



**EUCRiTE**

EUROPEAN CENTRE FOR REFUGEE  
INTEGRATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

# Alternative Admission Routes to Universities

Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union





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# **Intellectual Output 4:**

## **Tool-Kit for Alternative Admission Routes**

**European Centre for Refugee Integration in Higher Education  
(EUCRITE)**

### **Partners:**

**Aalto University**

**Technische Universität Darmstadt**

**Technische Universität Graz**

**Institut Polytechnique de Grenoble**

**Katholieke Universiteit Leuven**

**Politecnico di Torino**

**Author: Aalto University EUCRITE team, November 2019**

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## Disclaimer

The views and recommendations in the present publication reflect the EUCRITE -project results. These results are presented in the context of the opinions and views of the individuals involved in the project. This manual is not an official document of the partner universities, and the EUCRITE team is not responsible for any legal interpretation of this manual, as the rules and regulations of each partner may change. Prospective students, and other members of the public, who are interested in the admission routes to the partner universities should contact each University through their official websites.



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## Introduction

**Tool-Kit for Alternative Admission Routes** was one of the five targeted Intellectual Outputs (IO) of the EUCRITE project. The aim of this IO4 was to provide information and a model for each of the partners to later pilot and establish alternative admission routes to their engineering and technology/science programs in addition or as an alternative to the traditional admission procedures. As a result of the work in IO4, coordinated by Aalto University, we have collected data about the existing alternative admission routes and the structures (e.g. legal aspects and the role of the Open University) in each partner university. These are issues that need to be considered when structuring and offering alternative ways to access university, whilst also meeting the entry and quality requirements. The EUCRITE project team has also produced audiovisual material (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SRjD3EWP-BY>) to highlight the challenges that students with diverse backgrounds currently face, whilst trying to gain access to University studies. The video also contains some recommendations for Universities. During the course of the EUCRITE project the team has had several and continuous discussions on the target groups of our project. As a result of these discussions, we are well aware that the alternative routes to admission that are highlighted in IO4, not only target students with refugee background, but are also relevant for students with diverse backgrounds.

Following the peak of refugee arrivals 2015-2016, when 5 million people migrated permanently to OECD countries, attention has now shifted towards effectively integrating migrants into their new societies (OECD, 2018). However, this process has revealed several weaknesses in underlying governance for both the short and the long-term integration, of which the latter also reflects onto the role of our educational systems. Especially challenges concerning the access to higher education institutions have become evident for prospective students with refugee background. These challenges are also often linked to the lack of coordination of our processes and a wide range of differing policies. Lack of coordination often revolve around the residence and study permits, the problems associated with recognition of previous completed studies or the lack of required academic documentation, as well as housing and living costs to name a few (OECD, 2018). All of these issues are intricately woven into a larger web of confusion due to cultural, linguistic and societal challenges, which may hinder the participation in the opportunities offered by higher education.

At the European level, in view of the many societal changes and the demographics of the population, universities have initiated a range of activities to increase the attractiveness of eg. engineering education, as there has been a dramatic decrease in the attractiveness of engineering education all across Europe already for several years. Accordingly, as engineering and technology are the key to an innovative Europe, it is evident that all of our universities



need to reach out to talented potential students in line with the UNESCO principles of equity and inclusion (see: <https://en.unesco.org/sdgs>). Of the 17 UNESCO Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), SDG4 is dedicated to education and the roadmap for SDG4, the Education 2030 Framework for Action (FFA), has two central policy pillars that focus on monitoring and improving learning outcomes and inclusion. With regards to the latter the FFA calls for progress in existing international agreements to improve access, equity, quality and relevance of education (see: <https://en.unesco.org/themes/higher-education/sdgs>). The educational attainment of refugees is of major importance as it has been shown that it improves both prospects of employment and integration (Aberhardt, Coudin and Rathelot, 2017), and may be viewed as a major integration outcome. According to many researches, refugees have been reported to aspire education as one of their highest life goals, and among refugees who have completed secondary school there is almost universal desire to continue studies in higher education institutions (RSN, 2012; Brownlees and Finch 2010). Yet this desire is contradictory with their actual educational opportunities. Even if refugees meet the academic prerequisites, there are many other barriers to accessing higher education, and only one per cent of refugees are able to attend university compared to 34 per cent local students globally (UNHCR, 2016).

It is evident, that European universities need to develop alternative processes in order to make higher education equally available for all students based on an evaluation of their true competencies. Accordingly, as our universities have since 2015-2016 become more familiar and better prepared for the needs of potential students with refugee backgrounds, many services have recently been developed. These services include development and offering of special bridging and preparatory courses, language courses, and other alternatives to admission, which allow students to demonstrate their learning through evidence-based activities.

One of the most advanced processes for alternative routes for admission is the Open University Route in Aalto University that has been in place as the so-called “track” to a degree for more than 20 years. The Aalto Open University Route offers a great opportunity to show the eligibility for university studies regardless of previous educational backgrounds.-Moreover, as Aalto and all European universities are striving to become more diverse and international, the Aalto Open University Route has recently been developed to even better take into account the diverse backgrounds of students and to boost their routes to enter the university. The model of Aalto Open University Route was used as a case example and as a basis for discussion about the alternative admission routes in the EUCRITE project.

In this manual, we aim at raising the visibility of already existing alternatives for admission in different universities. However, during the project it has become apparent that many of the universities do not have any official alternatives, or the existing alternatives do not answer to



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the needs of potential students whose route to higher education will be different, and in many case more difficult. Therefore, we examine examples of different alternative ways to access the EUCRITE partner universities. These examples and experiences can be utilized as models or guidelines for developing alternative ways of admission throughout the European Higher Education Area in the future. Yet it has become very evident, that there is no “one size fits all” solution, as we all recognize common challenges in our current processes. Both institutional procedures and processes and national regulations will pose many challenges to the possible implementation of the different ideas that we present in this manual. Moreover, even if we refer to this publication as a “manual”, we do list specific do’s and don’ts, that could be carried out as point-by-point instructions. Each partner has presented their own routes and thoughts of admission with regards to students from diverse background. As the reader will learn, all the presentations are rather different and reflect a genuine view of the situation. Therefore, this also shows that no step-by-step standardized implementation “manual” can be drafted. This also highlights in a very concrete manner, the maze in which students with diverse background are trying to navigate. In conclusion, by compiling this manual we aim to raise and provoke discussion about the need to develop university admissions both structurally as well as open-mindedly in order to better take into account prospective students from various backgrounds.



## 1. Open University Route to a Degree in the Field of Technology

Open University of Aalto University is an integral part of Aalto University, Learning Services. Open University is by nature open for everyone regardless of educational background, age or nationality. Studies are subsidised by public funding, which enables affordable study fees for the students. Open University results in the form of completed study credits are also part of the university funding model in all Finnish universities and universities of applied sciences.

Aalto University Open University offers a study route possibility for students aspiring for degree studies for the field of engineering. Students who complete Open University Route of Technology studies in 365 days may become admitted as degree students without an entrance examination provided that they meet the study requirements of the route, and are generally eligible for studies in higher education.

Open University Route of Technology consists on mainly first year mathematics and physics courses totaling 27 credits. Studies need to be completed with a weighted average grade of at least 3 (good) during one year (365 days).

 <b>Study module:</b> Open University Route of Technology	 <b>Registration period:</b> August and September-October	 <b>Language of instruction:</b> Finnish/Swedish
 <b>Duration:</b> Maximum 365 days	 <b>Selection criteria:</b> Order of registration	 <b>Field of study:</b> Technology
 <b>Credits:</b> 27 ECTS	 <b>Organizer:</b> Open University of Aalto	 <b>Course fees:</b> Maximum 15€/ECTS

### Target groups of the Route can be defined as:

- Students who wish to get acquainted with technology studies before entering university
- Students who need preparation for the studies of technology in Aalto University
- Students whose choices in high school studies do not optimally match entrance eligibility criteria (e.g. do not fulfill requirements for mathematics)



- Students who wish to change their field
- Students who cannot participate to general admission procedures because of lacking documentation, language skills or other skills needed.
- Students who wish to start university studies while still in high school

## Prerequisites

Courses in Open University are open to everyone. Fees apply only to the courses.

## Procedure

Students register themselves in the Open University Route of Technology during the registration period and will be admitted in the order of registration. Studies cost approximately 15 euros per a course credit, which need to be paid before starting the studies. Students are given a separate study right for Open University. When they become accepted to Aalto University as degree students, their study right will change from separate study right to degree student study right.

Students of the Open University Route of Technology can apply for admission once they have completed all the required studies. The application period for degree programs is twice a year and will be announced annually in the guide for the separate application procedure. If the number of students applying for a given programme exceeds the student quota reserved for it, students are ranked and admitted on the basis of their average grade of study attainments. Most of the degree programmes offered have not set quotas, i.e. all qualified students are accepted. Students applying for a right to study may specify three degree programs in order of priority.

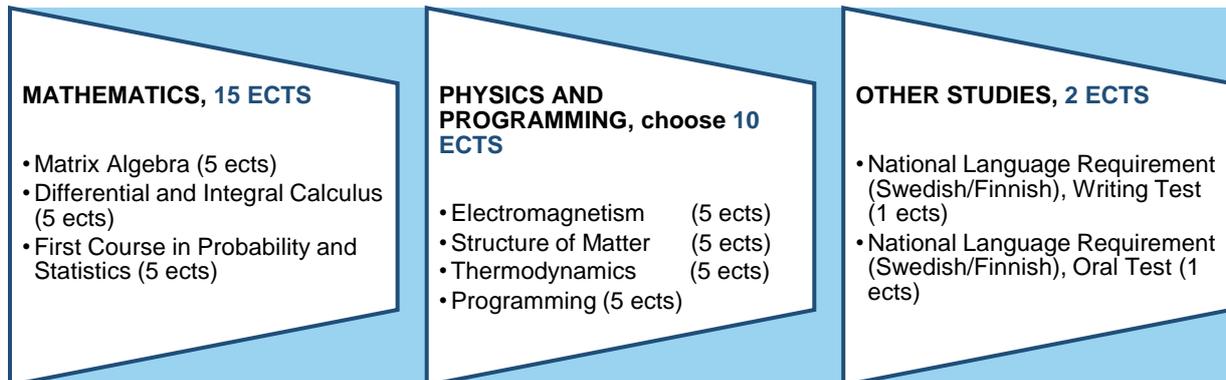
Students in the Open University Route are named a tutoring group to help them integrate into the studies. Students are can also participate freely in some activities of the university, such as eg. 'calculation cottage' (a class-room for math where an assistant teachers helps out with homework until 4 pm daily), attending possible seminars that are open to the public, and use the facilities of the Learning Centre / Library.

Students, who successfully complete the studies of Open University Route of Technology in line with the requirements, are guaranteed a study place in the field of technology (excluding some degree programs). When students become accepted as degree students, credits from Open University are automatically transferred to their degree studies.



## Courses

Students applying for the Aalto University degree programmes in the field of technology through the Open University Route of Technology are required to complete the following courses. Courses have to be completed with a weighted average grade of at least 3 (good) during one year (365 days).



As Finland has two official languages (Finnish and Swedish), native students must demonstrate proficiency in the 2<sup>nd</sup> language also. If a student is not required to take Aalto's written or verbal test for the second national language, s/he must still earn at least 2 credits in some other language studies.

Courses of the Open University Route of Technology are in accordance with the degree requirements on the field of technology in Aalto University.

## Comments of the Managers of Academic Affairs in Aalto University

- Open University Route of Technology offers a great opportunity to broaden the access to university studies
- Open University Route of Technology should measure the competence and motivation of students
- Open University Route of Technology route should include 3-4 courses / 15-20 credits
  - doable but not too narrow in order to guarantee student's eligibility for degree studies
  - courses will be some existing basic level courses included in the particular bachelor program
  - teamwork-oriented courses could support students' performance and integration into university
  - some of the courses could be done online



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## Challenges

The student experiences of Open University Route of Technology has been that courses are rather demanding and require full engagement and a lot of work in order to pass them with the average grade of 3. Route of Technology used to be called 'the Spring Route' which meant that studies needed to be completed in one spring term. Starting from admissions round 2020, the route has been widened to '365 Route', thus giving students more time to complete the studies during one year.

At the moment, Open University Route of Technology is offered in Finnish/Swedish only. However, Aalto University is considering the development of the Route also in English. Open University Route to a Degree in Economics and Business Administration is already available in very small scale in English to business and economics studies offered at Mikkeli Campus. See: <https://www.aalto.fi/en/aalto-university-open-university/open-university-route-to-a-degree-in-economics-and-business>

### For more information

Open University of Aalto University: <https://www.aalto.fi/en/aalto-university-open-university>

Open Universities in Finland: <https://studyinfo.fi/wp2/en/higher-education/open-studies/>



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## 2. Eligibility to apply: applicants with a refugee status and missing documents

If an applicant, who is a refugee or asylum seeker or has a refugee-like status in Finland, cannot prove the eligibility for higher education by documentation, she/he may be invited to an entrance examination or be required to take the Student Aptitude Test (SAT), which can be taken in Finland or anywhere in the world, where it is offered (<https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/sat/register/international>). Students need to pay for their own SAT test.

### Target groups

Applicants, who are refugees or asylum seekers or have a refugee-like status in Finland **AND** cannot prove the eligibility for higher education by documentation.

### Prerequisites

The applicant is required to provide additional information on the lack of requisite documentation as well as an official decision on the refugee status (decision on being granted asylum or a residence permit based on need for international protection or a certificate of a pending application for asylum). Aalto University will determine the applicant's eligibility based on the additional information provided by the applicant.

The applicant is also required to submit an application in the National level Joint application system for higher education. The eligibility can only be determined after the application has been received into the Joint application system during the application period. Instructions for applying can be found on Aalto University website.

### For more information

<https://www.aalto.fi/study-at-aalto>

[admissions@aalto.fi](mailto:admissions@aalto.fi)



At Graz University of Technology (TU Graz), Austria there are two existing routes of alternative admission (see 1. and 2. below). In addition, in Austria it is also possible to access higher education if an individual has successfully completed an apprenticeship training or a VET school (see 3. below).

## **1. University Preparation Programme of the Higher Education Institutions of Graz (VGUH - Vorstudienlehrgang der Grazer Universitäten und Hochschulen)**

The aim of the University Preparation Programme is to prepare international students for supplementary examinations. These are students who have received a notice of admission to pursue a German-taught study programme at TU Graz as well as prospective students with a foreign school-leaving certificate, which is not considered equivalent to an Austrian one.

The majority of students attending the VGUH are students who were not able to show proof of German language competence C1 level at the time of their application for admission as set in the admission requirements of TU Graz. This specific target group also includes students of refugee background who intend to continue their studies at TUGraz or those who aim to start studying at TU Graz.

### **Target groups**

International students, including also students with a refugee background, as well as students that do not have a school-leaving certificate that is equivalent to an Austrian one, see above.

### **Prerequisites**

In order to register for the University Preparation Programme in Graz, students must have received a valid provisional notice of admission by TU Graz. This includes, as a condition for completing the admission, the requirement to take the supplementary examination in German and/or other examinations (e.g. Mathematics, Chemistry, Physics, History,...).

While attending the University Preparation Programme, the student is registered as a non-degree student at TU Graz. This means that the student cannot register for courses nor sit examinations in their official degree programme. Once having passed the supplementary ex-



amination in German and/or in other subjects, the certificate(s) must be shown at the Registrar's Office of TU Graz to complete the admission and become a regular degree-seeking student in the degree programme.

## Procedure

Prospective students first need to apply for admission to a study programme offered at TU Graz. Once they receive the provisional notice of admission stating the necessity of taking supplementary examinations, the students need to register for the University Preparation Programme. To complete the registration the following steps need to be taken:

1. Online registration with VGUH
2. Visit the VGUH office
  - a) Personal registration with the provisional notice of admission issued by TU Graz and passport
  - b) Access data for VGUH-student's account, payment slip given to students as well as allocation to placement test
3. Payment of VGUH fees: It takes approx. 3 to 5 days for the VGUH to receive the payment
4. Visit the VGUH office again
  - a) hand in the deposit slip
  - b) get personal data sheet at VGUH for enrolment at university
5. Enrolment at university (TU Graz)
  - a) hand in the data sheet for the personal enrolment
  - b) get payment slip for the student union fee and access data to TU Graz Online account (pin code)
6. Payment of student union fee: it takes approx.. 3 to 5 days until the university receives the payment
7. Send confirmation of enrolment issued by TU Graz via email to the VGUH office
8. Check the VGUH student's account for information on course schedules

## Courses

1. German courses

There are three target levels (Ib, II, III). Students are placed in these levels according to their language skills, which are determined by means of a placement test. The basic German course comprises 12 hours per week. In addition, there is an elective course with three hours per week. Students must attend these two courses separately but both courses have to be at the same level. The fee for a semester is 420 Euros.



Students of level III with supplementary examinations in other subjects are required to only take a basic course in German (12 hours per week) and subject courses. The fee for a semester is 420 Euros.

## 2. Subject courses

Subject courses (Geography, Physics, Chemistry, etc.) are one-semester courses and can be completed as from German level III onwards. English is taken as a two-semester course and is possible from German level II onwards.

In addition to the workload of independent study time, an attendance rate of 80% of the classes offered is required for a positive assessment of the semester. If the semester assessment consists of a basic course and an elective course, the students have to complete them separately and pass both courses.

## Challenges

- In March 2019, a new regulation came into force which requires applicants to submit proof of level A2 of German (according to CEFR) already at the time of the application for admission to a German-taught degree programme.
- It is important to know that the provisional notice of admission is valid for a duration of three to four semesters only. The student must pass all necessary examinations within this time limit
- For students who are only starting from level Ib it can be challenging to achieve the target level of C1 German in a rather short timeframe. Also the course fees of min. 330€ per semester might be a hurdle.
- Some also find the administrative steps, especially the registration for the University Preparation Programme, rather confusing.

## For more information

<https://vorstudienlehrgang.at/en/graz/>

<https://www.tugraz.at/en/studying-and-teaching/studying-at-tu-graz/registration-and-admission/admission-of-international-degree-programme-applicants/overview-admission-of-international-degree-programme-applicants/>



## 2. MORE Programme - Flüchtlingsinitiative der Universitäten- at TU Graz

The MORE Programme at TU Graz is part of the Austrian-wide MORE Initiative. In 2015, as a reaction to the rising numbers of refugees in Austria, Uniko/Universities Austria (German: Österreichische Universitätenkonferenz) recognized the necessity to not only provide refugees with shelter, food and medical care in Austria but allow those interested and eager to pursue and/or continue their higher education, to get access to Austrian universities. The initiative MORE – Flüchtlingsinitiative der Universitäten allowed each public university to create their own specific MORE programme.

### Target groups

At TU Graz, the MORE Programme is an opportunity for refugee students to gain a first insight into student life at TU Graz. It serves as an orientation for refugees who consider starting a specific study programme at TU Graz. MORE students are registered as non-degree students at TU Graz and, can attend courses open for MORE students.

### Benefits of the MORE programme

- Student gains first insight into student life at TU Graz
- No admission documents required – only the residence card
- Students receive a student card (TU Graz card)
- Mentoring by a senior student of TU Graz within the scope of the Buddy Programme
- Free access to the libraries with the TU Graz Card
- Special student conditions in the Mensa cafeterias and other student discounts

### Procedure

In order to become registered as a MORE student at TU Graz, the following steps need to be taken.

1. Register at the Welcome Center
2. Pre-register in TUGRAZonline
3. Submit the online application and upload a photo for the student card (TU Graz card) in TUGRAZonline
4. Send an email to [more@tugraz.at](mailto:more@tugraz.at) and inform the team that the online application process is complete
5. Pick up your student card at the Welcome Center



## Registration Deadlines

For the winter semester: November 20

For the summer semester: April 20

The Welcome Center of TU Graz provides detailed information on the programme as well as assistance with the registration process.

## Courses

Courses can be attended by MORE students. See the website for further information on courses accessible for the current academic year.

## Challenges

As stated above, MORE students are non-degree students. Thus, there are certain drawbacks:

- Students are not enrolled in a specific degree programme
- Limited access to courses and lectures

## For more information

<https://www.tugraz.at/en/studying-and-teaching/international-studying-and-teaching/welcome-center/more-initiative-of-tu-graz/>

<https://uniko.ac.at/projekte/more/index.php?lang=EN>

## 3. General Higher Education Entrance Examination for Leavers of the Apprenticeship Training and VET Schools (Berufsreifeprüfung)

- For successful leavers with initial vocational education (e.g. Apprenticeship Qualification, Medium Level (BMS) Secondary Technical and Vocational qualification, School for Healthcare and Nursing (Schule für Gesundheits- und Krankenpflege)
- External completion of specific examinations
- Leads to any type of higher education
- Examination consists of four parts



A successfully completed General Higher Education Entrance Examination for leavers of the apprenticeship training and VET schools (Berufsreifeprüfung) enables unrestricted access to universities, University Colleges, Universities of Applied Sciences, Academies and Post-secondary VET Courses. A change of study programme is possible at any time and enables ranking in the upper level of the civil service.

### **Target groups**

Students who obtained initial vocation education, Medium Level Secondary Technical and Vocational qualifications or attended a School for Healthcare and Nursing.

Students who didn't take the A-levels (Matura).

### **Prerequisites**

One of the following is necessary:

- Completion of a 3 year programme at Secondary Technical and Vocational College, Medium Level or school year 3 of Upper Level Secondary Technical and Vocational College
- Apprenticeship
- Educational Institution for Nurses; Education and Training for Health Professions
- Professional examination as part of the process of training as a professional in agriculture and forestry

### **Procedure**

Prior to examinations being passed, an application for admission to a public upper secondary school must be submitted. Preparation for the examination can be carried out by means of independent study, via distance learning or in the context of preparatory courses (Adult Education institutions, VET Schools for Adults, schools in the context of partial legal responsibility). If preparatory courses are carried out at recognised Adult Education institutions, up to three examinations can be taken there. One examination, however, must be taken at a public upper secondary school.

Since April 2017 the format of the standardised final examination and diploma examination is also used for the higher education entrance examination.

### **Courses**

This examination consists of four parts: German, Mathematics, a Modern Foreign Language and a specialist area.



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The examination in the specialist area always relates to the initial vocational education.

### Challenges

**Language requirement:** Language of instruction is German. The German language exam is a compulsory part of the exam and level C1 is required.

**Finances:** Unless the student is an apprentice, he/she needs to pay the preparatory courses.

**Prerequisites:** The students needs to be able to show proof of prior learning and/or professional experience.

**Duration:** If the German of the student is good enough it will take between 1 – 2 years of preparation. It is highly advisable to join preparatory courses at one of the adult education institutions.

### For more information

Source of information: <https://www.bildungssystem.at/en/higher-education-entrance-examination/>

Federal Ministry for Education, Science and Research – General Higher Education Entrance Examination for leavers of the apprenticeship training and VET schools (BRP)  
[www.bmb.gv.at/schulen/bw/zb/berufsreifepuefung.html](http://www.bmb.gv.at/schulen/bw/zb/berufsreifepuefung.html)

Adult Education – General Higher Education Entrance Examination for leavers of the apprenticeship training and VET schools (BRP)  
[www.erwachsenenbildung.at/bildungsinfo/zweiter\\_bildungsweg/berufsreifepuefung.php](http://www.erwachsenenbildung.at/bildungsinfo/zweiter_bildungsweg/berufsreifepuefung.php)



At the present time, there are no other routes to Politecnico di Torino, Italy, than the entrance based on secondary education and admission test. However, if a candidate with a refugee background is not able to submit all the educational certificates required for the admission process, there are some alternative solutions to handle missing documents.

## 1. Applicants with a refugee background

According to the rules established by the Italian Ministry of Education and University, in order to be accepted into a bachelor's program, a candidate must have a valid high school diploma received in Italy or abroad. This rule is valid also for candidates with refugee background.

Italian law does not explicitly allow asylum seekers to enroll at university. A candidate with a refugee background must have been granted asylum (international protection) or subsidiary protection.

### Procedure

All applicants are required to submit an online application and to register for the admission test during the application period. If the test is passed with success but the applicant with refugee background is not able to submit all the required documents, there are some solutions:

- Enrollment under condition and extra time granted to the student in order to collect any missing documents
- Politecnico can directly get in touch with the Italian Embassy and/or the school where the foreign diploma was issued in order to verify its authenticity
- Support of external associations (such as "A Pieno Titolo") which help people with a refugee background who have difficulties in collecting all the documents required for enrollment at university.
- Support by CIMEA-NARIC: the statement of comparability issued by CIMEA can replace the declaration of value of the diploma issued by Italian Embassies/Consulates and required for enrollment in an Italian University. The statement of comparability is free of charge for refugee students.
- Academic Pass for refugees developed by CIMEA in collaboration with some Italian Universities. The Pass is released after the evaluation of documents (if available) and



a detailed interview with the refugee. This pass is not a legal document, but a useful tool to facilitate the evaluation of previous careers.

### **For more information**

[http://international.polito.it/admission/prospective\\_students/bachelor\\_of\\_science/2019\\_2020](http://international.polito.it/admission/prospective_students/bachelor_of_science/2019_2020)

[https://didattica.polito.it/inte/en/apply\\_bsc\\_step1](https://didattica.polito.it/inte/en/apply_bsc_step1)

## **2. Foundation Program**

Politecnico Foundation Program is a project to be developed, as it still (at the time of the publication of this manual), has to be discussed and approved by the Vice Rector for International Relations, the Vice Rector for Teaching, the Academic Senate, etc. Students who complete successfully the foundation program will be exempted from the admission test and directly admitted to a bachelor program. The one-year foundation program (60 credits) is conducted in English or Italian language, and it aims at helping students to enter gradually to the Italian university system and academic culture. It also promotes the integration to the Italian society.

### **Target groups**

- Candidates who did not pass the Politecnico admission test
- Candidates who passed the admission test with a very low score
- Candidates who don't feel prepared for a bachelor program and wish to acquire additional competences, to revise "old" skills and knowledge acquired in the past

### **Prerequisites**

A high school diploma received for a minimum of 11 years of first- and secondary level education is an absolute requirement.

Language skills (minimum level of Italian or English language).

### **Procedure**

Online application submission within specific deadlines.

Admitted students (20-25 per class) will be selected among eligible applicants.

### **Courses**

- Common core of basic scientific subjects: mathematics, physics, computer science.



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- Specific subjects:
    - for engineering courses: chemistry, linear algebra, geometry, engineering drawing
    - for architecture/design courses: humanities, history of art and architecture, geography
  - Workshops on Italian civic culture and European history, intercultural education, Italian education system and study methods, group work, English language, Italian language, oral expression.



## GRENOBLE INP



Grenoble Institute of Engineering is a public scientific, cultural and professional institution constituted in the form of a "Grand Etablissement" within the meaning of Article L. 717-1 of the French Education Code.

As stated in article 20 of the Grenoble INP Internal Regulations: "the admission of students to engineering schools is carried out by competition based on tests or applications, possibly supplemented by an interview. "

Admissions are granted in accordance with the decrees of 23 November 1994 and 16 March 2000 and Act No. 2018-166 of 8 March 2018 on student guidance and success.

While these texts, such as the law of 8 March 2018, advocate easier access to the various institutions of higher education.

However, it is planned that all admissions will be subject to the capacity of the accommodation.

Indeed, article L. 612-3 IV of the Education Code stipulates that: "when the number of applications exceeds the capacity of a training course, registrations are made by the president or director of the establishment within the limits of the capacity...".

Grenoble INP being part of this type of institution, it cannot by nature accommodate all students wishing to be admitted since we have limited capacity.

However, the article quoted above then stipulates that: "registrations shall be made by the president or director of the establishment within the limits of the capacity of the establishment, with regard to the coherence between, on the one hand, the candidate's training project, the achievements of his previous training and his skills and, on the other hand, the characteristics of the training".

Admission is therefore legally studied according to academic and not social criteria.

Legally, a refugee student is a person who has obtained a residence permit in view of his refugee situation. However, once he has a residence permit, this does not in any way promote his ability to admit him to an institution, he will be considered as a foreign student, refugee status not being an "academic" criterion. This is a situation that allows a person to obtain a residence permit.



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In doing so, it is difficult for INP to highlight the refugee criterion during admissions, knowing that a large part of our places results from a competition and that the remaining places are therefore studied mainly through the prism of the academic file.

On the other hand, this does not exclude the possibility for a refugee student to apply to Grenoble INP. The file of the student will be examined on a case-by-case basis by the institution's internal services.

Under no circumstances does our institution wish to exclude refugee students, but the capacity limits coupled with the selection criteria of the competition or the examination of academic files do not allow the implementation of a global reception plan that would call into question the foundations of access to our institution.

**For more information**

<http://www.grenoble-inp.fr/en/international/coming-to-grenoble-inp>



There are two official ways in Germany to enrol in a University in absence of the necessary entrance qualification. If the student has a high school diploma that is only partially recognized, they can enrol in a study preparation program (Studienkolleg). Enrolment can also be granted if the student does not have a high school diploma but has completed a vocational training program and has at least three years of experience in the field.

Since 2003, the independent service provider uni assist has been assisting universities in evaluating educational certificates during the admission procedure. Uni assist evaluates certificates and converts grades into the German system but it does not decide on admission, the individual university does. The procedure adopted by uni assist for cases of missing documents is described below.

Although TU Darmstadt does not use uni assist, many other institutions in Germany do so. The Coordination for Refugee Integration at the TU Darmstadt was established in September 2015 with the goal of supporting asylum seekers and refugees who wished to enrol in an institution for higher education across Germany. Among other services, the Coordination for Refugee Integration offers individual appointments to check credentials and certificated to all prospective students interested in enrolling in preparatory courses.

## Description

In general, applicants must provide a higher education entrance qualification (equivalent to upper secondary education diploma) to enrol in a bachelor course or they must possess a recognized undergraduate diploma to enrol in a master program. School certificates from EU member states (including Liechtenstein, Iceland, Norway and Switzerland) as well as those produced by German schools abroad are usually recognized as equivalent to German certificates. Certificates from third countries depend on the country and on the type of school. When students have a partially recognized certificate and want to enrol in bachelor programs, they are required to pass an assessment test. The Studienkolleg (preparatory courses) prepare for this test. Studienkollegs are available in all German states with the exception of Brandenburg, Bremen, and North Rhine-Westphalia.

A German-wide procedure regarding recognition of prior learning does not exist; therefore, each state has the freedom to set its own rules and regulations. The state of Hesse has not yet provided an official document approving the procedure for recognizing prior learning in



absence of documentation for refugee students; nevertheless, the different universities and universities of applied sciences of the state have come to an agreement on how to handle such cases.

### **Target groups**

Prospective students with refugee background who cannot (fully) prove their eligibility for higher education by presenting proof of prior learning or transcripts of grades.

### **Procedure**

#### **TU DARMSTADT**

In accordance with the resolution passed by the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs, applicants who are unable to provide evidence of prior education are still granted the opportunity to prove it through a three-step procedure:

- Determination of requirements
- Plausibility check of educational biography
- Participation in the assessment test, TestAS

Before being invited to an interview with an international admission staff member, students need to provide their Curriculum Vitae along with a copy of their residence status. The plausibility check consists in a personal interview when a questionnaire is administered. The questionnaire is designed to substantiate the applicant's educational biography. The results of the assessment test are also considered.

At this point, the staff member will write a brief report in which they issue their recommendations. One of four outcomes are possible:

- Impossibility to recognize prior learning;
- Indirect admission to university (the candidate must apply for a place in one of the Studienkollegs);
- Direct admission but limited to specific subjects;
- Direct admission.

#### **UNI-ASSIST**

Prospective students who apply through uni assist must fill out a "self-disclosure" form where they can enter information about their previous education (exams, grades and degree). This form will be forwarded to the university of choice, which will decide whether to accept it or not.

#### **STUDIENKOLLEG**



Depending on the Studienkolleg, students may either apply directly to the Studienkolleg of their choice, or via uni-assist in order to take the entrance exam.

The Studienkolleg offers bridging courses with a focus on mastering the academic language. Depending on the field of study, students can take on of the following courses:

- T-Kurs: German, Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry and Informatics
- M-Kurs: German, Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry and Biology
- W-Kurs: German, Mathematics, Economics, Business and Sociology
- G-Kurs: German, History, German Literature, Sociology and Statistics

At the end of the two semesters, students need to pass the assessment exam in order to be able to enrol in a university program of study.

### **Challenges**

Germany does not have a federal educational law, which means that individual states are free to legislate on educational matters. Depending on where an applicant lives or is registered, they will have to comply with local laws and regulations. For this reason, not every German state offers the possibility of enrolling in a Studienkolleg. Similarly, every state has different ways of regulating recognition of prior learning in absence of documentation, and not every university rely on the services of uni assist. It is therefore very difficult for refugees to navigate this complicated landscape.

### **For more information**

<https://www.daad.de/de/>

<https://www.hrk.de/>

<https://refugees.testas.de/en/>

<https://www.uni-assist.de/en/>



At this point KU Leuven, Belgium, does not offer any official alternative admission routes, but the university has certain measures in place to facilitate access to Higher Education.

## Description

According to title 1. Article 1. Section 1 of the Regulations on Education and Examinations:

(Candidate) refugees with degrees obtained abroad that might come into consideration to be deemed equivalent, but, due to their special circumstances, cannot present the degree certificates, can demonstrate by all legal means that they have obtained the required degree. If KU Leuven can establish with sufficient certainty that the degree has been obtained, the applicant will be allowed to register. KU Leuven can also decide to register applicants who cannot present the said legal means provided that they pass a language test and an additional specific test. Prospective students that fall into this category have to present their case to the Admissions Unit, who will initiate the assessment procedure.

## Target groups

Prospective students who cannot demonstrate that they have obtained the necessary degree certificates in order to enrol at KU Leuven.

## Prerequisites and procedure

### APPLYING FOR A BACHELOR'S DEGREE:

For prospective students (aged 21 or older) with a residence permit or a refugee status who cannot provide a secondary education diploma, a committee will decide as to whether or not a student can start his/her studies at the university. Since the bachelor's programmes at the Faculty of Engineering Sciences are offered solely in Dutch, the student will have to meet the language requirements set by the Faculty. In exceptional cases, the committee can accept a score lower than the minimum language requirements and allow the candidates to register for a credit contract.

Before submitting his/her file, the prospective student is encouraged to attend the university's *open-class days* and receive information about the programme. In the application file, the prospective student should incorporate the feedback from [luci.be](http://luci.be) (an online tool to help choose a



field of study) and motivate why they believe they meet the entrance requirements. The committee meets twice every academic year and will consider the prospective student's request. He or she may be invited for an oral interview and one or more written tests.

#### APPLYING FOR A MASTER'S DEGREE:

Persons with a full refugee status, with subsidiary protection or asylum seekers, can apply for a master's programme. Regardless of whether or not they can provide the necessary documents, these prospective students will rarely be directly admitted to the master's programmes of the Faculty of Engineering Sciences. Higher education institutions in Flanders are authorised to check diploma equivalence and depending on a programme's prerequisites, a student may have to follow a preparatory programme.

In case a student wishes to request exemptions, the student has two options: exemptions based on PAQ (Previously Acquired Qualification) and exemptions based on PAC (Previously Acquired Competence). The PAQ procedure is free of charge and based on documents that prove the student has successfully passed certain courses or programmes. The PAC is not free and is a more complex procedure. The entire procedure is described in article 28 and 29 of the Regulations on education and examination:

#### **PAQ procedure**

Students have to submit an application for exemptions at their first registration for the study programme. In the case of re-registering for the same study programme, an application for exemptions can only be submitted if new elements apply.

Applications for exemptions have to be submitted before the third Wednesday of the academic year. After this date, students can no longer rely on previously obtained credit certificates, certificates of competence or other study certificates to change their individual year programme.

Students registering in the second semester have to submit their applications for exemptions before the third Wednesday of the second semester. Applications for exemptions for study programmes or courses subject to a calendar different from the academic year, have to be submitted before the end of the third week after the start of the programme or course. Students who receive permission to register after the third Wednesday of the academic year, have to apply for exemptions a week later at the latest.

Students have to address their application for exemption for a course or part of a course to the faculty. They have to add a file containing the previously obtained credit certificates, certificates of competence or other study certificates.



The faculty will approve or reject the applications for exemptions at the latest at the same time the approval of the individual year programme. The number of credits for which the exemption has been granted, will be included in the individual study programme.

Exemptions can no longer be granted after the individual year programme for the semester concerned has been definitively confirmed.

### **PAC procedure**

Students have to address their PAC application to the central assessment committee appointed by KU Leuven, or to the contact person of the assessment committee on the campus where they are registered.

Students can submit their applications for recognition of competences throughout the whole year. However, applications for exemptions have to be submitted before 31 May preceding the academic year in which the students wish to draw on the exemption. Derogations from this provision are only possible if the central assessment committee has made an agreement on different deadlines with the study programme that would grant the exemption.

Students cannot submit a PAC application with a view to an exemption for courses that they have included in their individual study programme in a previous or in the **current academic year**.

### **Challenges**

In order to correctly inform prospective students about the flexible measures that may be available to partially facilitate the integration of the target group, the information should be easily accessible to everyone. Not all of the webpages have an English version and the different links should be kept up to date. Moreover, for a number of staff involved in the procedure, the particularities of the admission process and measures in place are not yet common knowledge. Making all information readily available, providing extra information sessions to both asylum seekers as well as staff from reception centres, will be essential. Other bridging solutions aimed at the social and academic inclusion of these students, should be further explored.



# Alternative Admission Routes: regulations, structures and administrative issues

In the autumn 2018, Aalto University conducted a questionnaire for all EUCRITE partner universities in order to gather information about the already existing regulations and structures that need to be taken into consideration when planning to offer alternative admission routes. Besides the admission requirements and legislation thereof, the more specific aim was to gather information on possible bachelor level programs taught in English, Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) and open universities or educational institutions equivalent to the Aalto Open University in each of the universities. English-taught bachelor's programs are particularly important for students from immigrant and refugee background, and MOOCs and open universities would allow people from diverse backgrounds and circumstances to attend studies at higher education level. Based on the results of the questionnaire, it can be concluded that several elements already exist that could be used as parts of alternative admission routes or as elements for the planning of such routes for use in many of the EUCRITE universities. Below, the replies for each of the EUCRITE partners is presented for the questionnaire under eight key topics.

## 1. Admission requirements for the Bachelor's program in Science and Technology

<b>Aalto University</b>	<p>Bachelor's programs in English:</p> <p>Admission Group I: Diploma of secondary education + the minimum requirements set by the target programmes.</p> <p>Admission Group II: SAT test results + diplomas to show eligibility for higher education.</p> <p>See: <a href="https://www.aalto.fi/en/admission-services/bachelors-admissions">https://www.aalto.fi/en/admission-services/bachelors-admissions</a></p>
<b>Politecnico di Torino</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Diploma of secondary education</li><li>2. Proof of language skills</li><li>3. Entrance examination (applicants with SAT, GRE or GMAT certificates may be exempted from this in some programs)</li></ol> <p>See: <a href="http://international.polito.it/admission/prospective_students/bachelor_of_science/2019_2020/admission_requirements">http://international.polito.it/admission/prospective_students/bachelor_of_science/2019_2020/admission_requirements</a></p>
<b>TU Darmstadt</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. University entrance qualification</li><li>2. Proof of language skills</li><li>3. Aptitude tests for some programs</li></ol> <p>See: <a href="https://www.tu-darmstadt.de/studieren/studieninteressierte/internationale_studieninteressierte/bewerbung_und_zulassung_international/index.en.jsp">https://www.tu-darmstadt.de/studieren/studieninteressierte/internationale_studieninteressierte/bewerbung_und_zulassung_international/index.en.jsp</a></p>
<b>TU Graz</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. University entrance qualification</li><li>2. Proof of language skills</li><li>3. Additional and supplementary examinations for some programs</li></ol> <p>See: <a href="https://www.tugraz.at/en/studying-and-teaching/studying-at-tu-graz/registration-and-admission/admission-requirements/#c33935">https://www.tugraz.at/en/studying-and-teaching/studying-at-tu-graz/registration-and-admission/admission-requirements/#c33935</a></p>
<b>Grenoble INP</b>	<p>Grenoble INP does not offer classic bachelor degrees. Students after having achieved 2 years in Higher Education (technology degree, advanced technician's certificate) can access to a vocational degree "Digital professions: design, writing and web production / Print and interactive digital media". The admission to this programme is based on the evaluation of the candidates files. Unfortunately this vocational degree is not taught in English.</p>



	See: <a href="http://www.grenoble-inp.fr/en/academics">http://www.grenoble-inp.fr/en/academics</a> (English taught programmes), <a href="http://www.grenoble-inp.fr/fr/formation/les-admissions">http://www.grenoble-inp.fr/fr/formation/les-admissions</a> (French taught programmes)
<b>KU Leuven</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. University entrance qualification</li> <li>2. A test (ijkingsstoets) measuring if students in their final year of secondary school are ready to start the Bachelor in Engineering Science. The test is obliged to take before registration.</li> </ol> <p>See: <a href="https://www.kuleuven.be/english/admissions">https://www.kuleuven.be/english/admissions</a></p>

## 2. Who sets the admission requirements?

<b>Aalto University</b>	Faculties participating to the English programme discuss admission requirements jointly and in cooperation with Admission Services. Admission requirements are then officially set by the Academic Committee of the coordinating faculty or university-level academic committee.
<b>Politecnico di Torino</b>	<p>The general admission requirements are set by the Italian Ministry of Education, University and Research (MIUR).</p> <p>As far as the Bachelors in Engineering, Design and Urban Planning are concerned, the requirements concerning the entrance test (thresholds, test dates and content, procedures, documents, deadlines, etc.) are set each year by the Academic Senate and by the Rector of Politecnico through a specific Call for admission to the Bachelor's Degree programs.</p> <p>As far as the bachelor in Architecture is concerned, the contents and procedures for the admission test are defined by the Ministry of Education, University and Research (MIUR) through the publication of a Ministerial Decree.</p> <p>The language requirements for all the bachelor programs are set each year by the Academic Senate and by the Rector of Politecnico.</p>
<b>TU Darmstadt</b>	The Hessian Ministry for Science and Arts is responsible for higher education legislation, administration and funding. Admission criteria for international students are coordinated by the KMK (Kulturministerkonferenz / Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs) through ZAB (Zentralstelle für ausländische Bildungswesen / Central Office for Foreign Education).
<b>TU Graz</b>	Admission and Registration Office
<b>Grenoble INP</b>	<p>With reference to Act No. 2016-1828 of 23 December 2016 adapting the second cycle of French higher education to the Licence - Master - Doctorat system, where reception capacities have been defined in the courses, admission is subject to examination of the candidate's file.</p> <p>Nevertheless, candidates can be accepted or not on a case by case study by the directors of studies and after consultation with the heads of courses.</p>
<b>KU Leuven</b>	In part the Flemish government, the university board and faculties.

## 3. Legislation behind the admission requirements

<b>Aalto University</b>	Universities Act directs admission requirements generally. Dates and deadlines for the bachelor level are set by the National Agency for Education.
<b>Politecnico di Torino</b>	<p>The main legislation directing admission requirements is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Art. 6 of the Ministerial Decree n. 509 (3/11/1999, Ministry of Education, University and Research - MIUR)</li> <li>• Art. 6 of the Ministerial Decree n. 270 (22/10/2004, Ministry of Education, University and Research - MIUR)</li> <li>• Procedures about the entrance and the enrolment of foreign citizens in Italian Universities (issued each year by the Ministry of Education, University and Research - MIUR)</li> <li>• Call for admission to the Bachelor's Degree programs issued each year by the Academic Senate and the Rector of Politecnico di Torino.</li> </ul>
<b>TU Darmstadt</b>	<p>The Hessian Code of Law regulates universities in their administrative function (structure, affirmative action, election of presidents etc) and specifically the admission procedure through the "Verordnung über das Verfahren der Immatrikulation, Rückmeldung, Beurlaubung und Exmatrikulation, das Studium als Gasthörer/in oder Gasthörer, das Teilzeitstudium und die Verarbeitung personenbezogener Daten der Studierenden und der Promovierenden an den Hochschulen des Landes Hessen (Hessische Immatrikulationsverordnung)" – The resolutions of the KMK are laid down in "Recommendations" and serve as a basis for admission to studies. The HMWK has established by law that the "Recommendations" are binding in Hesse.</p>



<b>TU Graz</b>	Austrian University Law 2002
<b>Grenoble INP</b>	Act No. 2016-1828 of 23 December 2016 adapting the second cycle of French higher education to the Licence - Master - Doctorat system and decrees of 23 November 1994 and 16 March 2000 and Act N° 2018-166 of March 8 2018 on student orientation and success.
<b>KU Leuven</b>	Flemish Decree for University Education (1991 - last change 2007). Admission Requirements (Chapter 3 - Part 8 - Art. 34) Rules mentioned in general admission requirements)

#### 4. English-taught Bachelor Programs

<b>Aalto University</b>	Bachelor Programme for Science and Technology: Options: Data Science, Digital Systems and Design, Quantum Technology (from 2019), Chemical Engineering (from 2019), Computational Engineering (from 2019) Bachelor Programme for International Business Bachelor Programme for Economics Bachelor Programme for Design
<b>Politecnico di Torino</b>	Completely held in English: Architecture, Electronic and Communications Engineering, Automotive Engineering, Computer Engineering, Mechanical Engineering  Partially held in English (first year in English, second and third in Italian): Aerospace engineering, Biomedical engineering, Building engineering, Chemical and food engineering, Cinema and media engineering, Civil engineering, Electrical engineering, Electronic engineering, Energy engineering, Engineering and management, Environmental and land engineering, Material engineering, Mathematics for engineering, Physical engineering
<b>TU Darmstadt</b>	n/a
<b>TU Graz</b>	n/a
<b>Grenoble INP</b>	International Semester in Responsible Design (Industrial Engineering) Bachelor in Science in Nuclear Engineering
<b>KU Leuven</b>	Bsc in Engineering Technology, BA in Theology and Religious Studies, BA in Philosophy, Bsc in Business Administration

#### 5. MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses) at the Bachelor level

<b>Aalto University</b>	Aalto MOOCs are listed at <a href="http://mooc.aalto.fi/">http://mooc.aalto.fi/</a> MOOCs are mostly related to Programming and Matrix Algebra and are mostly taught in Finnish. MOOCs are seen as an interesting possibility to develop course material and methods of teaching. However, MOOCs need a lot of resources both for development and well as on-line services for the students.
<b>Politecnico di Torino</b>	Politecnico di Torino offers a lot of courses in streaming on the bachelor and master level free of charge. This catalogue of online courses is offered in the frame of the project "Green mobile campus", who wishes to give the students the possibility of an independent learning, in particular for students workers. In this way the lectures/information can be shared among students. The condition to benefit of these lectures in streaming is to be enrolled at Polito and have access to a dedicated page (Portale della didattica), where students can find the materials of the courses prepared by their Professors (video recorded lessons, exercises, notes).
<b>TU Darmstadt</b>	TUD offers an online open learning platform called "OpenlearnWare" – offers a range of courses in Engineering, Natural Sciences, Humanities and an interdisciplinary track (for a list of current courses see: <a href="https://openlearnware.tu-darmstadt.de/">https://openlearnware.tu-darmstadt.de/</a> )
<b>TU Graz</b>	We are currently offering MOOCs for all ranges of education - for schools, for bachelor and master level for higher education as well as for adult education. See our range directly at <a href="https://imoox.at/mooc/">https://imoox.at/mooc/</a> . TU Graz did a high number of research studies on the impact and benefits of implying MOOCs in teaching - see on research gate: <a href="https://www.researchgate.net/project/Massive-Open-Online-Course-MOOCs">https://www.researchgate.net/project/Massive-Open-Online-Course-MOOCs</a> It is the best possibility to bring knowledge to a very broad public audience. It is easy to access and easy to handle a huge amount of students.
<b>Grenoble INP</b>	n/a
<b>KU Leuven</b>	MOOCs at KU Leuven X -platform: <a href="https://www.edx.org/school/kuleuvenx">https://www.edx.org/school/kuleuvenx</a>



## 6. Open University (OU) in your country

<b>Aalto University</b>	Open University is an integral part of the university and the organization is a part of the Aalto University Learning Services. Open university is allowed to offer the same courses/ curriculum taught by the official Aalto University which means that the level of studies is the same as in Aalto university. Open University is open for all regardless of e.g. previous education. Open university courses are either taught integrated to the normal degree studies or as separate courses in the evenings or weekends. Courses can be on-line only, blended or as contact-teaching. Part of university funding from the Ministry of Education is based on the credits-earned through Open University.
<b>Politecnico di Torino</b>	Politecnico di Torino offered some distance bachelor programs in the past but they are not offered any more. At the moment in Italy there are 11 recognized Open Universities: they are not public Universities, but they are legally recognized by the Ministry of Education, University and Research (MIUR) because they have gone through a process of evaluation and accreditation by ANVUR (National Agency for the evaluation of the University).
<b>TU Darmstadt</b>	The German educational system doesn't offer anything comparable to, for example, OU in Finland. However, single universities offer pre-study programs specifically designed for certain target groups (i.e. refugees). These programs allow participants to earn credits that will be later counted upon the completion of a degree at the university offering the pre-study program. Since 2015 the non-profit organization Kiron offers refugees and asylum seekers the opportunity to take bridging courses and courses offered in cooperation with different universities (not supported by TUD). It offers certificates but no degree. It is possible to transfer to universities but only for residents of Germany/Jordan/Lebanon.
<b>TU Graz</b>	None of the Austrian public universities offers an open university system as e.g. Aalto University does in Finland. The well-known "The Open University (UK) has an office in Vienna.  Danube University Krems – University for Continuing Education is located in Krems (Austria) and offers courses specifically oriented towards the needs of working professionals. Depending on what kind of diploma/degree (e.g. academic expert or master degree), the admission requirements are the following: Academic expert (course lasts 3 semesters): general university-entrance qualification is sufficient Master programme (4 semesters): bachelor's (or an equivalent) university degree For some master programmes at Danube University Krems, it is sufficient to prove that the person has a relevant work experience of at least 8 years (e.g. physiotherapist decides to take a master degree in a health-related field) WIFI – Wirtschaftsförderungsinstitut: is the education branch/institute of the Austrian Economic Chamber and focuses on adult education One branch is called "Berufsakademie" (professional academy) where professional can obtain a master degree even without having the school-leaving certificate that entitles Austrian students to study at university. In order to be admitted, they need to prove at least 6 years of relevant work experience.
<b>Grenoble INP</b>	In France we do not have proper Open Universities as they do in the UK for example (online courses). Here in France Open Universities offers to any public, without age limit nor diploma, to follow conferences of teachers researchers, researchers, and recognized professionals. However, France has its MOOC (Massive Online Open Courses) platform: it is called FUN for "France Université Numérique" and offers over 300 free online courses open to all. More than 80 French institutions participate (including the Communauté Universités Grenoble Alpes in which Grenoble INP is included). Nearly 50 training themes are proposed. Courses start throughout the year; the school year does not necessarily start in September.
<b>KU Leuven</b>	You can follow Open University Courses at KU Leuven but it is offered by the Netherlands Program 'Open Universiteit'

## 7. Target groups and course fees in OU

<b>Aalto University</b>	Open University courses are open for all regardless of previous education. At Aalto University we have four main groups: persons already in worklife looking for courses to update their education, adults willing to study as a hobby, degree students from Aalto and other universities and students aiming for degree studies. Open university is allowed to charge a fee of maximum 15 euros/ credit from participants.
<b>Politecnico di Torino</b>	They are considered the best solution for the workers who have not so much time to study and students who cannot afford moving to another city/country to attend a course. In general students older than 30 years and/or who are in delay with their career ask the enrollment to the OU. Online vocational training



	courses and advanced education courses having a short duration usually cover well defined subject matters. Course fees depend on the Open University and on the specific course selected. Usually fees are between 1000 and 5000 euros.
<b>TU Darmstadt</b>	Target group: refugees and asylum seekers
<b>TU Graz</b>	Danube University Krems – University for Continuing Education: professionals interested in further education, mainly also in obtaining a master or PhD degree related to their professional field WIFI: further education, obtaining a master For most of the institutions, the target groups are professionals interested in continuing their education while being employed at the same time. Course fees depend on the institution and the course/degree: up to 16,000€.
<b>Grenoble INP</b>	Target group: anyone who wants to learn, through conferences, on a specific theme. For the FUN platform, anyone can register and follow the wanted classes without paying anything.
<b>KU Leuven</b>	Target group: people over 18 years old.

## 8. Qualifications given by OU

<b>Aalto University</b>	Credits earned can be transferred to degree studies once the status of a student changes to degree student. It is not possible to complete a whole degree at the Open University.
<b>Politecnico di Torino</b>	Open Universities can give very different qualifications: bachelor degrees (3 years), master of science degrees (2 years), specializing masters (1 year), single courses, vocational training courses and advanced education courses (lasting from a few hours to 1 or even 2 years). Diplomas issued by legally recognized Open Universities have the same legal value of diplomas issued by regular universities.
<b>TU Darmstadt</b>	n/a
<b>TU Graz</b>	Degrees (master and PhD), also others such as certificates (e.g. academic expert). It's difficult to say whether qualifications are comparable with the qualifications given by regular universities. There is definitely a stronger focus on equipping professionals with further and in-depth qualifications for their respective fields, perhaps also more practice-oriented as in comparison to a general university degree.
<b>Grenoble INP</b>	When they are called Open Universities, there are no courses as such but rather conferences on a specific theme. No qualification is given. For the FUN platform: a distance examination verification system is in place for institutions to issue certificates in printable HTML5 format describing course content. The resulting certificate can be integrated into a social network profile or directly into a CV via a URL. Institutions are free to integrate them into degree programmes. This is what the CNAM has chosen to do by granting 2 ECTS with the MOOC certification "From manager to agile leader". The certification service is not free (50 to 60€) but remains optional. Follow-up certificates will continue to be issued by FUN.
<b>KU Leuven</b>	You can get a bachelor or master degree. Students in Belgium have to pass NARIC to have their degree validated for some professions (psychologist, law) . The other option is to get a certificate if you have followed certain classes.



## Conclusion and recommendations

Most of the existing practices of alternative admission routes in EUCRITE partner universities are designed to ease up the recognition of prior learning or to prepare prospective students for admissions. However, the granting of study rights is, for most partners, a separate issue. Aalto Open University is the only one making an exception to this by offering a study programme, which is perceived as a demonstration of one's eligibility to higher education, if completed with the given requirements.

The question of alternative admission routes, which would enhance equality in terms of university access, is confusing for universities that traditionally aim at high achievement and excellence, which is based on competitiveness. As Guri (1986, p. 59) explains, "*the equality–excellence dilemma in higher education bears unique conceptual and practical difficulties. The university is selective by nature, and its raison d'être is the pursuit of high academic achievement and the provision of quality education. The more an institution gains a reputation for excellence, the more likely it is to restrict access to a highly selective group of students.*" However, as long as Universities do not recognize the many structural constraints that hinder applicants from more diverse groups to attend universities, they simultaneously fail to recognize the potential of many prospective and talented students.

On the other hand, for example in Finland, the requirements for admission to university have undergone major changes, as there is a need to have wider opportunities for prospective students to demonstrate their eligibility. The Ministry of Education and Culture has funded several higher education development initiatives in the fields of student admissions, procedures for the recognition of prior learning and degrees in order to promote both national and international mobility (see: <https://minedu.fi/en/development-of-higher-education>). One of these projects is called Alternative path to university (see: <https://www.avoin.jyu.fi/en/open-university/projects/alternative-path>). The objective is to establish different paths to higher education besides the ordinary entrance examination and the matriculation examination based admission, and which also Aalto University has been involved in. During the project, the Aalto Open University Route of Technology has been developed to better meet the needs of potential students from diverse backgrounds. Accordingly, these broader avenues to University education will also pave the way for development of alternative ways of recognizing different competencies also in exceptional cases.

However, as can be seen from the results of the present manual, as well as the questionnaire of 2018, many of the partner universities are part of more challenging systems and regulatory



environments, which set also barriers for development of alternative admission routes, even if there is clearly willingness to integrate all students equally into the universities.

**What would happen if the university admissions procedures allowed some more flexibility in the ways eligibility, study success, motivation and commitment is assessed?**

This question was posed to the participants of the EUCRITE final conference at KU Leuven on 14.11.2019. The question was examined by using a SWOT analysis for considering the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of alternative admission routes. As a result of the iteration, it was concluded that if the concept of alternative admission routes is not explained and communicated effectively, there could be major threats and weaknesses reflected onto the prestige and reliability of university admission procedures. It is, however, important to note that an alternative admission route should not be understood as an easier access to university, rather it must attain the status of a valid and reliable approach to evaluate an applicants eligibility. Moreover, as a result of the Leuven final conference, it was also concluded that lack of funding and resources challenge universities' ability to establish alternative admission procedures. On the other hand, alternative admission routes were believed to have the potential to make higher education available for larger group of students from various backgrounds and foster social integration and equality in society. If access to university were to be more explicitly dependent on the applicant's competencies, it would also enable the access to higher education of individuals who for some reason or another cannot fulfill the traditional admission requirements despite of their potential for university studies.

Equity and inequality are at the core of policy discussion on tertiary education all around the world. Governments are keen to ensure that every person has an equal opportunity to access higher education and to benefit from the consequently improved opportunities offered by the labour market and social outcomes. To improve social mobility and socio-economic outcomes, it is critically important to remove inequalities in education opportunities and to promote inclusive growth by broadening the pool of candidates for high-skilled jobs. (OECD, 2017.) Consequently, increasing numbers of students are enrolling in tertiary education across OECD countries (OECD, 2019). Yet it is to be noted, that the expanded interest towards tertiary level education itself has not succeeded in reducing the social-class inequalities. Certain socioeconomic characteristics, including immigrant background, impair the likelihood of entering higher education institutions (OECD, 2017). Despite of the national regulations or other external factors directing the practices of admission, universities can still make small but effective steps towards equality and inclusion.

Based on the findings made in the EUCRITE project as covered in the present manual, the following recommendations can be made:



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- Universities should develop processes by which the background of applicants from refugee, migrant and underprivileged groups in general, can be better taken into consideration in application and admission
  - Early recognition of the needs of all students as well as the special groups discussed in this manual is essential to facilitate access and integration to higher education.
  - Positive discrimination can be a justifiable policy to guarantee that equal educational opportunities are available for all prospective students
  - The knowledge of different education systems should be enhanced so that the recognition of prior learning could be carried out appropriately.

In addition, universities could explore the opportunities and challenges of establishing an institution like Open University in Finland, which is constructed within the mother university and offers the same courses for a modest course fee. Studies themselves do not automatically lead to a degree, unless they are Open University Route studies, but can provide a great opportunity to become familiar with the local university studies in a particular field and develop the needed skills for e.g. passing the entrance examination and future studies. Open University Route would, in turn, serve the needs of many prospective students when accessing the university with differing educational backgrounds or even without formal documentation of previous studies.

One of the key findings of the EUCRITE project has been that universities need to improve the transparency of their admission procedures, including the access to information and clarity of communication. Central to the issue of communication is clarification of the student eligibility criteria and the process by which these criteria can be fulfilled and verified by the aspiring student and the receiving institution.



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