

Portugal: “Over 23 Years Old” Programme

Introduction

Title: “Over 23 Years Old” Programme

Country: Portugal

Type of tool: Entry into higher education courses for candidates who do not have the qualifications required to do so.

Target group:

- Adult students with non-regular trajectories;
- Unemployed who are betting on a higher education level;
- Active population that wants to deepen matters of their interest;
- Individuals in retirement.

Potential transferability: The transferability of the Referential for Pro RVCC can be possible if the professions have the same tasks from country to country and, if not, it can be adapted to the reality of each country.

Organisation and description of the tool

The ability test to apply to a higher education course has to be appropriate for each course and for the profile of each candidate, so even if all universities have to comply with the Portuguese Base Law of the Educational System, each one is free to decide their methods of assessment (i.e. value of each test to the final grade, criteria for evaluation in each test...).

Tests to assess the ability to attend higher education

This process is based on a legal framework, part of the Portuguese Base Law of the Educational System, which aims to give the right to individuals who do not have the qualifications needed to apply to higher education courses to perform a test of ability in order to be able to apply to these courses.

The tests should focus only on the **areas of knowledge** directly relevant to entry and progression in the course:

- a. Proof of knowledge and skills assessment (lesson of 30 minutes given by a teacher of the scientific area of the course the candidate wants to apply and a written proof of assessment of knowledge and competences of 30 minutes, where the candidate has to make a brief presentation of that lesson) – the criteria of evaluation focus on interpretation skill and critical commentaries of the candidate to the lesson given, and it has a value of 50% of the final grade;
- b. Appreciation of school and professional curricula – The jury will analyse the candidate’s educational qualifications and professional experience and their importance for the development of the course that the candidate wants to attend. This part of the proof has a value of 25% of the final grade;

Implementation

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c. Assessment interview regarding the motivation of the candidate (20 minutes) – The jury will assess the candidate's ability to elaborate a coherent and structured speech and this part of the proof has a value of 25% of the final grade.

The candidate has approval to apply to the courses if the final classification in these tests is higher than 10 (in a scale from 0 to 20).

These tests don't give candidates school qualifications.

Description of the target group

- Adult students with non-regular trajectories;
- Unemployed who are betting on a higher education level;
- Active population that wants to deepen matters of their interest;
- Individuals in retirement.

Policy context

In the age of globalisation adult education assumes decisive importance not only because it provides adults with the opportunity to improve their skills, but also as an element of contagion in improving the living conditions of their families, communities and societies.

In this context, the Polytechnic Institute of Leiria, has specific mechanisms adequate to evaluate the ability to attend higher courses for those over 23 years of age.

Interviewee

Lucilia Santos – Coordinator of over 23 programme Universidade de Aveiro (see also video interview).

