



Routes into higher education: Enabling university access for refugees

Many refugees bring good educational qualifications with them to Lower Saxony, where they look for new prospects through which to continue or restart the university studies they began in their own home country. The Lower Saxony Ministry of Science and Culture (MWK) has set itself the objective of giving active support to refugees when starting a university study course.

→ Support program for refugees with higher qualifications

In conjunction with providers of adult education, the MWK commenced five pilot projects in 2015 to support refugees with higher qualifications. This program was confirmed and extended in the 2016 budget. These courses focus on language training through intensive language courses containing basic as well as specialist and scientific language modules. This offer is aimed at refugees from 18 years of age onwards. Contact information about the individual project sponsors can be found on the web site of the Lower Saxony Ministry of Science and Culture: <http://tinyurl.com/owh3woq>

→ Access to higher education for refugees

Refugees interested in a course of study receive support when commencing a study course, when continuing a study course begun in their home country, or in gaining further scientific qualifications. Refugees with eligible educational certificates and sufficient knowledge of the German language can already study in Lower Saxony now. Individuals who cannot produce their certificates of education due to their refugee circumstances have the opportunity to obtain the access entitlement for a chosen study discipline through an entrance test and an assessment test at the Lower Saxony Preparatory College. There is now an additional option, namely to obtain a university entrance for an open admission degree program directly and without any further assessment test if an above-average pass is obtained in the entrance test (more information: <http://tinyurl.com/qyuykzu>).

→ The entry route to colleges and universities

The initial contact is always through the respective college or university. As a basic principle, knowledge of the German language at least at Level B1 is required. Local authorities, universities and adult education institutions can provide information about the opportunities to acquire this knowledge of the language. There are designated contact persons at the universities who can be contacted by interested individuals who have questions (<http://tinyurl.com/ngaadpt>). The first step is to clarify with these contacts the preconditions that must be fulfilled in each case in order to commence a degree course.

After passing the entrance test, individuals who do not have a university entrance qualification or who lack the certificates of education for this purpose will be prepared by the Lower Saxony Preparatory College for what is known as the assessment test. More information at: <http://tinyurl.com/onarery>

→ Further information

The Internet site of the **Conference of Education Ministers** has information about the assessment of foreign school-leaving certificates in relation to university entry in Germany: <http://tinyurl.com/ohj6d2d>

There is a large amount of further information on the Internet site of the **Coordination Center for Study Guidance and Counselling**, e.g. about study financing, student grants, student services and other offerings: <http://tinyurl.com/p27s4sx>

Students who have particularly difficult starting and framework conditions for a degree course due to their refugee circumstances can apply for a **scholarship grant** to the college or university at which they have begun a degree course. Further information is available on the Internet sites of the colleges and universities in Lower Saxony.

Adult education organisations in Lower Saxony have a varied program of education available to prepare for a degree course, together with advice, guidance and support in the introductory phase of the study program. You can find general information relating to adult education organisations on the Internet at: <http://tinyurl.com/nounpyw>

The **Servicestelle Offene Hochschule Niedersachsen gGmbH** offers all prospective students in Lower Saxony a good opportunity, in the form of online courses, to prepare themselves for a university degree course independently of their location and with flexible timing. Full information about the online courses can be found here: <http://tinyurl.com/pe2ejvl>