

FACTSHEET

Higher Education

Estonia

General and specific access requirements

According to the Estonian legislation for admission to higher education institutions there are general and specific requirements giving access to higher education. The general requirements are approved by the Ministry of Education and Research and are binding on all higher education institutions and study programmes.

General conditions for access and admission to higher education are stipulated by the following legal instruments:

Laws and Regulations:

- Universities Act / *Ülikooliseadus* (RT I 1995,12, 119)
- Institutions of Professional Higher Education Act / *Rakenduskõrgkooli seadus* (RT I 1998, 61, 980)
- Standard of Higher Education / *Kõrgharidusstandard* (RT I, 29.12.2008, 57, 322)

Conventions and Agreements:

- Estonia has ratified the Lisbon Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region (1998)
- Agreement between the Government of Ukraine and the Government of the Republic of Estonia on Mutual Recognition of Documents in the field of Education and Scientific Degrees (1996)
- Agreement among the Government of the Republic of Estonia, the Government of the Republic of Latvia and the Government of the Republic of Lithuania on the Academic Recognition of Educational Qualifications in the Baltic Educational Space (2000)

General requirements

The requirement for access to higher education is secondary education, certified by *Gümnaasiumi lõputunnistus* (Certificate of General Secondary Education), *Kutsekeskhariduse lõputunnistus* (Certificate of Vocational Secondary Education), the corresponding qualifications of the former systems, and foreign qualifications giving access to higher education.

Specific requirements

The specific requirements are set by the higher education institution and depend on the chosen field of study. The conditions and procedures for admission are established by the council of the higher education institution and approved by the Minister of Education and Research.

There is a selection procedure for most higher education institutions and programmes. In general, the results of state examinations (*riigieksamid*) passed in a general secondary school (*gümnaasium*) are accepted as the basis of admission, sometimes an interview or a professional aptitude test is required. It may also include a number of entrance examinations.

Entrance examinations are most commonly set by departments and approved by the boards of higher education institutions. Prevalent subjects are usually those relevant to the course of study. The basis for the admission decision is usually a combination of state examination

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results of general subjects and entrance examination results in the subject relevant to the course of study.

In certain cases, the Certificate of General Secondary Education and/or the state examinations average grade, or the gold or silver graduation award from the secondary school are accepted as special conditions for admission.

For admission to study programmes in art and music, aptitude is tested through the presentation of a creative work or through a creative competition.

Private higher education institutions may establish additional conditions for admission. Study places are filled with students according to their entry requirement results, under the conditions established by the council of the higher education institution.