

# PRESIDENTS' ALLIANCE | ON HIGHER EDUCATION AND IMMIGRATION

## Quick Guide: Refugee Eligibility for Admissions to Higher Education

Refugees resettled in the U.S. sometimes face unique challenges explaining their immigration status and eligibility to enroll in colleges and universities in the U.S.. These challenges include: gaps in their education history; transcripts in other languages; lack of financial means to take standardized tests; and identification documents that are new to admissions staff. Here is a round up of resources that can help refugee students, college and university staff, and refugee-serving organizations understand refugee eligibility for higher education admissions.

### Transcript & Credential Evaluation

- [ECE](#) provides credential evaluations and through ECE Aid they offer some fee waivers for refugees seeking credential evaluations in order to pursue educational opportunities.
- [World Education Services \(WES\)](#) evaluates academic credentials from around the world enabling individuals to continue their education or career pathway in the U.S. The WES Gateway Program provides specialized support for refugee and displaced individuals.

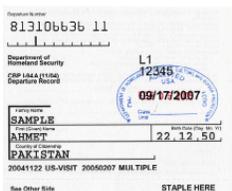
**Alternative Language Assessments-** Prospective refugee students and admissions staff can work together to determine what testing requirements meet the needs of the college or university, while also accommodating the student. [DuoLingo English Test](#) is an alternative to traditional standardized testing that may be inaccessible to refugee students due to cost or format.

**Access to In-State Tuition-** In the time before refugees qualify for and obtain lawful permanent resident (LPR) status, they are unable to access in-state tuition and state financial aid at their state's public colleges and universities. A growing number of states have implemented statewide policies expanding access to in-state tuition to individuals with refugee and other humanitarian status. Check [here](#) to see if your state provides this access.

**Federal Financial Aid-** Refugees are considered eligible noncitizens for federal financial aid.

- NASFAA- [Tip Sheet for Financial Aid Administrators Working with Refugee and Asylee Students](#)
- **Switchboard Toolkit: Accessing Federal Student Aid for Refugee Youth and Adults:** [Resources and Tips for Successful Application Processing](#)

**Documentation-** Refugees will have an I-94 (see photo), social security card, and Employment Authorization Document (EAD) that can serve as and should be accepted as identification. Eventually, they may also have a state ID and, after one year of arrival they may apply for a Permanent Resident Card (Green Card).



Examples of I-94 documents