

2.2 Student Union of Åbo Akademi University (Åbo Akademis Studentkår, ÅAS)

Åbo:

Kåren

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www.studentkaren.fi

Open Mon-Fri 12.00-15.00

Vasa:

Havtornen

Inre hamnen

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www.studentkaren.fi

Open Mon-Fri 12.00-15.00

The student unions are public corporations completely independent of their respective universities. The role of the student unions is to represent their members in the university administration, to improve the position of students in the society in general and to provide the members with services ranging from consultations with lawyers to extra curricular free time activities.

Members of the Student Union are entitled to:

- Subsidised lunches in the student cafeterias.
- Long distance bus/railway/ferry tickets at student prices in Finland.
- Reductions in most theatres, concerts, exhibitions, swimming pools, sports centres, and in some shops and restaurants by showing their student card.
- Reductions in over 1,000 shops. To see the full list of the shops included in the benefits, please see <https://frank.fi/en/discounts/>.
- Basic health care at the Finnish Student Health Service (for further details, please see chapter 5.3).

Student Union Membership

There is a student union (Swe. *studentkår*, Fi. *ylioppilaskunta*) at every Finnish university. The student union membership is compulsory by law for all Finnish degree students. Membership is optional for formal exchange students and PhD students, whereas visiting students and trainees are not eligible to join the Student Union.

The membership fee of the Student Union of Åbo Akademi (ÅAS) is 116€ for degree students for the academic year 2015-2016 (58€ for one term), and 62€ for PhD students for the full academic year (www.studentkaren.fi/english/membership-fee).

There are also many student associations within the university and within each faculty. These are sub-organisations of the student union, and the purpose of their work is to bring forth the opinions of the different associations within the university. Another important purpose of the student associations is to create opportunities for students to meet new and old friends by organising e.g. meetings, parties and excursions. There are also student associations specifically for international students. For more information about all the different associations please see www.studentkaren.fi/english/student-associations/.

ÅAS Membership Benefits

In addition to the general Student Union benefits mentioned before, ÅAS services for its members include the usage of e.g. meeting rooms for free at Kåren and Havtornen. There is also a gym and sauna in Kåren. ÅAS (in Åbo) offers free legal advice once a week together with the Student Union at the University of Turku (TYY). The Secretariat of the Student Union offers the members general help and consultation in academic, social and international affairs.

The Student Union also offers help in matters concerning discrimination and harassment. Their ombudsmen can be contacted by phone or e-mail and can also attend hearings in both Åbo and Vasa. For more information, please see www.studentkaren.fi/english/advice-for-students/.