



## University access for refugees in Europe: Some information and contacts

Prepared by the University of East London 'University for All' programme

(UEL Centre for Narrative Research with Psychosocial Studies)  
(<https://educatingwithoutborders.wordpress.com/university-for-all-2/>)

With thanks to l'École Laïque du Chemin des Dunes (Virginie Tiberghien)  
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and Akita Bourras, Celine Cantat, Marie Godin, Katrine Hansen, Mona Livholts, Aura Lounasmaa, and Corinne Squire

We hope you find these notes helpful. They do not cover everything and we are still developing them! Please get in touch with the people mentioned, by email, if you want some further advice, or contact [educatingwithoutborders@gmail.com](mailto:educatingwithoutborders@gmail.com)

### European university information

Institutions with programmes for refugees:

<http://refugeeswelcomemap.eua.be/Editor/Visualizer/Index/34>

EU support for refugee higher education:

[http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/migration/higher-education-refugees\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/migration/higher-education-refugees_en.htm)

<http://www.resettlement.eu/page/supporting-refugees-access-higher-education>

Best practice: [http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/higher-education/doc/inspiring-practices-refugees\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/higher-education/doc/inspiring-practices-refugees_en.pdf)

## European free university possibilities

### Fully accredited free programme

Kiron University: <https://kiron.ngo/about>; <https://kiron.ngo/study/apply-admission> (English and German and French). Enrolling till June 20, for September start. Two years' online in four study streams (social sciences, computer science, engineering, business and economics) plus language and study skills. Final year is in a European partner university. You need to have registered as a refugee to take part.

### Partly-accredited free programme

University of the People (US-based): <http://www.uopeople.edu/>. This is available for everyone.

### Accredited free starter course for non-registered refugees

University of East London 'University for all' programme: An accredited short course in Life Stories, available onsite (Calais and elsewhere) and (from September) online: Go here for details: <https://educatingwithoutborders.wordpress.com/university-for-all-2/> email: [a.lounasmaa@uel.ac.uk](mailto:a.lounasmaa@uel.ac.uk)

### Help for refugee academics who are at risk in their own countries/in the UK

CARA <http://www.cara.ngo/>

### Help for refugee scientists

Science4Refugees: <http://ec.europa.eu/euraxess/index.cfm/jobs/science4refugees>

## National programmes

PLEASE NOTE: Most of the programmes described below require you to have registered as a refugee.

In most cases, you are not able to travel out of the European country where you have registered as refugee, to attend university in another European country, until you have long-term residency rights in the country where you have registered.

Once you do get long-term residency rights in the country where you have registered, in many cases you are then able to move to other European countries for university education.

Even then, you will be charged fees that are higher than EU fees in the UK, Ireland and Denmark, until you are a permanent resident of the country where you applied for asylum.

We have included a variety of countries below because people register as refugees in many European countries, and have friends and family registered as refugees in many countries too, for whom this information could be helpful.

### Belgium

#### Programmes for refugees

Several universities have special provision for students who are refugees:

Universite Catholique de Louvain (UCL): UCL has decided to offer (free of charge) refugees planning to undertake or continue studies in higher education the opportunity to follow training in foreign languages (French, English) and to officially register for three so-called isolated courses ("cours isolés" i.e. not part of an academic track) in order to familiarise themselves with the Belgian higher education system. Refugees are exempted from tuition fees concerning both enrolment and participation in the three courses. More information here:

[http://www.uclouvain.be/cps/ucl/doc/international/documents/Refugies\\_FicheFAC\\_English.pdf](http://www.uclouvain.be/cps/ucl/doc/international/documents/Refugies_FicheFAC_English.pdf)

Vrij Universiteit of Brussels : 'Welcome Student-refugees Program'

<http://www.vub.ac.be/en/welcome-student-refugees-programme> . The VUB (Vrije Universiteit Brussel) actively supports the integration of refugees and encourages those with an academic background or academic ambition to make use of the various opportunities offered on campus. The VUB studies programme has been explicitly opened to help refugees. The University also supports refugees with language courses, which may help to prepare for future studies at the VUB. The offer comprises an intensive English (and Dutch) languages course in 2016 summer semester. The focus of this programme has to result in the enrolment for one of the study programmes at the VUB.

Dr. Mohammad Salman is the contact person for refugee-student matters, coordinates the project that supports access and integration of refugees at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel.

E-mail: [Mohammad.Salman@vub.ac.be](mailto:Mohammad.Salman@vub.ac.be)

Telephone:

+32 2 629 15 81

Universite de Liege – Refugee desk: [https://www.ulg.ac.be/cms/c\\_7038137/fr/refugies-et-ulg-un-programme-daccueil-et-daccompagnement-personnalisés](https://www.ulg.ac.be/cms/c_7038137/fr/refugies-et-ulg-un-programme-daccueil-et-daccompagnement-personnalisés). Contact: Christine

Meurens ([actions-refugies@ulg.ac.be](mailto:actions-refugies@ulg.ac.be) - tél : +32 4 366 98 95)

***For more details, contact Marie Godin [godinmarie@gmail.com](mailto:godinmarie@gmail.com)***

## Denmark

### General information

There are eight universities in Denmark. You can read about them here:

<http://studyindenmark.dk/study-options/danish-higher-education-institutions/universities>.

An undergraduate degree is three years and a master's degree, two years.

The universities in Denmark offer some of their master's degrees and many single courses in English. Bachelor's degrees in English are rare but a few of the bachelor's degrees at Roskilde University Centre, Copenhagen Business School and Copenhagen School of Design and Technology's are in English.

Programmes taught in English can be found here: <http://studyindenmark.dk/study-options/find-your-international-study-programme>

You apply for bachelor's degree online at [www.optagelse.dk](http://www.optagelse.dk) (enrolment is only once a year). You have to submit the application before the 15th of March for enrolment in September.

If you wish to apply for admission to a Master's (*candidatus*) programme or an adult education programme (VVU, Diploma or Master degree), contact the educational institution directly. A guidance counsellor at the institution or faculty can help you find out whether your educational background is relevant to the programme that you want to study.

In general, it is always a good idea to contact a counsellor at the institution.

### Qualifications required for entry

The basic requirement is to have graduated from a Danish high school. However, you can have non-Danish qualifications recognized. The general admission requirement is that you have accomplished upper secondary school/high school level in your country. For some countries, upper secondary level is not enough and needs to be supplemented by one or two years of further education.

Read about the specific requirements here:

<http://ufm.dk/en/education-and-institutions/recognition-and-transparency/find-assessments/entry-to-higher-education/foreign-qualifications-for-entry-to-higher-education>

It is recommended to get The Danish Agency for Higher Education to assess foreign qualifications before applying for admission to higher education.

### **Language requirements**

To do a full bachelor's degree you must pass a 'Danish as Secondary Language' test since all bachelor's degrees are in Danish. Local authorities are required by law to offer Danish language and culture courses to all foreign residents. The local language schools offer courses at all levels. The courses usually consist of 18 lessons a week, though some schools offer more intensive courses.

If the programme is taught in English you must submit proof of English proficiency equivalent at least to English B level in Denmark. Educational institutions may in some cases require that you take a supplementary test in English. If you do not have English proficiency at least at B level the educational institution may decide that you must pass a special test in English instead.

To prove a satisfactory proficiency in English, the language tests TOEFL, IELTS and Cambridge ESOL examinations (CAE) are often used.

### **Price**

Refugees who have a temporary residence permit with the possibility of permanent residence are exempted from paying tuition fees for their studies in Denmark.

### **Programmes for refugees**

Currently there are no university programs for refugees although Copenhagen University is negotiating with the government in their attempt to change this.

The Danish Folk High School does however have scholarships for refugees. Folk high schools are a Scandinavian tradition and there are more than 70 of them. It is a non-formal education and there are no academic requirements. They offer several different courses - courses in Danish language and culture are among them. You can read about them here: <http://danishfolkhighschools.com/> or watch this introductory video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UZ2a4NKppOA>. You apply directly to the school that interests you.

**For more details, contact Katrine Hansen [katr\\_h@hotmail.com](mailto:katr_h@hotmail.com)**

## Finland

Asylum seekers in Finland are entitled to free language and other tuition while waiting for their decision. Once a refugee status has been granted, a person is entitled to all the benefits that are given to Finnish citizens, including free secondary and third level education. All university education is currently free for everyone, but tuition fees to non-EEA students are going to be introduced in the coming years.

Most Bachelor's degree programmes are taught in either Finnish or Swedish and students would need to pass a language test in order to apply. To apply for a Bachelor's degree programme students need to present notarised translations of original high school diplomas and pass an entrance exam. Most universities offer Masters degrees and doctoral training in English.

The Open University offers affordable courses that can be enrolled on at any time without showing proof of previous education or passing language competency tests, although teaching in most courses is in Finnish or Swedish. Some courses are also offered as distant learning modules. Nearly all modules taken through the Open University can be integrated into a degree programme at a later stage if a student enrolls at a university. More information <http://www.avoinyliopisto.fi/en-GB/>

Many Universities of Applied Sciences (polytechnics) offer degree courses in English. These include Bachelor's level degrees in business, nursing, teaching, media, engineering and many other areas. These are currently free for everyone. Application requires translated and notarised high school diplomas and entrance exam. Proof of English language competency is required. More information can be found on each polytechnic's website (ammattikorkeakoulu).

If original high school diplomas cannot be located or a person hasn't finished their secondary education, it is possible to do the Finnish secondary school and take the Baccalaureate exam, which entitles a person to apply for higher education. Courses are offered as evening and distant modules for adults. Finnish or Swedish language competency is required before commencing secondary education. Vocational secondary education that prepares directly for a profession is also available free of charge. In addition, an access course for immigrants, which prepares students for language and educational competencies can be taken before enrolling on a vocational course. Immigrants, including refugees, may be eligible for financial aid and transport subsidy during the access course.

This link provides a useful introduction available education pathways, application procedures and available support in English <https://studyinfo.fi/wp2/en/>

**For more information, contact Aura Lounasmaa [a.lounasmaa@uel.ac.uk](mailto:a.lounasmaa@uel.ac.uk)**

## France

### General information

There is no general system for applying to French universities. You need to check the admission policy of each university and apply accordingly. A good place to start looking for information is the general portal, available in French and English

<http://www.campusfrance.org/en>

As well as undergraduate and Masters degrees, there is the BTS diploma (Brevet de Technicien superieur), which is a diploma completed in 2 years in a high school (lycée) but after high school. These are professional qualifications in for instance communication, building or marketing <http://www.letudiant.fr/etudes/bts.html>.

### Qualifications required for entry

The basic requirement is to pass the Baccalaureat at the end of high school. However, for French people, as well as others who do not have this qualification, equivalent qualifications will be accepted

How this is done, depends on which university and which department, again – so you need to ask the particular department to which you are applying

### Language requirement

The language level required is B1 for (undergraduate) Licence, usually C1 for Masters. It is tested usually by the university or they ask for a certificate. Every university is different as every university is independent. It is best to check with the university to know which certificate they want or if they organize their own tests.

There are a number of degree courses available in English:

<http://www.campusfrance.org/en/page/programs-taught-english>

### Price

The prices are very different as every university is independent. Usually an undergraduate degree or Licence is around E300 per year, a master's, E 500 per year. BUT 'Les Grandes Ecoles', which are high level universities like Oxford and Cambridge, can charge E5000 to E10000, depending also on the subject of the degree.

Students can get a grant from the state, depending on their and their family's economic circumstances. This may mean they pay very little or nothing in fees, and also receive up to E400 a month for expenses. They may also get help with accommodations. The applications for the grants are made directly to the local HE authority of the area where you live – CROUS.

### Programmes for refugees

There is no overall system for helping refugees into university education.

Some advice can be found here: A general portal:

<http://www.etudiant.gouv.fr/cid97598/les-institutions-universitaires-francaises-s-engagent-pour-l-accueil-des-refugies.html>

For general help, you can also apply to OFII (<http://www.ofii.fr/default.php3>) which has an office in Calais and which should be able to provide education guidance.

On financial help for refugees' study, please see: Entraide Universitaire Francaise:

<http://entraide-universitaire.fr/>

In Paris and the nearby area, there is a programme to provide pre-university: up to diploma level, free French education for refugees: [http://fr.ulule.com/ecole-thot/?utm\\_campaign=presale\\_36655&utm\\_source=newsletter\\_ulule&utm\\_medium=click](http://fr.ulule.com/ecole-thot/?utm_campaign=presale_36655&utm_source=newsletter_ulule&utm_medium=click)

Specific universities are developing their own programmes:

University of Paris 1- Pantheon-Sorbonne <https://www.univ-paris1.fr/international/accueil-des-etudiants-refugies/>

Sciences Po French branch of Kiron University: <http://uk.reuters.com/article/us-europe-migrants-france-sciences-po-idUKKCN0WH201> (in English)

Ecole Normale Supérieure: <http://lci.tf1.fr/france/societe/l-ecole-normale-superieure-accueil-50-etudiants-refugies-8724269.html>

Resome: student-led organisation coordinating information about French university opportunities for refugees. Here is its listing: [http://www.resome.org/Les-membres-du-reseau\\_a20.html](http://www.resome.org/Les-membres-du-reseau_a20.html)

Contact **Khalid Mansour** at the Darfuri School for information about the programme at Lille University

*For more information, contact Aura Lounasmaa [a.lounasmaa@uel.ac.uk](mailto:a.lounasmaa@uel.ac.uk) or Atika Bourras [batika.1@gmail.com](mailto:batika.1@gmail.com) or [virginie.tiberghien@wanadoo.fr](mailto:virginie.tiberghien@wanadoo.fr)*

## Germany

### General information

An introduction: <https://www.study-in.de/en/refugees/>

See [https://www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?mid=zi1\\_FmZIBexM.k9RxfL-WxtjY](https://www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?mid=zi1_FmZIBexM.k9RxfL-WxtjY) (click on locations)

For instance, just one example is here: Open University Heidelberg: <https://www.uni-heidelberg.de/university/refugeerelief/>

**For more information, contact Anna Schmauder [universities4refugees@posteo.de](mailto:universities4refugees@posteo.de)**

## **Hungary**

Central European University are running an Open Learning Initiative, Olive: free weekend courses for refugees:

[https://www.ceu.edu/olive\\_registration\\_spring](https://www.ceu.edu/olive_registration_spring)

## **Ireland**

Undergraduate university education in the Republic of Ireland is free for home and EEA students, including refugees and those granted a humanitarian leave to remain. Although there are no course fees, there are considerably high registration fees varying between institutions and reaching up to and over €1000 per year. Postgraduate courses have course fees that vary between subject and institutions, usually from about €3,000 to up to €15,000.

Masters students can have their fees paid by the local authority under the Free Fees Scheme. A small maintenance grant is also available for both undergraduate and postgraduate students. If you hold refugee status in the Republic of Ireland, you can apply for free tuition under the Free Fees Scheme: <http://www.studyineurope.eu/study-in-ireland/tuition-fees>

Applications for grants and Free Fees is done directly to the local authority where you live.

You will not be able to access university before you have been granted a refugee status, but can avail of English language tuition and other courses, organised by NGOs as asylum seekers have no automatic right to state funded courses.

Applications to undergraduate courses in universities and Institutes of Technology are done centrally through the Central Applications Office <http://www.cao.ie/>

Applications for postgraduate courses are sent directly to the institute where course takes place.

There are no specific programmes currently on offer in Ireland for refugees and asylum seekers.

More information about education in Ireland can be found here <http://www.educationinireland.com/en/How-Do-I-Apply-/>

**For further information, please contact Aura Lounasmaa [a.lounasmaa@uel.ac.uk](mailto:a.lounasmaa@uel.ac.uk)**

## Italy

Contact *Giorgia Dona* [g.dona@uel.ac.uk](mailto:g.dona@uel.ac.uk)

## Netherlands

A good place to start: the Foundation for Refugee Students  
[https://www.uaf.nl/home/english/the\\_foundation\\_for\\_refugee\\_students\\_uaf](https://www.uaf.nl/home/english/the_foundation_for_refugee_students_uaf)

We Are Here Academy (<http://heretosupport.nl/we-are-here-academy-3/>): The We Are Here Academy is an educational initiative offering university-level courses for undocumented individuals. In the Netherlands, refugees in limbo are not allowed to enrol in universities because they lack the documentation required for admission. At the We Are Here Academy, professional lecturers teach university-level courses on a voluntary basis. Like other institutions for higher learning, every course is concluded with an exam, when students pass the exam they get a certificate, which describes the level of the course, and provides contact information of the academy and teachers who vouch for the level of the course and can act as a reference for the student. These certificates testify that the students have passed a course on an academic level. Since the We Are Here Academy cannot grant study credits (ECTS) the certificates are signed by the lecturers on a personal title, meaning that they – as lecturers – vouch for the capabilities of the student. In preparation of the ‘We Are Here Occupying the Border’ Forum the Academy will offer a range of media courses to teach students journalistic skills, so they can represent themselves in media, instead of being dependent on mainstream media and journalists.

Education Without Borders (contact: [s.r.j.deen@uva.nl](mailto:s.r.j.deen@uva.nl)): this will start after the summer at the University of Amsterdam, UvA

For those already recognised as refugees, the University of Amsterdam is organising this:  
<http://www.uva.nl/en/news-events/events/events-calendar/content/information-events/2016/0/open-day-for-refugees.html>

On World Refugee Day – 20 June – the University of Amsterdam (UvA) and Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences (AUAS) will organise an open day to provide you with information about studying and gaining work experience in the Netherlands.

## Norway

For information about studying and applying for programmes in Norway:

<http://www.uio.no/english/about/collaboration/academic-dugnad/events/info-day-for-refugees.html>

*For more information, contact Katrine Hansen [katr\\_h@gmail.com](mailto:katr_h@gmail.com) \**

## **Sweden**

English language teaching at all levels is available in most Swedish universities. Non-EU students pay a tuition fee, but scholarships are available in all institutions. Asylum seekers are not entitled to access higher education in Sweden. Swedish language education is available. Once asylum has been granted a person is entitled to free education under the same rules as Swedish citizens.

The following link provides through information about courses on offer, application procedures, general information about living in Sweden and available support

<https://studyinsweden.se/?nab=0>

Some courses are in English. For instance, this graduate course, 'Global and transnational social work', which may have funding for travel for refugees.

<https://www.liu.se/utbildning/kurs/745A35?l=sv> *For more information, contact Aura Lounasmaa [a.lounasmaa@uel.ac.uk](mailto:a.lounasmaa@uel.ac.uk)*

## **United Kingdom**

### **General information**

A UK undergraduate degree is usually three years, except for some professional degrees like art, architecture and medicine. Scottish undergraduate degree programmes are four years. A Masters may be one or two years.

For undergraduate degrees, you are expected to apply once a year via UCAS, the overall university application system for all UK universities. The deadline is spring, for entry in late September. However, you can also apply to UCAS through 'clearing' in August, when courses with spare places may still be recruiting some students. <https://www.ucas.com/>

For Masters courses, you need to apply to the specific university and course that interests you.

The UCAS site will also guide you through selecting an undergraduate course.

### **Qualifications required for entry**

Most high school diplomas will be adequate for entry to a UK undergraduate degree, although in some cases one or two extra years are required. A specific level of high school diploma pass may also be required.

Different universities and different degrees require different numbers of 'points' (related to grades) at high school diploma level.

### **Language requirement**

University degrees are conducted in English. If the language of your education qualifications has not previously been English at high school or above, you will be asked to take an IELTS Academic test. Scores of 5 or above are usually required; these vary with courses and universities.

### **Price**

Most English university degrees cost £9000 (about E10000) a year but students receive government loans for each year to cover all these tuition costs. The loans start adding interest, at a low rate, after the degree is finished. At that point, you are also liable to start paying back the loan, if you are earning more than £21,000[E25,000] a year. Below this level of income, you pay nothing. Above this level, you pay a fairly small amount (about £700 a year) which goes up as earnings go up. Any amount of the loan or interest remaining unpaid after 30 years is written off.

You can also take out a small government loan to cover some of your living expenses during the degree.

Many universities have bursary schemes which provide approximately £1000 a year for student expenses, if students are progressing well.

Universities in Wales can charge up to £9000, as in England, but fee grants are available of up to £5000, as well as loans. Fees in Northern Ireland are up to £3800 a year for undergraduate degrees and can be covered by loans. Loan repayment starts when you are earning £17,300 a year. Scotland does not charge tuition fees for students under 25 and maximum fees for older students are about £2000 a year. However, you need to have been resident in Wales, Northern Ireland or Scotland for three years before you start university, or to be from a non-UK EU country, to be charged these lower fees. Residents of England are not eligible for the lower fees or other benefits in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland.

### **Programmes for refugees**

Article 26 scholarships are available specifically for asylum seekers at 30 universities:

<http://article26.hkf.org.uk/student-bursaries/2016-17-student-bursaries>

Helena Kennedy Foundation bursaries are also available to help refugees study:

<http://www.hkf.org.uk/hkf-awards/bursary-scheme-1/hkf-2014>

New Bristol University programme, not yet registered by Article 26:

<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/fees-funding/awards/sanctuary-scholarship/what/>

Oxford University student initiative is also looking for refugee applicants

<http://www.oxfordrefugeecampaign.org/about/>

Refugee Support Network has a programme that provides advice and support for young asylum seekers and refugees: <https://refugeesupportnetwork.org/>

Many refugee support organisations across the UK provide English language tuition which helps refugees reach IELTS standards required for university entrance.

***For more information, contact Corinne Squire [c.squire@uel.ac.uk](mailto:c.squire@uel.ac.uk)***

## Free English language support to university level

British Council IELTS page: <https://ielts.britishcouncil.org/> Refugee registration not required

British Council Nexus <https://esol.britishcouncil.org/>: requires registration with an email.

British Council FutureLearn: IELTS MOOC

<https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/categories/languages-and-cultures>

Common European Language Framework: details.

[http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Manuel1\\_EN.asp](http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Manuel1_EN.asp)

Duolingo: Smartphone/tablet app. <https://www.duolingo.com/comment/1316505>

ESOL: <http://www.esolcourses.com>: Needs no registration, goes up to IELTS, includes job-seeking English and 'Life in the UK' test materials.

Kiron University – English and German support provided during years 1 and 2.

<https://kiron.ngo/>

Lang-8: Free language `exchange', with corrections: <http://lang-8.com/>

Online dictionary: <http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/>

Swiftkey: 'Intelligent soft keyboards': (prediction and spelling correction)

<https://swiftkey.com/en>

Write & Improve: Cambridge University-associated improvement for your writing:

<http://www.cambridgeenglish.org/learning-english/free-resources/write-and-improve/>

Language classes widely available (in Calais, in Ecole Laïque du Chemin des Dunes, Jungle Books Library, and the Darfuri School, in English and French)