

Higher Education in the Lowlands:

Essentials about studying in the Netherlands

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What we'll cover

- Overview of Dutch education system
- Eligibility & recognition
- Application & selection procedures
- How to search for programmes



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Facts and figures

- 125,000+ international students in the Netherlands
- #1 country in Europe in English proficiency
- 400+ English-taught bachelor's programmes
- 1200+ English-taught master's programmes
- 14 Research Universities – including 3 technical universities, 1 agricultural university and 10 university colleges
- 40 Universities of Applied Science



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Systemic pressures created a challenging environment for institutions, students, staff and the public.



How is geopolitics shaping the landscape?

- The Netherlands has become very popular – pause on recruitment requested in 2022
- Internationalisation in Balance bill introduced in parliament – discussion/lobbying to the present (no official outcome yet)
- Outcomes to date: some changes made by the universities themselves
 - Fewer new programmes in English to be launched
 - Groningen and Maastricht phased out English-taught BSc Medicine programmes
 - Small number of other programmes followed suit: i.e. BSc Biomedical Sciences at VU
 - Focus on preparing students for the Dutch labour market (including language acquisition)
 - Beethoven project launches - focus on technical programmes
- What else? 1 billion Euro budget but to higher education: will affect services, possibly new programmes
- What are we seeing? Increases in interest and application as other areas of the world experience difficulties.
- What's next?



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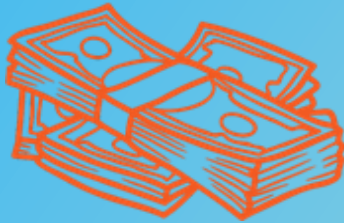
Much hasn't changed: why the Netherlands?



Peace of Mind



Student Experience



Cost of Attendance



Career Opportunities

Internationalization and international students are highly valued and welcome



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Higher Education in the NL



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Higher Education Philosophy

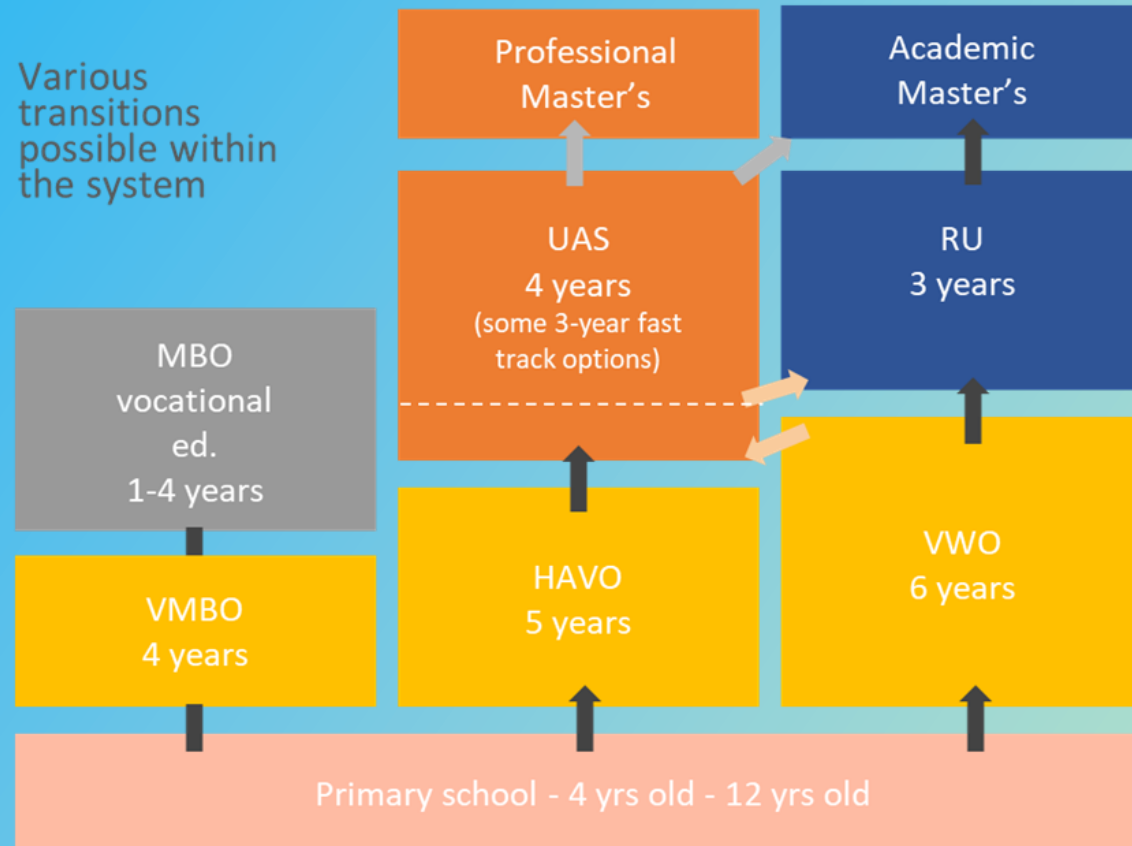
- Access to education for all
- Highly standardized education system
- Right fit:
 - Personal characteristics, logistics, typical items for fit
 - Plus: different educational options for different skills and goals



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Dutch Higher Education System



RU: Research University

- Academic education

UAS: University of Applied Sciences

- Professional higher education

MBO: vocational education

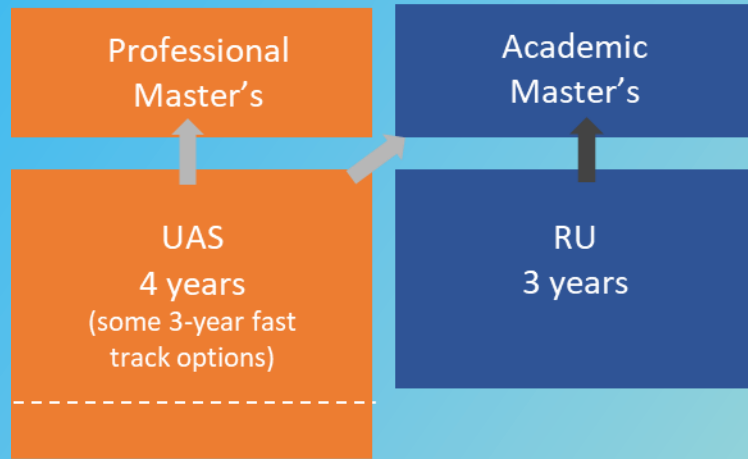
- Preparation for a wide range of jobs: hair dressing, construction work, shop assistant, etc.
- Not offered in English



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Binary System



RU: Research University

- Includes University Colleges
- Academic education

UAS: University of Applied Sciences

- Professional higher education

Differences are getting smaller, but they are still an important distinction.



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Academic Fit - UAS

Universities of Applied Sciences

Professional Higher Education



- Logistics:
 - Professional focus
 - 4-year programmes, including internships/on-the-job learning
 - Some 3-year accelerated programmes
 - Over 200 English-taught programmes to choose from
-
- Learning style:
 - Thrive when you are learning by doing
 - Succeed in environments with more structure and guidance
 - Interested in entering the labour market directly after your Bachelor's



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Academic Fit – Research Universities

Research Universities

Academic Higher Education



Logistics:

- Academic focus
- 3-year programmes
- Can include internships, study abroad or minors
- Over 100 English-taught programmes to choose from

Learning style:

- Enjoy gaining in-depth knowledge
- Like critical thinking and in-depth discussion
- Can get through high volumes of material
- Thrive in a fast-paced environment
- Are able to work well independently
- Are considering completing a Master's degree or even PhD
- University Colleges...



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Academic Fit – UC's



Facts:

- Same characteristics as the main Research University, but different
- Most research universities have a University College
- Most are honours colleges
- Many are residential
- Liberal Arts and Sciences programmes

Living and learning style influenced by the US and UK systems:

US Influence:

- Flexible curriculum
- Multi/interdisciplinary approach

UK Influence:

- Small-scale college within a larger institution
- Focus on extra-curricular activities and community



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Is your student a good fit?

- Independent & pro-active
- Adventurous
- Open-minded
- Personally responsible
- Adept at time management
- Interested in new cultural experiences
- Cross-cultural learner
- Motivated
- Life skills
- Academically strong or suited to hands-on learning



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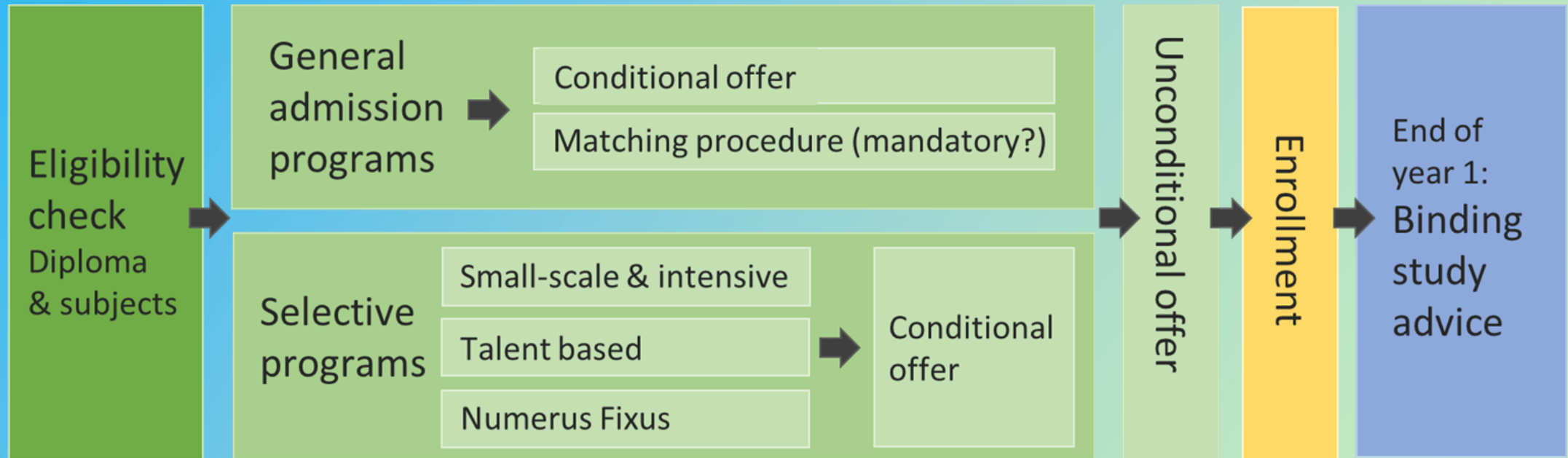
Admissions and application



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The Admissions Process



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Eligibility Check

Diplomas *generally accepted* for **Research Universities**

- International Baccalaureate diploma
- GCE certificate: 3 Academic A-levels (grades A*-C)
- US high school diploma + 3 or 4 AP courses, sometimes minimum GPA required
- European secondary school diploma which gives access to university in your home country
- 40+ other international diplomas

Diplomas *generally accepted* for **Universities of Applied Sciences**

Almost all diplomas accepted by RU, including:

- IBDP and IBCP
- BTEC level 3
- GCSE certificate + 2 AS-levels
- US high school diploma (check per programme)
- European secondary school diploma which gives access to university in your home country



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Further requirements?

Check if the program has further requirements*

- Subject requirements (must match HAVO and VWO profiles)
- Minimum scores required
- English language requirements
-other requirements?



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Further requirements?

*Mathematics

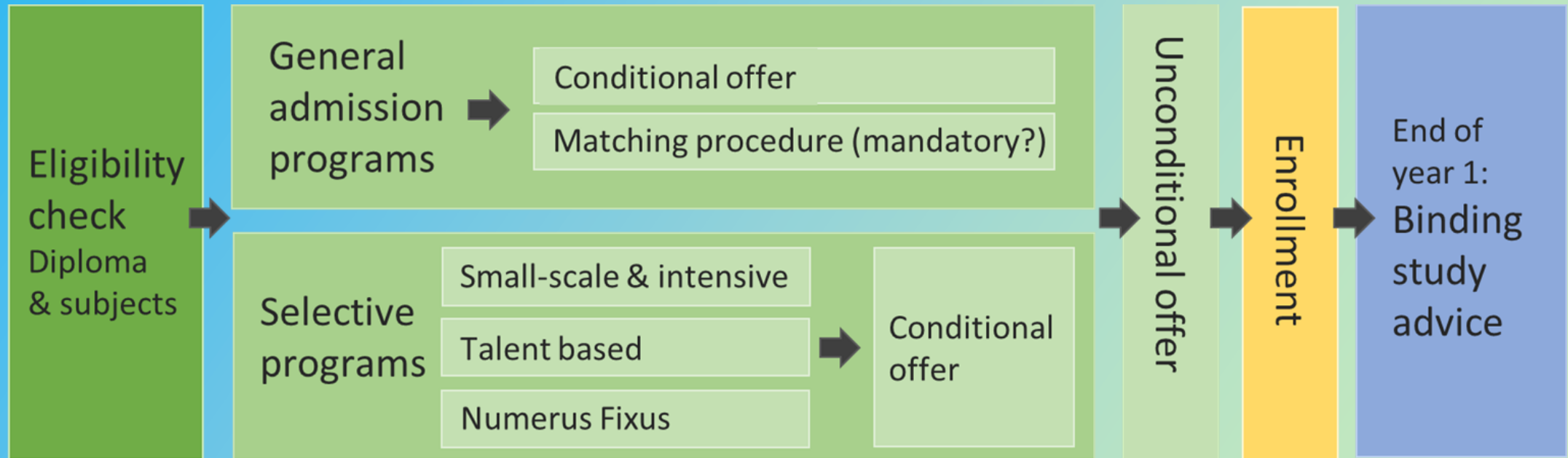
- In most cases, math to senior level is sufficient for many programmes – business, social sciences and science/technical programmes may have additional requirements
- IB AI SL/HL recognition
 - Most programmes accept all levels of IB math
 - Math AA likely to be required: Business, Engineering, Data Science, Natural Sciences
 - Math AA may be required, or may be suggested: Social sciences (Psychology, Political science, Anthropology/Sociology)
 - Association of Math Teachers has assessed both levels and made suggestions, but each university programme can make their own decisions
- Deficiencies? Options: Boswell Beta exams, OMPT various levels



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The Admissions Process



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Matching...is not selection

- Checks whether the program is a good fit for the student and vice versa
- Takes place after eligibility check (but this may not be obvious for students)
- Usually an in-depth activity, can be as simple as a CV or survey
- Can be *mandatory* to take part
- Non-binding advice
- Underlying goal: better match between program & students to reduce dropout rates



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Selection after the gate

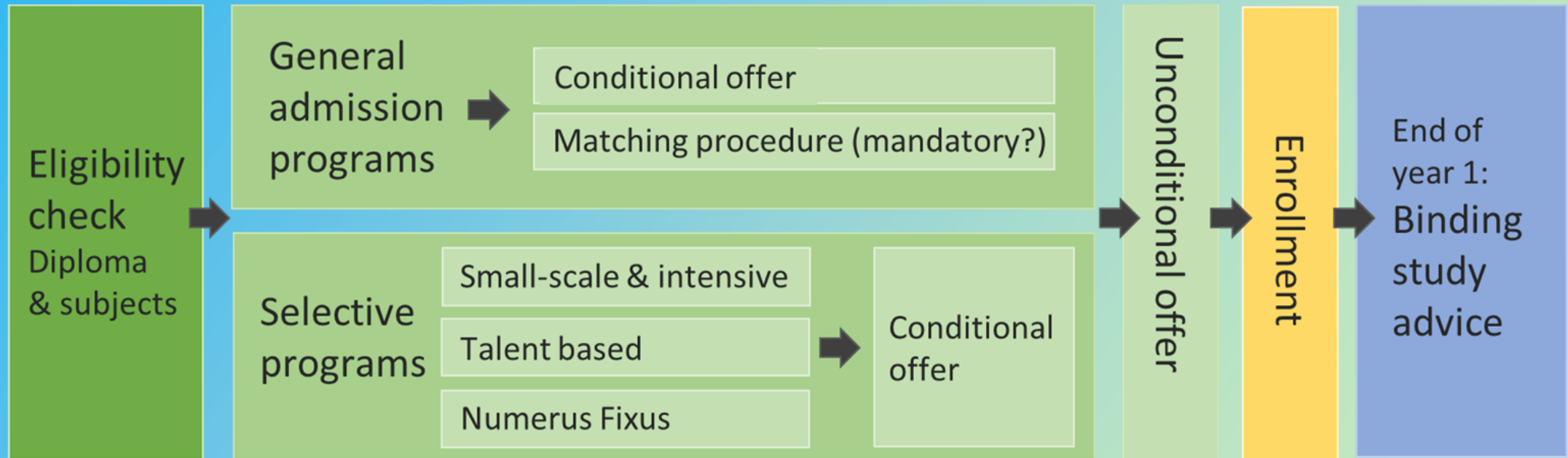
- Easier (?) to get in, must put in the work to stay in!
- Binding Study Advice
 - Students must achieve the number of study points required per university programme to move on to second year
 - Sometimes 45 out of 60 sometimes up to 60 out of 60
- Right fit students generally make it!
- In-programme advisers there for support throughout the year



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The Admissions Process



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Selection

- Approximately 20% of programmes have a selection process
- Three types of selective programmes:
 1. Talent-based
 - academics + showcasing talent
 2. Small-scale and intensive (University Colleges, hotelschools)
 - programmes with a high staff to student ratio and a high concentration of contact hours
 - holistic or aptitude/skill-based admissions
 3. Numerus Fixus - capped numbers



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Selection

Numerus Fixus:

- Highly popular programs with many more applications than places
- Examples: medicine, psychology, physiotherapy, business (note: Not all programs in a field are always Numerus Fixus at all institutions)
- Limit of 2 applications in Studielink (1 in case of some programs: medicine, physiotherapy, dental care)
 - Maximum of 3 application attempts in a lifetime to the same NF subject/programme
- Early and very strict application deadline: January 15
- Strict application & offer acceptance procedures
- Selection based on 2 or more clearly outlined criteria
- Programmes with a Numerus Fixus can change from year to year - check prior to application

Every NF ranking is determined by different criteria but typically include:

- Minimum GPA (& subject) requirements
- Aptitude test(s) or assignment(s)
- Motivation (written or interview) and/or CV

The weight of each requirement is also determined per programme.

BUT some programmes have unweighted lotteries...



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Two-step application process

- Centralized national registration system
- Almost all programs start with registration in Studielink, but not all
- Most universities require students to submit an application in their own application system (Osiris, uSis, MyUM, Embark, and others)
- *Students need to read and follow the instructions per program*
- *Check deadlines! Dec 1-July 1*



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Cost of attendance

Fees are based on nationality, not residency*

- EU/EEA – subsidized tuition fees; determined by Dutch government
- Non-EU/EEA – higher tuition fees but still competitive; determined by institution

Tuition fees 2026-2027 Academic year**

- Non-EU/EEA: € 6,000 - € 22,000
- EU/EEA: € 2,695
Exceptions: Some specialty programmes have higher fees, up to €6,000

* In some cases permanent EU residents qualify for EU subsidized fees; check with institution when applying

** fees are subject to change

Few scholarships/funding available

- Check per programme
- Mostly tuition fee waivers
- Full scholarships extremely rare
- Tuition fee loan for Dutch & EEA/EU students (DUO)
- If EEA/EU students work a minimum of 32 hours per month they are eligible (loans, grants, public transport cards, etc.)



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Housing

- It is the student's responsibility to find housing*
- Housing is not owned or managed by universities, but large organisations or private landlords
- Many different types of facilities - dorms and meal plans are not typical
- Costs vary significantly depending on city and facilities – €400-1400 Euro/month
- Demand is significantly more than supply of rooms - chronic shortages across the country
- Students should start EARLY, make it a PRIORITY

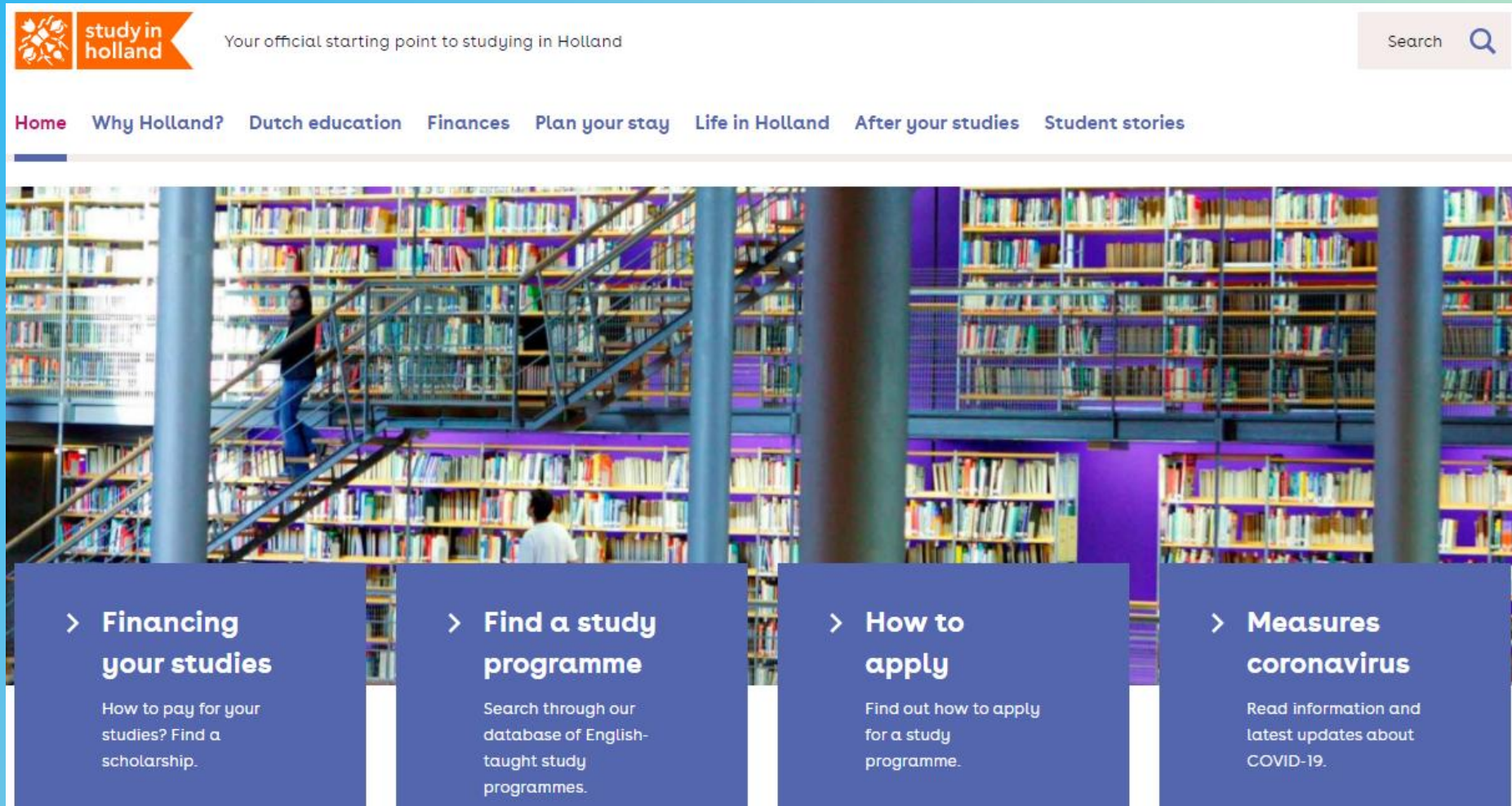
*exception is residential programmes such as some University Colleges and a small number of other programmes



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www.studyinnl.org



The screenshot shows the homepage of the studyinnl.org website. At the top left is the 'study in holland' logo, which includes a stylized orange flower icon. To its right is the tagline 'Your official starting point to studying in Holland'. On the top right is a search bar with the text 'Search' and a magnifying glass icon. Below the header is a horizontal navigation menu with the following links: 'Home', 'Why Holland?', 'Dutch education', 'Finances', 'Plan your stay', 'Life in Holland', 'After your studies', and 'Student stories'. The main content area features a large background image of a modern library with tall bookshelves and a staircase. Overlaid on this image are four blue rectangular boxes, each containing a link and a brief description:

- > Financing your studies**
How to pay for your studies? Find a scholarship.
- > Find a study programme**
Search through our database of English-taught study programmes.
- > How to apply**
Find out how to apply for a study programme.
- > Measures coronavirus**
Read information and latest updates about COVID-19.




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How to find programmes

study in NL Your official starting point to studying in the Netherlands

Search 

[Home](#) [Why NL](#) [Dutch education](#) [Finances](#) [Plan your stay](#) [Life in NL](#) [After your studies](#) [Student stories](#) [Events](#)

[Home](#) > [Dutch education](#) > [Find your study programme](#)

Find your study programme

Independent and up-to-date overview of English-taught programmes in the Netherlands

Find a study Search

1990 programmes (of 1990 programmes)

< Use the filters on the left Sorted by: Relevance


Type of programme




<input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor	484
<input type="checkbox"/> Master	1287
<input type="checkbox"/> Other	41
<input type="checkbox"/> Short or summer course	178

Field of study


<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture and environment	69
<input type="checkbox"/> Economics, commerce, management and accounting	288

Creative Business

 Inholland University of Applied Sciences

 Bachelor  Den Haag  4 years

Contemporary Literature and Arts: Cultural Interventions and Social Justice

 Maastricht University



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ROADMAP TO STUDYING IN THE NETHERLANDS

STEP 1 - PLANNING YOUR JOURNEY

1 - Getting Started

- What are your interests?
- What kind of higher education institution do you have access to in the Netherlands?
- Find suitable programs on www.studyinnl.org

2 - Deeper Research

- Explore your selected programs in more depth
- Complete the "Fit" section of the roadmap

3 - Narrowing down your choices

- Complete "Practical details" section of the roadmap

STEP 2 - ON THE ROAD

5 - Getting ready to apply

- On the roadmap checklist, complete the 'Application Documents' and 'Application Checklist'

7 - Further steps

- Selection: Additional testing, interviews, letter etc.
 - Matching: Study Choice Check
- Don't forget to do it!**

4 - Studielink

- After October 1: Create your account on Studielink
- Register for your program(s) of choice in Studielink

6 - Complete and submit your application(s)

- Complete application(s) for your program(s) before their deadlines
- If applicable: Pay application fees

8 - Await decision

- 6-8 weeks
- Numerus Fixus: April 15
- Haven't heard? Check Admissions Portal, inbox and spam filter before reaching out to the university

STEP 3 - BRINGING IT HOME

9 - Accept/decline

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Your blueprint for studying in the Netherlands
www.dutchuniconsortium.nl/resources



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Q&A



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