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EU REGIONAL TRUST FUND 'MADAD'

الصندوق الاستئماني الأوروبي 'مدد'

Integrating Syrians into Lebanese Higher Education through Recognition of Qualifications

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February 12, 2019

Beirut, Lebanon

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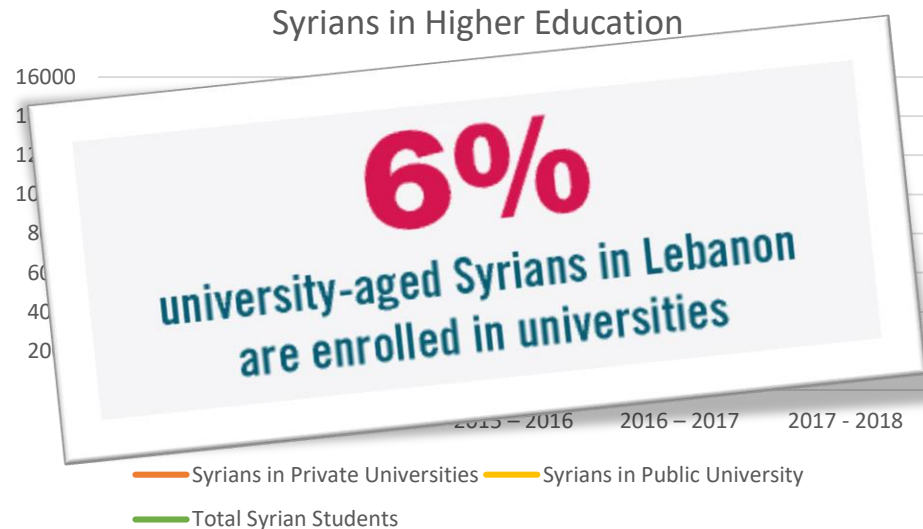
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The Current Situation...



33% of the total population in the country



Source: MEHE, 2016, 2017, 2019

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**This
project
works
towards:**

Recognizing the
prior learning,
experience, and
training of Syrian
refugees in Lebanon

Adapt "Qualification's
Passport for Refugees"
to fit the Lebanese
context. (NOKUT)

Integrating Syrian
youth into Lebanese
higher education
institutions (coping)

Conduct a study on the
integration of Syrians
and prospective refugees
into the Lebanese higher
education system. (AUB)

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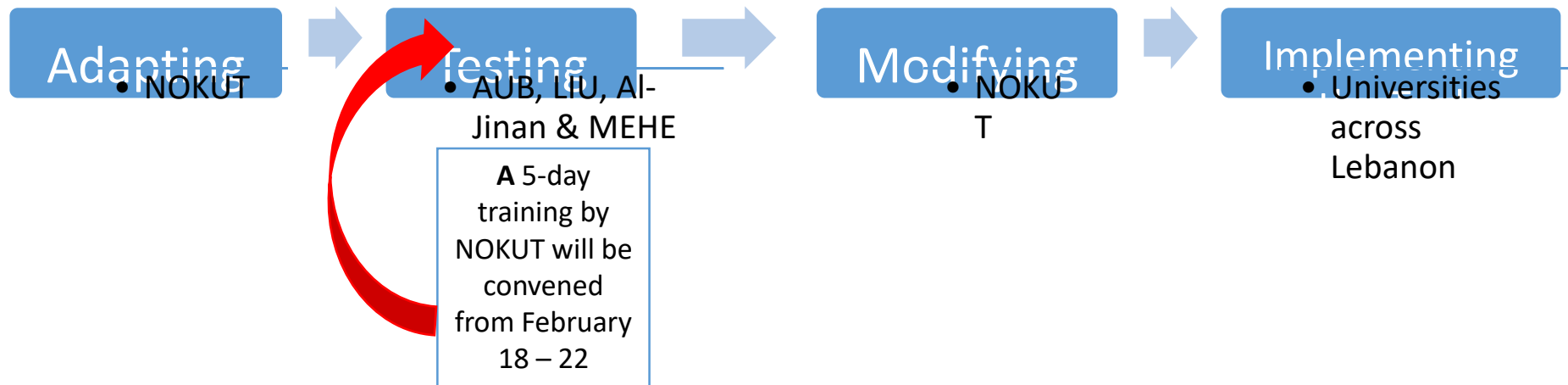


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Implementing the “Qualification's Passport for Refugees”



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The Research



Institutional Surveys

Institutional Interviews

Admission and Student Affairs Officers



Student Surveys

Syrian students enrolled at universities

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Preliminary Findings of the Institutional Survey

50% Response Rate

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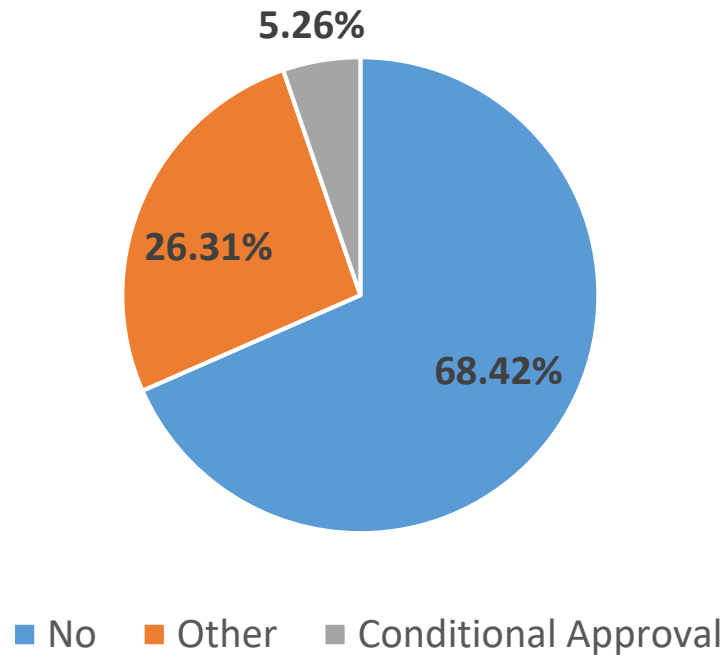


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Special Admission Procedures



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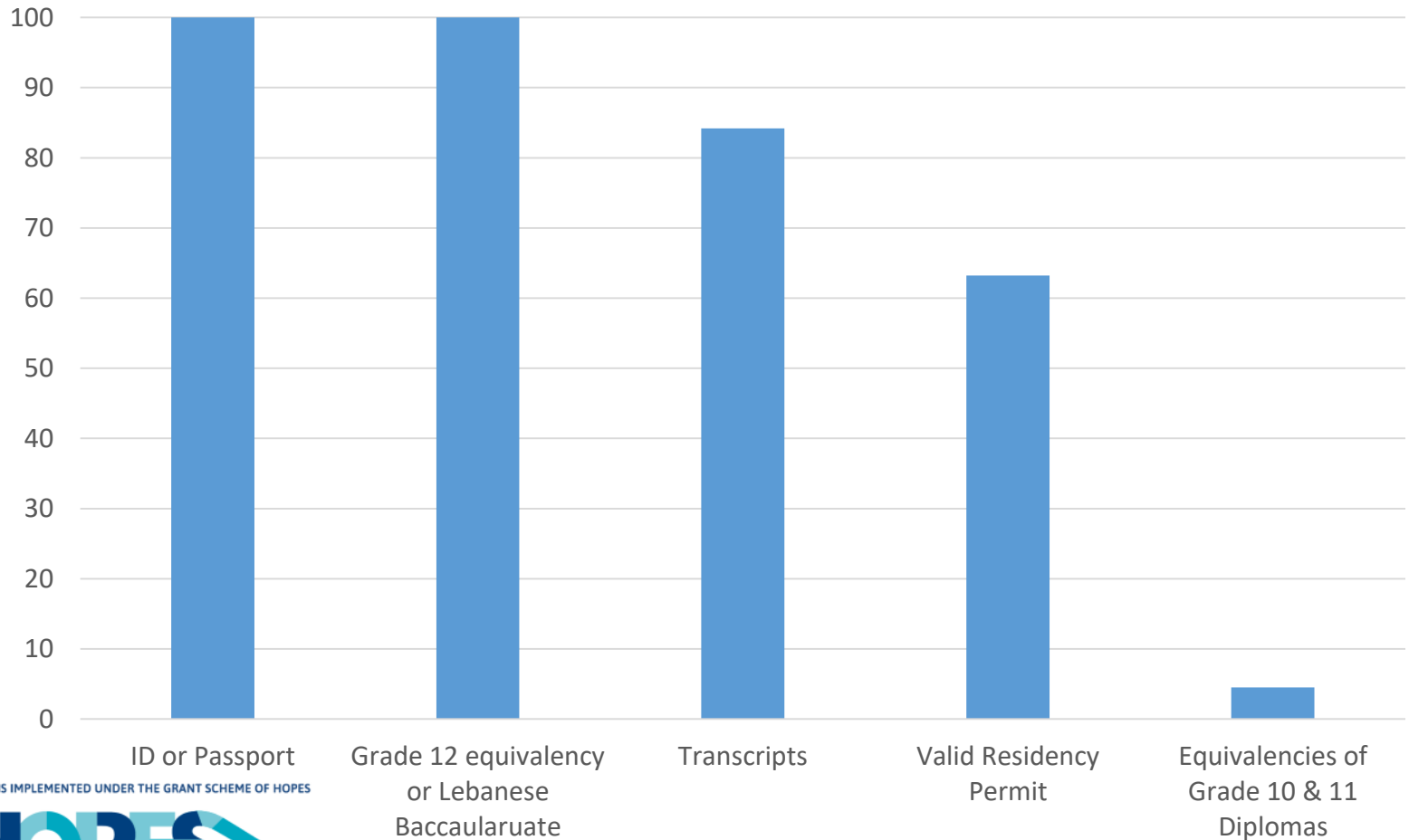


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Special Documents Required from Syrian Students



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HIGHER AND FURTHER EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES & PERSPECTIVES FOR SYRIANS



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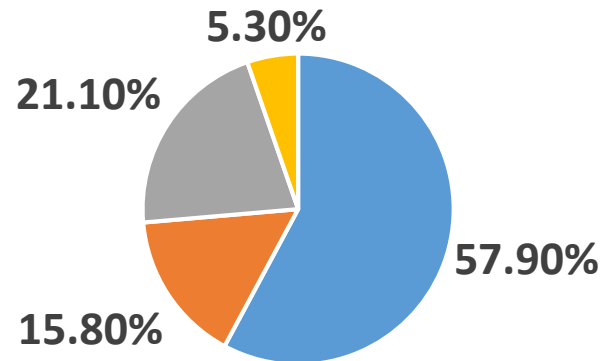


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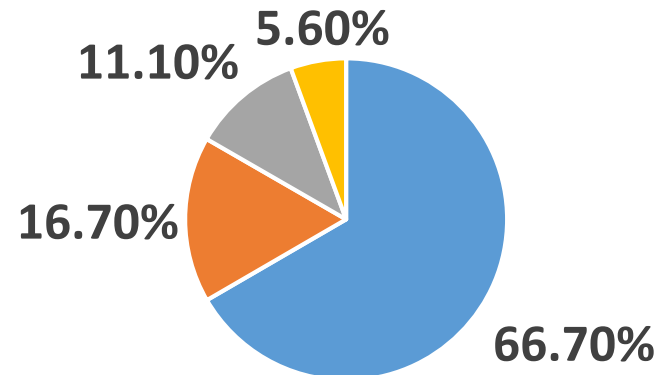
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Number of Applications Received from Syrian Students



■ 0-50 ■ 51-100 ■ More than 100 ■ 300 to 750

Number of Syrian Applications Easily Processed



■ 0-50 ■ 51-100 ■ More than 100 ■ All except few cases

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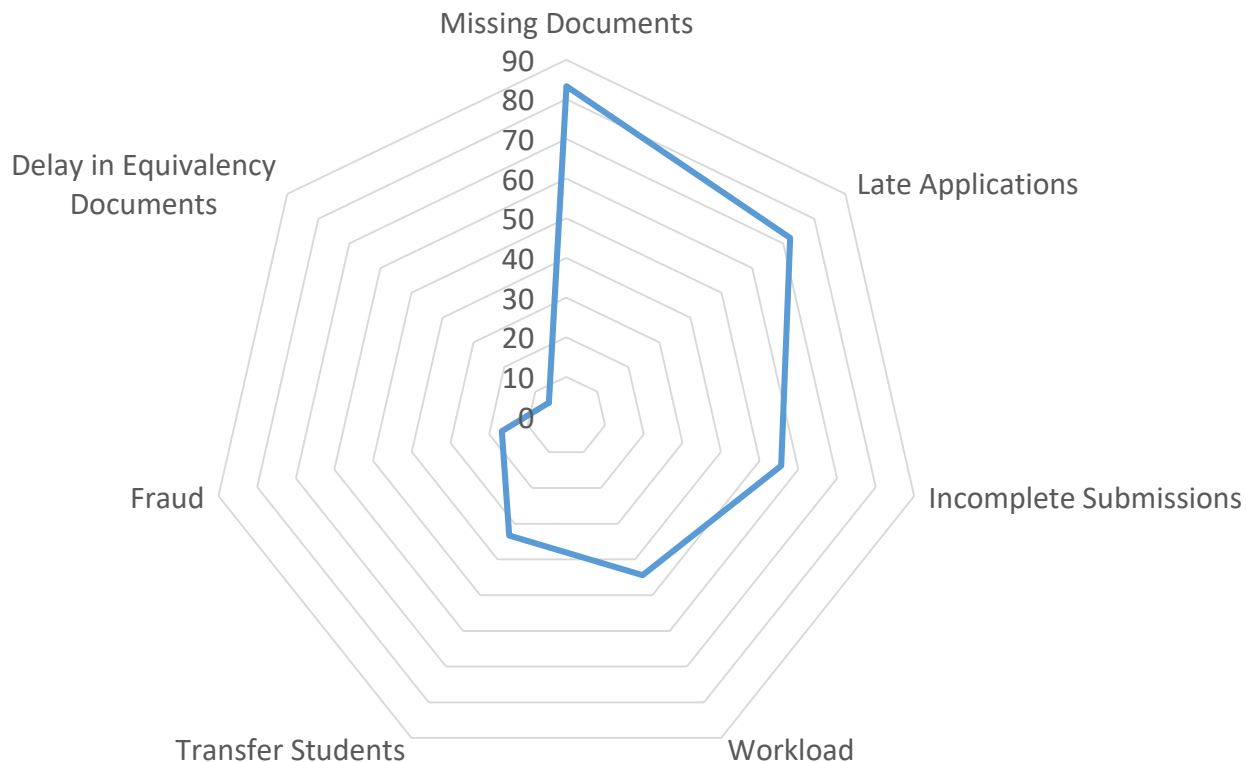


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General Challenges Faced by the Admission Officers



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— Challenges of the Admission Office



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In summary...

Admission Officers faced the following challenges when processing the applications of the Syrian students:

Transferring courses
and credits from an
Arabic educational
system

Different grading
system

Missing documents
/ Incomplete files /
Delay in submission

Difficulty in
obtaining
equivalency of
documents

Weakness in English
Language (resulting
in an unclear
application)

Seeking university
acceptance with
the aim of securing
a residency
permit

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Complaints received by Admission Officers from Syrian students:

Financial issues (cost of tuition fees)

Language differences during transfer of courses or applying for a major

Getting the required documents, attestation, and certification of documents.

Finding residential accommodation

Weakness in English Language (resulting in an unclear application)

Time management and meeting deadlines of enrollment and submission

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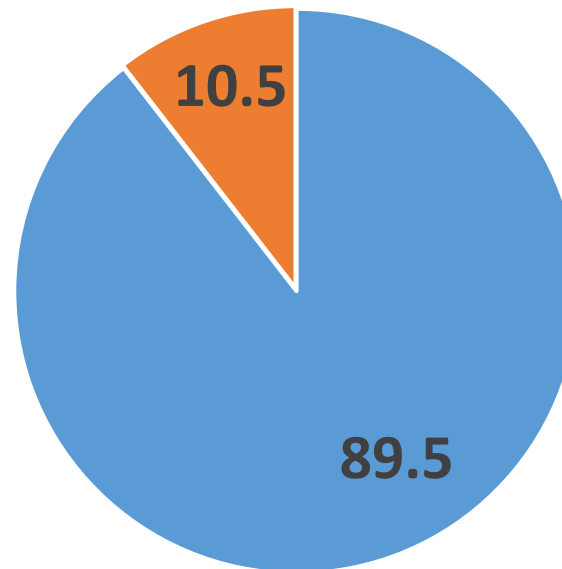


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Designated Staff Members Processing the Applications of Syrian Students



■ No, admission staff is responsible

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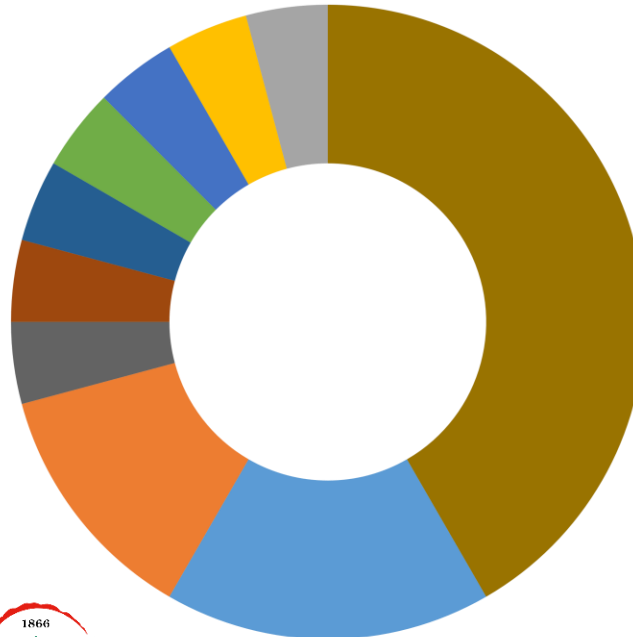


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Organizations Working with Syrian Youth to Apply to the University



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Preliminary Findings of the Institutional Interviews

Universities were
divided into 2 Clusters

Cluster 1

high tuition => less
accessible to Syrian
youths

Cluster 2

lower tuition => more
accessible to Syrian
youths

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Key findings on Admissions across all clusters:

- **Regardless of nationality**, all prospective students are treated the same during the admissions process.
- **Support mechanism** is offered which is conditional approval is given to the students to obtain the missing documents such as equivalency or transcript

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Difference in **Admissions** in Cluster 1 and Cluster 2 Universities

Cluster 1

Most of the Syrian students are **self-paying**

Most of the Syrian students are enrolled in the **bachelor programs**

Cluster 2

There are **special programs/diplomas** for Syrian students

Student Affairs Officers **assist the students** to fill out the application form

The application form is **translated to Arabic**

Student Affairs Officers give the students an overall description of the university & **discuss with the youths** the most suitable major they ought to pursue

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HIGHER AND FURTHER EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES & PERSPECTIVES FOR SYRIANS





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Key findings on Student Affairs across all clusters:

- Syrian students participate more in **university-wide activities** than clubs.
- **Counseling** is perceived as a taboo.
- Cases of **anxiety**, **relationship** issues, and **depression** have been reported among Syrian students.
- **Faculty members** try to assist students in solving their issues; sometimes refer cases to the appropriate department

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Cluster 1



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Cluster 2

- Structure of Student Affairs Office is independent
- The Counseling Department is independent
- Reported trauma cases
- Low participation in student clubs, but Syrian students hold high-ranking positions such as VP of a club

- Many Syrian students study and work
- Almost 30% of the student club members are Syrians

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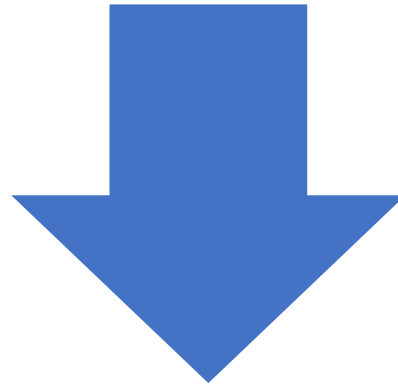


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Reflections on the project *so far...*



Broader Aim:

Pathways to higher education through
**recognition of
previous learning**

Main Challenges:

Reaching out to
Syrian students

Lengthy process of
recognition



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“Education is the **only thing** that refugees can take back with them. So it is only fair to give them this opportunity, and to give them the best.”

Wenona Giles, York University



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