

To Whomever it May Concern,

I am writing this letter to appeal the recent decision that the Lapin musiikki- ja tanssiopisto has made regarding the position of Horn teacher on the 11th March 2024. I am the current teacher, and to my shock and surprise I have been told I am being replaced in June with almost no warning beforehand.

I am making this appeal on two bases; first, that I was ill-informed of the fact that, despite my expertise in the field of music and specifically my horn playing ability, I am apparently “unqualified” in the eyes of the Finnish Board of Education. The fact that the Institute failed to tell me for over a year that I have worked there that I had to register my British degree in order to be considered qualified for the role I was employed in, means that the open job position was held under false pretense.

I applied for the job position after being told by Julia Pihavainio that the horn position was suddenly open. This was news to me; in fact no one had ever told me I was working on a temporary basis; when I first applied I only had a work permit for a year, so I assumed that I would be made permanent once my work permit was changed to permanent (which by now, it has). To quote the email she sent me on the 8th February:

“It is a bureaucracy thing that it has to be opened and the institute cannot continue your employment directly.”

I was never told WHY it had to be opened, just that it HAS been opened, and that all I needed to do was fill out the form again and I'd be good to go. It was only after the fact that I discovered that if anyone else applied for the job who held a degree from Finland, they would immediately outrank me as my degree does not come from Finland, and I would not even be offered an interview. And that is exactly what happened. Of course, I can apparently register my degree to the Finnish Board of education, but once again, *no one ever told me*. I can guarantee you that the music institute knew this, as they had their records about me from my previous application a year ago. They would have also known months in advance that this position was to re-open and that I would once again be unqualified. Due to the Institute's complete and utter incompetence, I would have never had a chance to be given an interview in the first place.

Therefore, I would argue that the job application and interview process was held under false pretense, as I was given no warning or indication that there was an upcoming application, and that I would be unqualified to work there, despite the fact that I actually had been working there for a year.

My second basis to appeal this decision is a more serious one, in that this is a blatant case of discrimination against an immigrant.

I hold a degree from the Royal Academy of Music, which according to the *QS World University Rankings by Subject 2023*, is in the top three of all universities in the world for the Performing Arts.¹ In this degree, I received a 1st Class Honors, which in the UK is the highest possible level one can achieve for a degree. Furthermore, I have much experience playing with the best orchestras in the UK, Sweden and Finland, including with the Royal Opera House, Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra, and I am currently the Solo Horn of the Lapland Chamber Orchestra.

For the Lapin musiikki- ja tanssiopisto to tell me that I am unqualified to teach at their establishment is quite frankly insulting. The only reason that this is the case is because my degree is from a foreign university. How is that even remotely acceptable?

I realise that this blatant act of discrimination to anyone who studied outside of Finland can be avoided by, according to Julia and her rude and uncompromising boss Kaisa Kuula-Bullat, registering my degree with the Finnish Board of Education, but if no one thought of telling the immigrant who struggles to even speak a word of Finnish this, then it's a moot point. Information about this sort of thing has to be supplied in a way that is understandable to everyone, and so if they are prepared to hire a non-native Finnish speaker, then they have a duty of care to keep that person in the loop. In this case the Institute failed to provide me any information at all, let alone clear and concise information in English.

I'd just like to point out that I understand the importance of learning Finnish in order to integrate into society, and I am taking every effort to do so. I have two private lessons a week and I study every day, but fluency won't happen overnight, and when it comes to important matters such as my job security, I expect all information to be laid out clearly in a language that I understand as an absolute necessity. The Institute failed to provide me that information, and therefore they failed to provide me with the apt duty of care that they are obligated to provide to all employees. I doubt a Finnish speaker would be treated with the same disregard as they have treated me, which is why I am accusing them of discrimination.

Therefore, I believe it is my right to have this decision reversed and for the application process to reopen, so I can re-apply and be treated on equal ground alongside any Finnish citizens also applying.

I'd now like to outline why, if this appeal is rejected, this negatively affects everyone involved, except ironically myself.

I have already spoken to two of my three students about this miscarriage of justice. They were both shocked that the Institute had done this to their teacher against their will, and both agreed to leave the Institute after this term and study with me privately. The third student is the son of Lapland Chamber Orchestra's chief conductor: John Storgårds. He is offended that the Institute would have done this to one of his musicians, and has also decided to take his son out of the Institute.

¹ <https://www.topuniversities.com/university-subject-rankings/performing-arts>

This is bad for the new horn teacher, who will join the Institute in September and have no students to teach, therefore no salary. This is bad for the Institute as they will have no horn players for orchestra and ensembles, limiting the scope of what music can be performed and what chamber groups can be made. This is bad for the Institute's reputation with the Lapland Chamber Orchestra, and therefore the greater field of the performing Arts; the LKO is the only professional orchestra for 100,000 square kilometres. Whilst I myself will not be affected as I will still be receiving a salary from my private tuition, what is worst of all in my opinion is that this is bad for my students, as it prevents them from receiving education such as music theory and ensemble playing that I cannot provide with private tuition alone. But as stated above, they would rather lose this, then lose me as their teacher.

This is why it would be completely impractical and pointless to replace me as the horn teacher. I hope I have outlined my reasons for this appeal clearly and succinctly, and I apologise only for not being able to provide you with a letter in Finnish. Please let me know if there is any further information I can provide with you to help with this claim. I would like to state that if this appeal is rejected for any reason, I shall be contacting the Finnish Musicians Union (of whom I am a member) in order to take further action, until this matter is resolved. I hope that won't be necessary.

Thank you for your time reading this letter, and I look forward to hearing back from you.

Kind regards,

Oliver Davis

Asiakirja / viesti on vastaanotettu / lähetetty edelleen valmisteluun.

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Henkilö- ja arkaluonteisia tietoja sisältävät sähköpostit tulee lähettää Rovaniemen kaupungin turvapostipalvelun kautta.

Turvapostipalvelun saat käyttöön osoitteessa <https://turvaposti.rovaniemi.fi>. Täytä kentät ohjeen mukaisesti. Rekisteröidyttäsi saat ilmoittamaasi sähköpostiin linkin salatun postin lähettämiseksi. Avaa linkki ja täytä luottamuksellisen viestin vastaanottajakenttään [kirjaamo\(at\)rovaniemi.fi](mailto:kirjaamo(at)rovaniemi.fi) ja muut tiedot.

----- Forwarded message -----

Lähtettäjä: **Davis, Oliver** <oliver.davis@rovaniemi.fi>

Date: to 28. maalisk. 2024 klo 18.39

Subject: Appeal against the music institute

To: Rovaniemi Kirjaamo <kirjaamo@rovaniemi.fi>

Hei,

Following my question the other day on how to appeal, attached is my letter. I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards,

Oliver