



**Student Counselling plan
2022-2025 at
Centria University of Applied
Sciences**

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1 THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDENT COUNSELLING PLAN

This is the English version and summary of the document “Centria-ammattikorkeakoulun ohjaussuunnitelma 2022-2025”.

This plan is to give an overview of the student counselling at Centria University of Applied Sciences (Centria). It is also intended to clarify the roles and tasks of the different counselling and guidance actors. Centria’s counselling plan is based on the Act on Universities of Applied Sciences, which stipulates those studies leading to a degree and student counselling must be organized in such a way that full-time students can complete their studies within a time corresponding to their study right (§ 14 of the Act on Universities of Applied Sciences). The counselling plan is also based on Centria’s strategy and the strategic action plan for teaching. These emphasize

goal-orientation and shared responsibility, and a good student experience throughout the learning pathway.

This counselling plan has been developed as a tool for all those involved in student counselling. The objectives, contents and practices set out in this plan provide the basis for a coherent implementation of counselling activities on all campuses and in all degree programs of Centria. It also aims to improve the quality, equity, and accessibility of counselling services to students.

The counselling plan is drawn up for three years at a time. It is discussed and approved by the Education Management Group (opetuksen johtoryhmä) and disseminated to all teaching staff. The counselling team (ohjauksen ryhmä) may make minor changes to the approved plan if necessary.

2 COUNSELLING VISION, OBJECTIVES, AND PREVENTIVE STRATEGY

2.1 Counselling vision

At Centria, we see counselling as a service that focuses on the students and their counselling needs. Counselling is carried out in a networked cooperation with actors inside and outside Centria. Counselling is linked to the strategic objectives of the whole organization, the curriculum and the structural arrangements that support learning.

Through counselling, we develop the effectiveness of education and learning. At the same time, we promote smooth progress of the studies, quality, sound use of financial resources and prevent unnecessary dropouts. It contributes to student well-being and helps students to graduate on time. Through counselling, we develop work-life relations in education and training and students' work-life skills. Successful and varied study counselling thus has a positive impact on the quality of education and Centria's finances.

Student counselling is a joint effort of everyone working at Centria. Counselling is a student-centered, preventive, continuous, systematic, versatile, and goal-oriented activity to support student learning and overall well-being. Counselling is accessible, transparent, and ethically aware. Counselling is regularly evaluated and its processes are continuously developed.

2.2 Objectives of the counselling

The aim of counselling is 1) to enable students to progress in their learning and studies within the target time and 2) to support their personal growth, well-being, and development. By focusing on these objectives, the quality and outcomes of learning will be enhanced, enabling students to be better prepared for the transition to working life and to plan for the continuous development of their skills in a changing society. The promotion of these objectives also increases student satisfaction with Centria as an education provider and learning community.

The progress of student learning and studies requires students to master their own learning process; to be familiar with the physical and electronic learning environments of Centria, the curriculum in their field and the study support services. Managing the learning process also requires setting goals, study and learning skills and developing reflection and self-assessment skills. With the support of the counselling network and counselling activities, students are guided to achieve these goals.

The student's personal growth, well-being and development is built as a process. In our well-being work, we pay attention both to strengthening the student's own skills and competences and to actively seeking to identify structural issues that affect student well-being. We aim to strengthen well-being (e.g., accessibility of



learning environments and learning, student feedback of the learning environment), by shaping the structures. The starting point for counselling and well-being work is meeting the student as a unique person, open interaction and respect for diversity.

2.3 A preventive strategy for student counselling

The effectiveness and efficiency of counselling comes from cooperation. Counselling is provided through multi-professional cooperation, with many different people with different skills and different approaches to counselling (e.g., counselling, guidance, information, progress monitoring, career guidance). The counselling includes basic, supplementary, and enhanced counselling.

2.3.1 Basic counselling

Basic counselling is designed to support students' self-direction and to guide them in making independent use of the services available. Basic counselling is the cornerstone of student counselling. Basic counselling includes a wide range of advice, counselling, and guidance for students at various stages of their studies, especially at transitions (e.g., starting or graduating), as well as counselling provided in connection with teaching. Clear and informative websites and other communication support basic counselling. Counselling by study advisers, teachers and especially teacher tutors is an important part of basic counselling. Adequate implementation of basic counselling will lead to smooth progress of the studies.

Orientation days at the beginning of studies are an important form of basic counselling. The role of the teacher tutor during orientation days is to introduce students to their study program and its objectives, to familiarize them with their study group, to support the students to get to know each other and to support their self-direction so that they can make independent use of the complementary counselling services provided for them, when needed.

The PSP (Personal study plan) discussion is part of basic counselling. Discussions are held twice during the first year of study, then once every Academic year and more often if necessary. During the PSP discussion, the student receives personalized study counselling, and the teacher tutor gets an overview of the student's situation and can refer the student to other support functions or enhanced counselling if necessary. Another tool used by the teacher tutor is study progress monitoring (Peppi and PowerBI). It provides information on the progress

of studies of the student group, enables teacher tutors to identify potential challenges and, if necessary, refer the student to enhanced support (e.g., Skills Centria, special education teacher, student psychologist, student counsellor).

Orientation to study and study skills 2 credits, Work life skills and career planning 2 credits and Professional growth 1 credit taught by the teacher tutor, support basic counselling. These provide group guidance, counselling and information and strengthen group bonding.

In addition to the teacher tutor, basic counselling is provided by all teachers. This is guidance for learning, familiarization with learning environments (Its-learning) and practices, and a range of advice, information, and guidance. Support for learning is provided through pedagogical solutions. Assessment is part of guidance and counselling. In line with the principle of continuous learning, counselling and guidance is also offered to non-degree students. In this case, the counselling is provided by the student counsellor.

2.3.2 Supplementary counselling

Supplementary counselling is offered to students on their own initiative and need. The most typical form of counselling in this case is individual counselling. For example, a student may request supplementary counselling to address the challenges of reconciling studies and life, issues related to the workload of studies, international exchange, career planning, internships, study acceleration, etc.

Supplementary counselling is provided by the teacher tutor and teachers, but typically by student counsellors, a career counsellor, a special education teacher, a study psychologist, an international coordinator, and those working on counselling projects at Centria, as well as by external actors (e.g., Finnish Student Health Services, school priest etc.) who complement the counselling provided by Centria.

2.3.3 Intensive counselling

Intensive counselling is offered when a student's studies are not progressing as expected. In addition to the student, also Centria may be the initiating party. Intensive counselling typically starts with a counselling discussion, in which the student's situation, well-being and possibilities for furthering his/her studies are evaluated together with the student. These meetings may be repeated regularly if needed. Intensive counselling is typically provided by student counsellors, a career counsellor, a study psychologist, and a special education teacher.

3 COUNSELLING ACTORS AND THEIR TASKS

The key players involved in counselling and guidance are outlined below.

Actor	Description of the task
Teacher tutor	Guides, advises, and informs students at various stages of their studies – from the orientation days until graduation. Supports group formation, guides PSP discussions, monitors the progress of studies at least twice every Academic year and reports any challenges in studies to the student counsellor.
Student counsellor	At Centria, there are campus counsellors and counselors for individual degree programs. The student counsellor and teacher tutor work in pairs. Provides additional counselling at the student's request and on the topic raised by the student. If the teacher tutor notices challenge in the student's progress or well-being, the student will be directed to meet with the student counsellor.
Student tutor	Acts as peer support for students, e.g., in adapting to the study environment, finding new friends, getting motivated to study, and promotes the creation of a positive learning atmosphere in the group and guides in matters related to study practices. Student union Copsa organizes and coordinates student tutoring activities. Student counselors also support student tutors.
Study advisor	Advice on specific problems such as changing attendance details, transferring credits via e-form and applying for graduation. The study advisors guide the student to other support services, if necessary.
Special education teacher	Provides support, advice, and guidance on the challenges of studying in person, in small groups, workshops and study info sessions. Identifies and tests difficulties in areas such as reading and maths and writes reports if necessary. Consults teachers and students on a range of learning support issues.
Study psychologist	Counselling and support for students, who phase challenges of learning and motivation. The focus is on maintaining good study ability and strengthening student wellbeing. Small group counselling is also available for students and courses on topics like tension and time management. Discussions with students are confidential.
Head of degree program	Is Responsible for developing education and organizing work-based learning. Participates in the implementation and development of student counselling.
Teacher	Guides student learning and professional growth as part of teaching. Guides the development of the student's self-assessment skills.
Career counsellor and other working life experts.	Provides concrete counselling and advice on job search. Work and career services support and help you find a job or traineeship.

4 COUNSELLING PROCESSES AT CENTRIA UAS

Student counselling and guidance is available throughout the student's studies. These are made up of different processes at various stages. The Counselling Process Inventory in this chapter, aims to gather and open processes that are specifically addressed by many counselling and guidance providers.

In the following, the different processes have been structured - from guidance during the student recruitment phase to guidance during the graduation phase. In the following, the different processes have been structured in a chronological order, from guidance during the student recruitment phase to guidance during the graduation phase. In between, there are guidance processes which can also be overlapping.

4.1 Student counselling during the student recruitment phase

Students apply for studies through the Opintopolku.fi service (Study info). The service describes the courses leading to a bachelor's degree and a master's degree. Centria's head of degree programs and the head of study affairs prepare course descriptions. Centria's Admissions Services and Communications and Marketing (Viestintä) are involved in marketing, advice, and information at the application stage. During the application phase, attention will be paid to visibility and discoverability in social media. An annual Centria Open event for secondary school students and student counsellors is organized for partners. In addition, several different events and podcasts are organized to promote the opportunities offered by Centria.

When the student accepts the study place and registers for the Academic year, he or she will be informed about the start of their studies, how to activate the student ID, participation details on the Orientation days, which focus on team building, information, advice, and guidance on studies.

For international students, efforts have been made to make their transition to a new environment as smooth as possible. Centria offers support, help and advice on matters such as arriving in Finland, finding accommodation, making everyday life easier and getting to know other students. International students are assisted by an international advisor to help them settle in their new city.

4.2 Personal study plan (PSP)

A personal study plan (PSP) is an individual plan that takes into consideration the student's prior learning (RPL = recognition of prior learning), life situation and study ability. The PSP is a tool for planning the studies, and a method for the development of competence, which is a goal-oriented process throughout the studies. The PSP describes the learning objectives, content of the studies, learning methods and timetable of the learning process. It is a tool for actively observing one's own learning, measuring the development of professional skills, and for transition to working life and career planning. The PSP is developed in collaboration with the student and the tutor teacher and is refined in the PSP-discussions. The PSP form can be found on the Centria website and in the

common course of study in Its-learning. After the PSP discussion, the teacher tutor approves the PSP in Peppi.

4.3 Recognition of prior learning (RPL)

Recognition of prior learning (RPL) is based on competency-based thinking and the curriculum. It is part of continuous learning. You can apply for recognition of prior learning at higher education level towards a Centria's degree programs. Learning and skills are acquired through formal education and training, work, voluntary work and hobbies. Students are also entitled to apply for recognition of such learning in their degree.

The RPL process is student driven. Students compare their own competences with the learning outcomes of the courses and start the RPL process as instructed. The RPL guidelines and forms are available on the Centria website <https://net.centria.fi/en/for-students/students-guide/content-of-studies/#RPL>

If a student is applying for RPL of a language course, previous language studies should be checked at the beginning of the course (PSP discussion), as this will affect the student's study plan. For the RPL procedure for language studies, see the guidelines on the Centria website.

Pathway students (polkuopiskelija) will not apply RPL for any studies at the start of their pathway studies. However, RPL discussions are held with pathway students (see 4.3). If a student has some courses, he/she can RPL, he/she can choose other courses to replace them. The RPL-studies are registered when the student has become a degree student.

4.4 Work-based learning

In work-based learning (Työn opinnollistaminen), learning is taken out of the classroom and into the workplace. The competences required for the qualification are acquired through work in accordance with the plan and by linking practical work to the knowledge base of the subject. Students must analyze their work and relate it to the courses or modules and reflect on their work in relation to the learning outcomes of the courses. For example, a career counsellor and a student counsellor can guide the student to identify opportunities for work-based learning.

One of the most important steps in work-based learning is the demonstration event, which is based on teacher-, peer-, self- and workplace assessment. In the demonstration, the student connects the work-tasks to the theoretical background and demonstrates his/her competence. Reflection on the student's own learning and identification of competences play a significant role in the learning process. Students receive feedback and a numerical assessment after the demonstration. The demonstration is a learning and guidance situation.

You can ask your student counsellors for more information on work-based learning.

4.5 Support with studies - Skills Centria

Skills Centria aims to support students in their studies and to provide low-threshold activities to help them succeed in their studies. The activities are open to all students and are provided in both English and Finnish.

The Skills Centria website provides information on activities to support students' learning, including workshops with the special education teacher, thesis workshops and workshops in languages and mathematics. Through these activities, students can get support for their studies or to progress with their thesis. For more information on the diverse types of study support activities, visit the [Skills Centria](#) website.

4.6 Thesis guidance system (Wihi)

The aim is to ensure that students receive consistent, high-quality guidance in their thesis work. The thesis is divided into three phases: planning, implementation, and finalization. The thesis guidance system (Wihi) is built around these stages, each of which is 5 credits.

The first and second stages appear as performance records (Pass) in Wihi until the final grade is entered and becomes the numerical grades according to the final grade. The grade is determined by the assessment criteria as an average. At the end of the process, the thesis is checked in the plagiarism checking system, Turnit.

Wihi can be found on Peppi. There is a W symbol in the top bar of Peppi, which is Wihi.

4.7 Career and work-life services

Career and work-life services is a place where students can reflect on their dreams, goals and skills, and the direction they want to take on their career path. Through the service, students can get concrete advice on job search, personal career guidance and networking with the world of work. There is also a wide range of events and activities to help students network and progress in their careers.

Centria has a digital career and recruitment service called Centria Jobi (Tiitus App), which provides an easy and free platform for students to find a job. Students can create their own profile in Centria Jobi, which can be completed during their studies. Centria Jobi is an excellent tool for networking with the world of work. In contrast, the social and health sector uses Jobilli, a joint system of universities of applied sciences specifically for the social and healthcare sectors.

Talent Boost activities focus on attracting and retaining international talent, promoting internationalization and education-based migration and integration in higher education. Through Talent Boost, international students receive support in their job search, information about

typical Finnish habits in working life, the opportunity to visit companies and the promotion of Finnish language studies. The purpose of Centria's Talent Boost activities is to provide the regions of Central Ostrobothnia, Ostrobothnia, and North Ostrobothnia with added value in terms of international skills and RDI activities, created and developed in cooperation with other actors in the regions. The aim is to create a Talent Hub for the region, which will bring together and coordinate the region's Talent Boost activities, services, and actors.

4.8 Application process for application of extended study-right

It is important to Centria that a student who, for one reason or another, has not managed to complete his or her studies within the set study time, can apply for extension of the study-right and can complete his or her degree with the necessary support.

When applying for an extension of the study right, the student makes a study plan together with the student counsellor. This is a prerequisite for applying for an extension. The counsellor will process the applications for extension in his/her field in Peppi and send a proposal to the Head of degree program. The Head of the degree program can approve or reject the request for extension, based on the student's progress in his/her studies as well as the feasibility of the study plan.

A student studying with extended study right, agrees to follow the study plan and to make use of the support services available (Skills Centre) as required. The student counsellor's role is to be in contact with the student and monitor his/her progress. The common goal is to guide the student towards graduation.

4.9 Centria's substance abuse and addiction program

Centria students Substance Abuse and Addiction Program is designed to promote academic success, health, and well-being. The program helps to prevent harm from substance abuse and functional addictions, facilitates intervention to address a student's addiction problem, and clarifies treatment referrals.

The purpose of the substance abuse and addiction program is to provide tools on how a teacher tutor, student counsellor, teacher or other staff members can raise concerns with a student and support their wellbeing. The program differentiates the roles of the different actors, introduces the steps for drug testing practices and treatment counselling. Centria's student substance abuse and addiction program can be found in Centraali and you can ask more information from student counsellors.

4.10 VALO graduation service and electronic diploma)

In the VALO service, the student applies for graduation and answers the AVOP questionnaire. The AVOP is a feedback questionnaire where the student evaluates and gives feedback on the degree completed. The results of the survey are used to develop Centria's activities.

The VALO service aims to clarify and facilitate the graduation process. In practice, the VALO graduation service includes a list of tasks and instructions that the student needs to do in order to advance in the graduation process. The service supports the smooth preparation of the graduation application and the transparency of the graduation process.

The student starts the graduation process five weeks before graduation. The application can only be approved once all studies have been completed and graded. The diploma is only issued electronically. Concretely, the VALO graduation service is in Peppi, in the top bar of the student's desktop.

5 EVALUATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF STUDENT COUNSELLING

The counselling team (ohjauksen ryhmä) coordinates the counselling activities, evaluation and development of counselling at Centria. The role of counselling team is to be an expert forum for counselling, which, if necessary, makes proposals for the earlier mentioned strategies, informs the management, and thus ensures the development and visibility of student counselling at the organizational level. These actions are aimed at increasing the impact, effectiveness and efficiency of student counselling.

In addition to the student counsellors, the counselling team includes a study psychologist, a special adviser for student administration, a study advisor (student services), a service manager (Averko and Open University of Applied Sciences), a student affairs manager, a special education teacher, a learning services specialist, and a representative of the student union COPSA. The counselling Team meets regularly during the academic year and discusses topical issues related to counselling. The counselling Team is chaired by the Development Manager (Kehittämispäällikkö).

Another multidisciplinary expert community involved in the evaluation and development of student counselling is the Well-being Forum (Hyvinvointifoorumi). The Well-being Forum is a network of counselling actors from within and outside Centria. The Wellbeing Forum discusses current phenomena related to student wellbeing and how to respond to them, the utilization rates and accessibility

of services, and the effectiveness of guidance processes. Discussions at the Well-being Forum help to provide an overall picture of the functioning of guidance and counselling services and their development needs.

The well-being forum brings together the development manager, the student counsellors, study advisors (student services), Student Union COPSA representative, 1-2 student representatives, the study psychologist, the pastor, the special education teacher, the FSHS representative and the learning services specialist who supports the integration of international degree students in their studies and in their new city of study. The Forum may also include visiting representatives where appropriate.

The evaluation of guidance and counselling will make extensive use of data on applicant and graduate numbers available from various systems. Centria is continuously developing analytics for monitoring student study progress, which will also be used for guidance evaluation and development. Another useful tool for evaluating guidance is the use of various indicators of student satisfaction, such as the AVOP feedback survey, where students evaluate and provide feedback on the education they have received. The results of the survey are used to develop the education provided at Centria. The questionnaire is completed by all graduating students at the universities of applied sciences in Finland.

6 DATA PROTECTION IN COUNSELLING WORK

Section 65 of the Universities of Applied Sciences Act deals with the right to information and provides a framework for those working with students.

“The holder of information concerning the health and functional capacity of a student and necessary for the performance of his/her duties has the right to disclose the information, notwithstanding the provisions on confidentiality:

1. to the Rector of the UAS and other people responsible for its safety to ensure the safety of students.
2. to the person responsible for the guidance of students for the purpose of guidance to other studies and support services.
3. to the people responsible for student health care to ensure the health and safety of the student and to refer to the necessary support measures.
4. to those responsible for work placements to ensure the safety of the student and the staff and clients of the placement site.
5. to the police and to the representative of the UAS who has primary responsibility for determining whether there is an immediate threat to safety or if the student's health status is determined to be a threat to the safety of others.” (Act on Universities of Applied Sciences 65§.)

The right of access to information emphasizes the need to ensure student safety. Especially in such situations, staff have extensive rights to disclose and receive information from each other within the UAS and between authorities, notwithstanding the provisions on confidentiality.

In cases other than student safety, the right to information and access to information is more limited. In case of doubt, the persons responsible for guidance can always consult other experts and authorities on student matters on an anonymous basis. They can also, in cooperation with the student - with his/her consent - pass on information.

Health professionals are bound by health regulations. Regardless of their profession, psychologists, for example, can only disclose confidential information with the client's consent. A written consent form is used to obtain the student's consent to the disclosure.

7 BACKGROUND LITERATURE AND MATERIALS

Osa tausta-aineistosta on suojatun yhteyden takana ja tarkoitettu Centria ammattikorkeakoulun sisäiseen käyttöön.

Ammattikorkeakoululaki. Ammattikorkeakoululaki 14.11.2014/932, 14 §

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Centria-ammattikorkeakoulun STRATEGIA 2021-2024. Luettavissa osoitteessa: https://net.centria.fi/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/STRATEGIA_centria_2021-2024.pdf

Hautala, T. 2022. Opintojen ohjauksen toimijoiden ja opetushenkilöstön kokemukset ammatillisesta toimijuudesta ja asiantuntijuudesta. Yhteys korkeakouluorganisaatioiden hallinnollisiin piirteisiin ja johtamiseen. Tampereen Yliopisto: Tampere.

Opettajatutorin muistilista 2022–2023. Luettavissa: <https://centriafi.sharepoint.com/sites/Opotiimi/Jaetut%20asiakirjat/General/Opettajatutorin%20muistilista%20lukuvuosi%202022-2023.pdf>

Osaamisen tunnistaminen ja tunnustaminen (AHOT). AHOT ohjeistukset oppilaalle ja lomakkeet luettavissa: <https://net.centria.fi/opiskelijalle/opiskelijan-opas/opintojen-sisalto/#ahot>

Tukea opiskeluun ja opintoihin: Skills Centria. Luettavissa osoitteessa: <https://net.centria.fi/opiskelijalle/opiskelijan-opas/ohjaus-ja-neuvonta/tyopajat-ja-tapahtumat/>

Työn opinnollistamisen ohje Centria-ammattikorkeakoulussa: https://net.centria.fi/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/OHJE_Tyon_opinnollistaminen_sote.pdf

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