

## **Operating model: consequences of a student's inappropriate behavior**

This guide complements the previous guidelines of the University of Eastern Finland, which include:

- Early Support: Operating model for promoting action (2022) (*will be updated via Kamu*)
- [Ethical guidelines for teaching and studying](#) (updated 2021)
- [Inappropriate treatment and harassment](#) (updated 2019)
- Viihtyisä ja turvallinen opiskeluympäristö, ohje (updated 2014) (only in Finnish)

Students at the University of Eastern Finland have the right to a safe and pleasant learning environment (Universities Act, Section 41).

Appropriate behavior includes:

- valuing and taking other people into account
- accepting diversity
- appropriate language in speaking and writing
- taking care of the common learning environment
- compliance with common agreements and rules

This operating model instructs how to deal with a student whose behavior is disruptive, violent or threatening.

Teaching refers to activities that take place in different learning environments, including distance learning and practical training. Removal from distance learning can be achieved by restricting the student's access rights and preventing access to the digital environment. Teaching is also related to situations where the student sends inappropriate text and WhatsApp messages or e-mail messages, or inappropriately comments on matters directly related to teaching on the university's social media channels.

Disruptive behavior can be described as:

- inappropriate language in speaking and writing that targets people's beliefs, gender, age, origin or other reasons related to a person
- participation in training while intoxicated, other disruptive substance use in teaching
- bullying in teaching
- interrupting, talking on top of other students and teachers, laughing, shouting or other verbal or non-verbal inappropriate behavior during a lecture or in a teaching group
- unauthorized recording of teaching (please see in more detail [Principles of publicity of university education in remote teaching](#)) and unauthorized redistribution of the recording.

## **Student may be ordered to leave teaching or an event organized by the university**

*A student who disrupts teaching, behaves violently or threateningly or endangers the life or health of another person, may be ordered to leave the premises where teaching is given or from an event organised by the university. In the above situations, the Rector, the teaching and research staff and the practical training instructor may act together or separately. The disciplinary measures must be recorded. (Universities Act, Section 45).*

If the student interferes with teaching, the matter must be discussed immediately (please see *Early Support: Operating model for promoting action*). A teacher, including a practical training instructor at Teacher Training School, may order a student to leave the premises if s/he interferes with teaching, behaves violently or threateningly or endangers the life or health of others. If the student refuses to leave, the teacher does not have the right to physically remove the person from the place. If the situation requires it, the teacher can call the police and ask for assistance. In an acute threatening situation, 112 should also be called. The teacher must leave the scene if the threat of violence is obvious.

The teacher submits an order to leave using an electronic form (LINK). The order will be retained in Teams (OPI Archive) for 6 months.

The order to leave is not a decision in an administrative matter issued by the university and does not involve the right of appeal.

The faculty or unit may arrange a discussion related to disorderly behavior (please see *Early Support: Operating model for promoting action*).

## **A ban from attending teaching for a maximum of three days**

*A student may be banned from attending teaching for a maximum of three days where there is a risk that the safety of another student or a person working in the university or some other teaching facility is threatened as a result of the student's threatening or violent behavior or where the disruptive conduct of the student makes teaching and associated activities unduly difficult. In the above situations, the Rector, the teaching and research staff and the practical training instructor may act together or separately. The disciplinary measures must be recorded. (Universities Act, Section 45).*

The decision to revoke the right to study is taken by the Rector or the Dean of the Faculty where the student holds the study right. In addition, the Dean has the right to revoke the right to study for an open university student. The Dean may delegate the decision-making to the Vice Dean responsible for teaching.

The student may be suspended from a single course or from all courses currently ongoing. The suspension may include on-campus teaching, practical training and studying in a digital environment. The latter can be achieved by restricting the student's access rights and preventing access to the university's digital environment. Suspensions can be issued regardless of whether the student has previously been asked to leave the teaching. In addition to any form of suspension, the student may be subject to other disciplinary measures as well.

The teacher submits a notification of the suspension using an electronic form (LINK). The Head of Student Affairs of the faculty prepares a letter of suspension for the Dean. The suspension is carried out by sending the student information on the matter to her/his UEF e-mail. The e-mail shall state for which period – up to three working days – and why the suspension was made. In addition, it must be explicitly stated which teaching/course is covered by the suspension. The student's participation in teaching can be banned for a maximum of three working days. The time shall be calculated from the working day following the suspension notice.

The letter of suspension must indicate the student's name, which courses are covered by the suspension, the exact period of and the reason for the suspension. The letter of suspension will be retained in Teams (OPI Archive) for 6 months.

The person who prepared the letter of suspension shall inform teachers to which course(s) the suspension is directed. The letter of suspension is not a decision in an administrative matter issued by the university and does not involve the right of appeal.

### **Written warning and revocation of the right to study**

According to the Universities Act (558/2009, Section 45.1), the student may be given a written warning if s/he disrupts teaching, behaves violently or threateningly, acts fraudulently or otherwise violates the university order, refuses to present a drug test certificate, or has used narcotics for purposes other than medical treatment in a way which undermines her/his functional capacity. If the student's deed or negligence is serious in nature or if the student continues to behave inappropriately, in the sense referred to in subsection 1, after having been cautioned, s/he may be suspended from the university for a fixed period of one year at most.

The Rector decides on the written warning given to the student, whereas the UEF Board decides on the temporary suspension. Before issuing any disciplinary action, the Rector investigates the student's activities and decides on the use of suitable means of investigation.

The student will be sent information in writing on which offence s/he is suspected of, and an opportunity will be reserved for her/him to be heard on the matter. Primarily, the student is asked for a written statement and, if necessary, a hearing shall be held. A request for a written statement or an invitation to a hearing is sent to the student with an advice of delivery or another form of recipient confirmation. If necessary, other persons such as teachers and

fellow students may also be consulted. If the hearing takes place orally, it shall be documented by signed minutes. The student may include a person of her/his choice in the hearing for her/his support (a health and safety delegate or trustee).

After the hearing, the Rector may issue a written warning to the student, propose to the UEF Board that the student be suspended for a fixed period, or consider that no disciplinary action will be taken. The Rector assesses the extent, severity and repetition of the student's actions. The decision taken by the Rector or the UEF Board is notified to the student, the Dean of Faculty as well as the UEF Student and Learning Services. An appeal may be lodged with the Administrative Court of Eastern Finland against the decision on a written warning and temporary suspension.

### **Application for a restraining order**

If there is a risk that the safety of another student or person at the university or any of its teaching facility will suffer as a result of a student's violent or threatening behavior for a period longer than three working days, the Restraining Order Act (898/1998) is applicable. Under the law, a restraining order may be imposed to combat a crime against life, health, liberty or peace, or to combat the threat of such a crime or other serious harassment.

A restraining order is applied for from a local district court. If necessary, the police may issue a temporary restraining order which is immediately put into effect and remains so until the local district court processes the case in detail.