

Norway – NOKUT

Institution	NOKUT
Interviewed Person	Afrah (26), asylum seeker from Afghanistan

I – Preparation

Afrah (26) came to Norway as an asylum seeker from Afghanistan in 2015.

II – Awareness

A few months after arriving in Norway Hasina participated at info-event at the University of Oslo called Academic Dugnad. There she learned that her documentation from Afghanistan was considered non-verifiable, and that she in order to get a recognition of her higher education from her home country had to go through the UVD-procedure. A special recognition procedure for persons without verifiable documentation conducted by NOKUT (Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education).

This made her depressed since she expected to be able to use her qualifications immediately after arriving in Norway. Afrah had a Bachelor degree in Journalism, and had been working for a few years as a journalist in Afghanistan before she had to flee the country.

III – Starting up

Afrah knew that in order to get her recognition she would also have to fulfil the language requirements of the UVD-procedure, a B1 level in Norwegian or English. Her English proficiency was good, but she wanted to get some training in Norwegian as well before applying for recognition.

In addition to starting at a Norwegian language course, she started volunteering as an event assistant at one of the universities in Oslo. Slowly she was expanding her network in her new homeland, and she managed to get a job as a research assistant at the Department of Journalism and Media studies at the university.

She was also allowed to attend a couple of classes at the journalism studies. These classes were taught in English.

V – Assessment

In March 2017, two years after she arrived in Norway she finally decided to apply for general recognition of her higher education.

She was initially sent a questionnaire where she had to answer different questions about her education, and where she had to reconstruct parts of her education. After submitting the questionnaire she was invited to a preliminary interview at NOKUT with her case handler. In this interview she was asked more questions about her education, and she was given information about the final stages of her recognition process.

Then she was invited to an interview with two professors in journalism. A week before this interview NOKUT sent her a home assignment made by the two professionals. They had gone through all the information about her education, and made the home assignment in accordance with the courses she had stated that she had taken in the questionnaire.

At the interview the two professors asked her more questions about her home assignment, and also asked questions regarding the academic content of her courses.

The interview lasted for about one hour and had the form of an oral exam. Present at the interview, in addition to the two professionals, was Afrah's case handler at NOKUT.

After the interview was over, the professionals wrote a report to NOKUT, and their decision was unanimous. Their decision was that they were convinced that Afrah actually had undertaken the Bachelor's degree in journalism. Based on that report NOKUT could make their decision where Afrah was given a recognition of her foreign higher education.

VI – Impact

With her Bachelor's degree recognized as equivalent to a Norwegian Bachelor's degree, Afrah is now able to apply for admission to a Master's degree in journalism. As she has already been working on expanding her network within the journalism field she will have good opportunities to find a relevant job in journalism.