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TRANSLATION: Guidelines concerning granting extension of study time at the Sibelius Academy

The duration of studies is limited for all students who have been granted a right to study on 1 August 2005 or thereafter. The limitation of the duration of studies is stated in the Universities Act 558/2009, sections 40–43. A student who has not completed his/her studies within the time appointed or within the extension granted, as well as a student who has not been granted an extension for completing his/her studies, loses his/her right to study.

According to the University of the Arts Helsinki degree regulations section 16 Decisions related to the normative duration of studies are made by the dean of the academy.

Monitoring of study times and informing the students

The head of academic affairs at the Sibelius Academy monitors the study periods accordant with the Universities Act and sends letters to those students whose study periods are coming to an end at the end of the term (31 July or 31 December). The letters are sent to the student's registered home address and uniarts e-mail. The letters are sent latest 2 months before the end of semester, so that students have time to either graduate or get study counselling and apply for extension of study time.

Applying for extension of study time

The extension application must be made in writing following the instructions and timeframe given in the letter. If the application arrives late it is possible that it cannot be processed before the study time expires. This may result in the student losing his/her study right and having to make a re-enrolment application and pay the enrolment fee.

The student must always attach a graduation plan to the application. The plan must be based in the student's individual study plan, and be up-to-date and approved. Any changes in the study plan are approved by the study coordinator or head of department.

In the graduation plan, the courses missing from the degree are listed using the names and codes of the curriculum. The planned time of completion (semester) of the missing courses must be given as well.

The application must also state the reasons of delay of the degree. If the application is made only for the purpose of getting the degree certificate (all the courses have been completed), the graduation plan is not necessary.

Processing of applications and decision-making

The student sends the application to the study coordinator of his/her department. The study coordinator checks that the individual study plan meets the degree requirements and is approved and that the graduation plan follows the individual study plan.

In case of the first extension application by the student in question and when the completion of the degree is realistic within the requested extension period (up to 1 academic year), the coordinator may support the application without the head of departments statement. The principles can be more accurately agreed within the department.

In case of a further application by the student, the student is always invited to a counselling session as agreed by the head of department and study coordinator. In the counselling, the goals and schedule are clarified with the student. After the counselling, the head of department evaluates the application and decides whether the application will be supported. If the application is supported, the head of department evaluates what kind of further guidance and support the student needs and, together with the study coordinator, arranges this guidance for the student.

When the application has been processed in the department, it is sent to the head of academic affairs for decision making. At the Sibelius Academy the head of academic affairs makes the decisions after consulting the dean of the academy.

A positive decision does not automatically grant the right to tuition. The decisions on granting tuition are made at the department according to the academy guidelines.

The decisions are not made in advance. This means that students can apply for and receive extension of study time only during the last semester of the existing study time. A student may not register as non-attending during the extension (exception: when extension is granted only for receiving the degree certificate).

Criteria used in decision making

The extension of study time is intended for completing the degree. Additional time may be granted for at least one semester and up to two academic years at a time if the student presents a goal-oriented and feasible graduation plan and acceptable grounds for obtaining an extension and if the department supports the application.

Acceptable grounds for extension of study time are situations which the student has not been able to influence, such as illness or other difficult life situation. On the other hand, other studies, student exchange, work or change of major subject / instrument are not grounds for extension, unless this has been specifically agreed upon.

The student may first be granted less additional time than he/she has applied for in order to make sure that the student uses granted extension for studying towards the

degree. The decision will in that case include the conditions for obtaining further extension.

If a student applies for a second extension, the decision-making considers whether the student has studied in a goal-oriented way during the first extension. If a student has not completed the degree during two extension periods, there must be very solid grounds for granting a third extension.

When a student applies for extension of study time based on illness, injury, etc., the application must be accompanied by a medical certificate or statement. Alternatively, the student can show the certificate to the study coordinator, head of department or head of academic affairs who makes a note of this in the application. Medical certificates are not retained, but they will be destroyed after the decision has been taken.

The decision will consider the overall situation of the student (such as amount of existing and missing credits, earlier extensions and the student's life situation).

Information on decision

If a student is granted extension of study time, the extension will be added to the student register. The student will be informed about the extension to his/her university e-mail. If the decision is negative, the decision together with an appeal notice is sent to the student's home address and to the university e-mail.

The student may apply for rectification from the Dean of the Sibelius Academy. If the dean's decision is negative, the decision may be appealed to the Helsinki Administrative Court (Universities Act 83 §).

Dean of the Sibelius Academy
Kaarlo Hildén