

# Structure of the specialization studies for police sergeants, advancing in studies and the competences produced by studies 2026-2027



The Director of Education and Research has approved this document on 23 June 2025 (POL-2025-89419).

## Contents

1 Striving for professional excellence .....	3
2 Competency-based curriculum.....	3
3 Pedagogic and RDI policies behind the curriculum.....	4
3.1 Pedagogic policies.....	4
3.2 RDI policies .....	6
4 Program structure and implementation.....	6
5 Competence to be acquired through the program .....	7
5.1 European and national qualification frameworks.....	7
5.2 General and professional competences.....	8
5.2.1 General competences .....	9
5.2.2 Professional competences .....	10

# 1 Striving for professional excellence

This document describes, at a general level, the structure of the specialization studies for police sergeants (38 credits) and the advancement of studies as well as other recommendations and policies that guide curriculum work. Specialization studies are long-term studies that may be completed after the attainment of a higher education degree. Specialization studies provide a systematic opportunity for individuals who have completed a basic police degree (Bachelor of Police Services or an earlier equivalent or other applicable university-level qualification) or who have already joined the workforce to deepen their competence, pursue a specialization without completing a degree and flexibly cater for emerging areas of expertise primarily in the police and, where possible, in other government agencies.

Police officers are expected to possess multifaceted expertise that is based on the generally accepted values and codes of conduct of police work. The objective of the Police University College is to provide higher education in internal security, based on the cultural knowledge of and research conducted in the field. The studies provided by the College have been designed for those aiming for specialist and leadership positions, as well as for supporting each student's professional growth and lifelong learning objectives. In addition, the Police University College conducts applied research and development work that support the planning and development of policing and internal security, as well as the teaching activities conducted at the College.

The specialization studies for police sergeants (38 credits) qualify students to act in supervisory and advisory roles at senior officer level. The program teaches students the basic theoretical and practical knowledge and skills needed to work in managerial-level supervisory and leadership roles, the ability to improve their work community and themselves as well as the necessary communication skills.

The target group of the training is police officers who have completed their basic police training and who have worked in policing duties for at least three (3) years after graduation. The Police University College decides on the grounds for student admission, the application procedure, and the final admission selection process.

Provisions on the eligibility for police posts provided by the training are laid down in the Government Decree on Police Administration (158/1996).

Students are awarded with a certificate upon completion of the studies at the Police University College.

## 2 Competency-based curriculum

The curriculum is an overview of the studies and the work required to complete the program. The curricula of the Police University College focus on professional competence. A competency-based curriculum defines the learning outcomes of the studies, i.e. what the student must know and understand as a result of the learning process. The evaluation process, which is based on a predetermined set of learning outcomes, focuses on learning achievements. Grading is based on Police University College Degree Regulations.

The factors used to guide the College's teaching and study activities are goal-oriented competence development, strengthening the perspective of learning, and the creation of workplace-oriented studies.

The specialization studies for police sergeant's includes the following competency-based characteristics<sup>1</sup>:

- The student's self-assessment plays an important role in their study path.
- Competence is recognised and acknowledged regardless of where, when or how it was acquired.
- The teacher plays a strong role as an instructor and identifier of individual competence.
- The curriculum consists of competence areas that are relevant to working life.
- Each competence area includes student-oriented learning outcomes.
- Clear assessment criteria have been defined for the learning outcomes.
- If the skills are insufficient for the learning outcomes, competence can be acquired and complemented in different ways.
- All competence is assessed in a continuous and versatile manner and by multiple evaluators.

## 3 Pedagogic and RDI policies behind the curriculum

### 3.1 Pedagogic policies

#### **Expertise in policing creates future security**

We combine strong expertise in policing with higher education as well as the skills, knowledge and attitudes required by both. We educate experts in internal security and leadership who act ethically and learn continuously throughout their careers.

We use forward-looking education to meet the expectations directed at the police and respond to changes in the operational environment. We experiment boldly and try out new things. We encourage participation in the research and development of working life practices.

We build a common view of our education and ensure in-depth learning and well-being within the university college community. We support the ability to study and learn based on the principle of a constantly learning organization.

#### **This is how we reach our goals**

Forward-looking approach

- In the planning of our education, we utilize foresight information as well as information about the operational environment systematically.
- We develop learning outcomes, contents, teaching and evaluation methods and learning environments on the basis of research data and best practices.

---

<sup>1</sup> Alaniska Hanna, Keurulainen Harri, Tauriainen Tiia-Mariia (toim.) 2019. Osaamisperustaisia käytäntöjä korkeakouluissa. Oulun ammattikorkeakoulun tutkimus- ja kehitystyön julkaisut, ePooki 58/2019.

- We strengthen compatibility with working life through personal rotation and other competence development practices.

#### A competent university college community

- We plan and implement education based on the principles of constructive alignment.
- We encourage everyone to think, act, investigate, and experiment creatively.
- We appreciate and support the continuous improvement of know-how and expertise.

#### Strong partnerships

- We are active in partnership networks within the fields of education and research and with various authorities that support teaching and studying.
- We develop our education and working life together with our partners.
- We offer diverse student and staff exchange programs and cross-institutional studies.

#### Social responsibility

- We implement our sustainable development goals and strengthen our competence in responsibility.
- We comply with the ethical principles of teaching, research, open science and the police.
- We support diverse ways of learning.

### **The principles of our education**

#### Student-centricity

Students have an active role. We take the needs of diverse learners into consideration. We ensure a safe and confidential atmosphere. We promote learning by using diverse teaching methods, evaluation practices and both authentic and digital learning environments. We encourage feedback.

#### Collegiality

We study, teach and work in multiprofessional teams. Our education is based on co-teaching. We encourage sharing of skills and knowledge as well as experimentation with new methods. We are accountable for the welfare of ourselves and each other. We strengthen an interactive university college community together.

#### Competency-based curriculum

Our education is based on the national qualification framework. Our competency-based curricula ensure compliance with the standards of higher education, close cooperation with working life and the development of professional and general competencies.

#### Shared pedagogic management

We share pedagogic management. We promote cooperation and collegiality between actors. We support and guide the planning and development of education and everyday work in teaching. We manage competence to enable each individual, the team and the whole organization to learn, develop and reach their goals.

## 3.2 RDI policies

We produce research and innovations in a long-term way for the development of a safe and fair society. We are building a knowledge base for police education and police expertise. We are a distinguished and international university college and a project partner in the security sector.

### **This is how we reach our goals**

#### Forward-looking approach

- We predict and analyse the development of the operating environment and higher education.
- We develop new ways to act by evaluating our own activities and learning from others.

#### A competent university college community

- We strengthen a research and development-oriented approach in education and policing.
- We increase the RDI competence of students and police staff in a versatile manner.

#### Strong partnerships

- We engage in targeted, cross-disciplinary and cross-professional cooperation.
- We utilize RDI activities to solve complex societal problems.

#### Social responsibility

- We commit to the principles of scientific freedom, open science and research, and research ethics.
- We increase societal impact by publishing and communicating in a versatile manner.

RDI activities are research, development and innovation activities, such as RDI projects, publications, analyses, theses and student projects. These also include service activities, export of knowledge, compilation and presentation of police history and the development of RDI environments.

## 4 Program structure and implementation

Completing the specialization studies for police sergeants earns students 38 credits<sup>2</sup> and takes approximately nine (9) months. The program includes six (6) weeks of supervised practical training in a police unit. A more detailed implementation schedule is confirmed separately for each year. Students have one (1) year to complete the program. If the seconding unit proposes that a student discontinues their studies, the unit can request that the student be allowed to complete their studies during the next suitable program.

The required work is set out in the curriculum. The curriculum for specialization studies is confirmed by the Police University College Board. More detailed descriptions of the content and

---

<sup>2</sup> The scale of the studies is measured in credits. One credit corresponds to approximately 27 hours of student work. The student's workload includes all the work required to complete the course, both in-class activities and independent study.

implementation of each course are given in Implementation Plans confirmed by the Director of Education and Research.

The program consists of the following mandatory courses:

- General Leadership (10 credits)
- Legal Basis of Team Leadership in Policing (4 credits)
- Team Leadership in Crime Prevention (8 credits)
- Team Leadership in Public Order and Security (8 credits)
- Practical Training (8 credits)

The studies require attendance in lectures and exercises. To progress in the studies, the student must pass all study attainments included in the training. The practical training course includes a written assignment relating to human resources management, which focuses on building the analytical skills needed in various kinds of workforce development roles.

Plagiarism detection software is used in the assessment of written assignments and analytical exercises. In cases of student fraud, the investigation process follows the Police University College's instructions on dealing with cases of student fraud.

Specialization students who are employed by the police administration are all, as a rule, police officials who have been seconded to the program and who are therefore discharging their work duties by participating in the program.

In the event of an illness, the student must notify the teacher in charge of their absence in addition to following the instructions for reporting any illness-related absences at work. If a student is repeatedly absent during a contact teaching period, they must complete the substitute exercises/learning assignments assigned by the teacher in charge of the course or, if necessary, retake the course.

Individual teachers may grant absences that last for a maximum of one day in such particularly compelling situations where the student is not able to apply for an absence from their immediate commanding supervisor. The teacher in charge will inform the student's commanding supervisor of all absences.

Short absences of up to one week are subject to approval by the commanding officer who is the student's immediate supervisor, together with the relevant teacher. In case of any longer absences, the commanding unit must submit a study interruption proposal to the Head of Student Services at the Police University College.

## 5 Competence to be acquired through the program

### 5.1 European and national qualification frameworks

The specialization studies for police sergeants is aligned with the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and the Finnish National Qualifications Framework (FiNQF).

The Act (93/2017) and Decree (120/2017) on the Framework for Qualifications and Other Competence Modules define the requirement levels of degrees, courses and other extensive set of competencies.

For each requirement level, the Act specifies the knowledge, understanding and capabilities of a student who has attained the level. These requirement level descriptions are applied to the work of the Police University College, creation of competence profiles, and the evaluation of competence. Specialization studies for police sergeants corresponds to NQF Level 6.

In the national qualifications framework, level 6 and the shared national competences describe the level of competence of graduates of universities of applied sciences. The aim is to integrate the level descriptions and general competences with the objectives of the curricula. Achieving these objectives is also assessed as part of the normal assessment of competence associated with the learning process.

Level 6 (degrees from universities of applied sciences, Bachelor's degrees)<sup>3</sup>

- The student has gained a broad and advanced knowledge of the field of study, including a critical understanding and assessment of the key concepts, methods and principles.
- Holder understands the scope and limits of professional fields and/or scientific disciplines.
- Holder has advanced cognitive and practical skills that demonstrate mastery of concepts, the ability to apply them and the ability to come up with creative solutions and implementations that are required in a specialized professional, scientific or artistic field to solve complex or unpredictable problems.
- Holder works independently in expert positions in the field and in international cooperation or runs a business.
- Holder manages complex professional operations or projects.
- Holder is capable of making decisions in unpredictable operating environments.
- Holder is responsible not just for the evaluation and development of their own expertise but also for the development of individuals and groups.
- Holder has the prerequisites for lifelong learning.
- Holder works with different kinds of people in educational and working communities as well as in other groups and networks, taking into account collaborative and ethical perspectives.
- Holder communicates fluently in their mother tongue to audiences both within and outside their field orally and in writing.
- Holder communicates and interacts in the other national language and is capable of international communication and interaction in at least one other foreign language in their own field.

## 5.2 General and professional competences

The objective of specialization studies is to prepare students for meeting the competence needs of future society. The general capabilities for working life create the basis for the student's ability to function and collaborate at work and to develop their specialist skills. The general capabilities for working life constitute learning to learn, operating in a workplace, ethics, sustainable

---

<sup>3</sup> Government Decree (120/2017) on the framework for qualifications and other competence modules.

development, internationality and multiculturalism and proactive development. In policing, professional specialist competences comprise special vocational skills in policing, acquired during the program.

### **5.2.1 General competences**

#### **Learning to learn**

The graduating student recognises the strengths and development areas of their competence and learning methods, and they utilise the opportunities communities and digitalisation provide in their learning.

- Assesses and develops their competence and learning methods in different learning environments.
- Is able to acquire, critically assess and appropriately apply the national and international knowledge base and practices of their field.
- Also takes responsibility for group learning and sharing what has been learned.

#### **Ethics**

The graduating student adheres to the ethical principles and values of their field of profession, taking the principles of equality and non-discrimination into account.

- Is able to take responsibility for their own actions and their consequences and reflects on them in accordance with the ethical principles and values of their field.
- Takes others into account and promotes equality and non-discrimination.
- Take into account the realisation of diversity and accessibility in their actions.
- Understands the principles of responsible conduct of research and adheres to them.
- Is able to influence society based on ethical values.

#### **Operating in a workplace**

The graduating student has versatile working life skills and is able to operate in work communities of their field.

- Is able to work constructively in a work community and promotes their own and their work community's well-being.
- Is able to act professionally in communication and interaction situations at a workplace.
- Utilises the opportunities offered by technology and digitalisation in their work.
- Understands the complexity of changing working life and their own resilience in changing working life situations
- Has capabilities for an entrepreneurial approach.

#### **Sustainable development**

The graduating student is familiar with the principles of sustainable development, promotes their implementation and acts responsibly as a professional and a member of society

- Is able to use information related to their field in finding, implementing and establishing sustainable solutions and operating models.

- Understands sustainability challenges, their interdependencies and the various aspects of issues and problems.

### **Internationality and multiculturalism**

The graduating student is able to operate in multicultural and international operating environments and networks.

- Is familiar with the impacts of their cultural background on their activities and is able to develop operating methods that take multiculturalism into account in their work community.
- Is able to monitor and utilise the international development of their field in their work.
- Is able to communicate internationally in their work tasks.

### **Proactive development**

The graduating student is able to develop solutions that anticipate the future of their own field, applying existing knowledge and research and development methods.

- Solves problem situations creatively and reforms operating methods together with others.
- Is able to work in projects in cooperation with actors of different fields.
- Is able to apply existing knowledge in the field in development and utilises research and development methods.
- Is able to seek customer-oriented, sustainable and economically viable solutions, anticipating the future of their field.

## **5.2.2 Professional competences**

Students who complete the specialization studies for police sergeants:

- possess extensive practical and fundamental knowledge as well as the skills and theoretical principles necessary for working in specialist and leadership positions in the field of internal security.
- have acquired the capabilities necessary for continuous learning and are able to assess their own professional growth trajectories as supervisors.
- know how to conduct themselves in the duties of a police sergeant-level operational group supervisor in the fields of surveillance, emergency operations and crime prevention.
- are able, in their roles as supervisors, to follow the objectives specified in the relevant strategic policies, performance management systems, and performance targets.
- learn how to analytically assess and improve the operations of their own organization and work community.