Teaching is a popular profession in Finland. Consequently, gaining entry to a teacher education programme is very competitive. In 2017 some 13 per cent of the applicants were admitted into a class teacher (primary teacher) education programme. Thus, the qualification situation is generally very good among teachers. The proportion of fully qualified teachers in 2016 was

- 96 per cent in pre-primary and primary education
- 97 per cent in basic education
- 99 per cent in general upper secondary education
- 91 per cent in vocational upper secondary education and training
- 99 per cent of principals in primary and lower secondary education
- 100 per cent of principals in general upper secondary education
- 91 per cent per cent of principals in vocational upper secondary education
- 87 per cent of special needs teachers in basic education and 94 per cent in upper secondary vocational education and training

In early childhood education and pre-primary education (at age 6) teachers are required a Bachelor’s level degree. In general basic and upper secondary education all teachers are required to have a Master’s degree. In vocational education teachers should have a Master’s degree or Bachelor’s degree. Teacher training can be either concurrent, with pedagogical training integrated into the Master’s programme, or consecutive, with the pedagogical training completed after the initial degree.

The current Teacher education development programme focuses on admissions, initial education and as well as development of professional competence and learning during the career. Students with the best capacity for teaching will be selected and the aptitude of applicants to teacher education is taken into account in the student admissions. Particular attention is paid to mentoring and peer support as systematic parts of teacher education.

The working methods used in the teacher education and educational institutions emphasise a learner-oriented, research-based and whole-school approach. In addition, key issues are the new and diverse learning environments, team-teaching, cross-disciplinary approaches and teachers’ management skills.

The conditions of service for teachers and principals are agreed on in a process of collective bargaining between the teachers’ union and representative for the municipal employers. The collective agreement is renewed 1-3 years.