

FINNISH INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION AGENT CODE OF CONDUCT (ACoC)

Introduction and Purpose of the ACoC

Finland's aim is to increase the amount of international degree students in the higher education by 2027. Consequently, Finland strives to ensure that 75 % of the international students stay in Finland to work in order to meet the high demand of skilled workforce in the country. This target is stated in the *Internationalisation Programme for Finnish Higher Education Internationalisation Programme 2021-2024* and *Talent Boost 2023–2027. Programme for international recruitment and work-based and education-based immigration*. Achieving this goal requires coordinated efforts in professional international student recruitment and ecosystem development involving higher education institutions, governmental organizations, educational consultants, and other stakeholders.

The purpose of this Agent Code of Conduct is to establish guidelines for the professional conduct expected of individual agents and agencies engaged in international student recruitment for Finnish institutions of higher education. These guidelines apply to all interactions with prospective students, their parents, educational providers, and fellow agents.

Finland embraces education for a better life and a brighter future for everyone. Finland's education system has strong focus on equity and inclusivity. This means that Finland is committed to ensure the highest standard of studies and services for all the students.

This ACoC is approved by Arene, Rector's Conference of Finnish Universities of Applied Sciences and Unifi, Rector's Council for Finnish Universities. Therefore, this document provides standards for working in international student recruitment.

This ACoC document does not conflict with any HEI's individual code of conduct applied to the international student recruitment. Furthermore, it is to be noted that the Finnish education export sector follows the Guide for Education Export Professionals on Ensuring Ethical Conduct in Education Export published by Education Finland.

Agent Code of Conduct's Ethics and Standards

The Agents and educational consultant are expected to:

- **Demonstrate Integrity:** Act in good faith, exercising due skill, care, and diligence.
- **Prioritize Client Interests:** Act in the best interests of their clients.
- **Embrace Transparency and Honesty:** Maintain transparency and honesty in all operations and communication with stakeholders involved in a transaction.

- **Adhere to Ethical Marketing Practices:** Follow ethical marketing principles and provide accurate, up-to-date, and truthful information to prospects and their parents.
- **Safeguard Confidentiality:** Respect and preserve the confidentiality of all personal and business information.
- **Provide Accurate Representation:** Present an accurate portrayal of the rights and responsibilities of students in their intended destination country.
- **Comply with Legal Standards:** Abide by all relevant laws and regulations in both the agent's home country and the student's intended destination.
- **Establish a Feedback Mechanism:** Establish a feedback mechanism for clients and stakeholders to provide input or raise concerns about the agent's services can help ensure continuous improvement and accountability.
- **Commit to Professional Development:** Continuously develop professional knowledge and participate in training opportunities provided by Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).

Agent Code of Conduct's Guiding Principals

The Agents and educational consultant are expected to:

- **Conflict of Interest:** Agents should disclose any potential conflicts of interest that may arise in their dealings with clients or institutions.
- **Non-Discrimination:** Agents should commit to non-discrimination and equal treatment of all prospective students, regardless of their background, nationality, race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or disability.
- **Responsibility towards Host Communities:** Agents should encourage responsible behavior and cultural sensitivity among students to foster positive relationships within host communities.
- **Accessibility and Inclusivity:** Agents should strive to make their services accessible and inclusive to students from diverse backgrounds, including those with disabilities or special needs.
- **Feedback Mechanism:** Establishing a feedback mechanism for clients and stakeholders to provide input or raise concerns about the agent's services can help ensure continuous improvement and accountability.

The Agent should comply with all applicable laws, statutes, regulations and codes relating to anti-bribery and anti-corruption including but not limited to the Finnish Criminal Act (39/1889) ("Relevant Requirements"); not engage in any activity, practice or conduct which would constitute an offence under the Finnish Criminal Act (39/1889) if such activity, practice or conduct had been carried out in Finland.