires. Criminal records extracts for international exchange are subject to a fee.

Data protection

Personal data is processed in a way that does not compromise students' privacy. Personal data may only be handled by those who need to do so because of their professional duties. Only those with user IDs for the system have access to the data. User IDs are personal, and their user rights have been defined based on the person's professional duties. Printed documents are stored and protected to prevent unauthorised persons from accessing them. Personal data processing software is protected in accordance with the university of applied sciences' information security policies.

References

Opiskelijoiden oikeusturvalautakunta. Ministry of Education and Culture.

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<https://www.oph.fi/fi/koulutus-ja-tutkinnot/sora-ratkaisuja-soveltumattomuuteen>

Student health meetings in institutions of higher education. A guide for students, higher education institutions and student healthcare. 2021. Finnish Student Health Service (FSHS).

ANNEX Processing sensitive student data at the LAB University of Applied Sciences

Approved by the president on 6 December 2025

In accordance with the Universities of Applied Sciences Act (932/2014), section 40, information relating to an applicant's and a student's state of health, referred to in sections 27 and 34–36, may be processed only by those who prepare or make decisions on admission, the revocation or reinstatement of the right to study, or disciplinary actions or by those who issue statements on these matters.

Information on a student's criminal records extract about matters referred to in section 33, subsection 2, may be handled only by those who prepare or make decisions on the revocation of the right to study. Universities of applied sciences shall specify the tasks which involve the handling of sensitive information.

At LAB, sensitive data may in all cases be handled by the president, vice president for education, legal counsels, director of Student Services, and head of student counselling services.

Matters involving SORA legislation are handled and prepared by LAB's SORA committee, which consists of the director of the health care unit, the degree manager concerned, the head of admissions services and the guidance counsellor.

The persons mentioned in the table below and the SORA committee have the right to process sensitive student data. In addition, the administrator of the document management system has the right to process sensitive data.

Document	Processing right
Decisions on disciplinary measures	LAB's board, president, vice president for education, legal counsels, unit director, degree manager, teacher, director of Student Services, head of student counselling services, guidance counsellor, Student Services staff, persons in charge of security
Student health data	LAB's board, president, vice president for education, legal counsels, unit director, degree manager, teacher, director of Student Services, head of student counselling services, guidance counsellor, Student Services staff, study counselling psychologists, persons in charge of security, work placement supervisor, Finnish Student Health Service
Drug testing data	LAB's board, president, vice president for education, legal counsels, unit director, degree manager, teacher, director of Student Services, head of student counselling services, guidance counsellor, Student Services staff, persons in charge of

	security, work placement supervisor, Finnish Student Health Service
Criminal records extract	A criminal records extract is shown to the person to whose job duties it relates. The following have a right to access the data: LAB's board, president, vice president for education, LUT Group legal counsels, unit director, degree manager, director of Student Services, head of student counselling services, guidance counsellor, coordinator, study secretary and persons in charge of security