MASTER OF SCIENCE IN
GERONTOLOGICAL SCIENCES

www.vub.ac.be/gerontological-sciences

60 ECTS
WHY VUB

VUB education delivers strong individuals, critical minds & world citizens

The Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB) offers high-quality English-taught programmes, supported by outstanding research. Being a student at VUB means learning in an open atmosphere of tolerance and diversity and growing into an independent and critical-thinking individual.

All fields of study are offered on 4 student-friendly campuses in the cosmopolitan city of Brussels. At VUB, students have easy access to their lecturers and assistants. Faculty members are available and open to answer questions; small group workshops are used to ensure close interaction and hands-on experience.

VUB is a dynamic and modern university with almost two centuries of history. There are 15,000 students, 21% of whom are international students from more than 120 different countries.

The basis of our academic success

The Vrije Universiteit Brussel was founded on the principle of ‘free inquiry’ as formulated by the French mathematician and philosopher of science Henri Poincaré (1854-1912): ‘Thinking must never submit itself, neither to a dogma, nor to a party, nor to a passion, nor to an interest, nor to a preconceived idea, nor to anything whatsoever, except to the facts themselves, because for it to submit to anything else would be the end of its existence.’

Personal growth with a positive and critical attitude, a sense of responsibility and open-mindedness, these are characteristics that you will encounter in everyone at the university, from professors and researchers to students and staff. It lies at the heart of our academic success.
A unique master

Progressive ageing of the population is a worldwide phenomenon nowadays. The Master of Science in Gerontological Sciences provides students with the necessary knowledge, insights and methodologies to critically answer the various biogerontological, biomedical, psychological and social questions concerning ever ageing societies, without neglecting intercultural aspects.
Gerontology is the future

The world population is ageing. International organizations, such as the World Health Organization, consider the ageing population as one of the major topics that need immediate and thorough attention. Professionals who come into contact with older persons, working in various domains, have felt the need to improve their knowledge of the ageing process and the needs, limitations and potential of senior citizens. The Master of Science in Gerontological Sciences provides a suitable educational answer, giving you the expertise to serve, support and monitor the ageing of society, and to advocate the rights, competences and opportunities of older persons.

Unique and multidisciplinary

The Master in Gerontological Sciences is unique in its kind in Belgium and surroundings. It is the only programme that studies the field of gerontology on a broad and multidisciplinary basis. It offers a wide spectrum of scientific aspects that is essential to understand the field of gerontology. The programme investigates the biogerontological and biomedical basis underlying the ageing process. But it also discusses the psychological, social and health policy aspects of older persons, like for example ethical themes and intercultural aspects. Students are stimulated to start from the principle of ‘free inquiry’ in order to reflect critically on current gerontological problems.

It’s an academic master, offering you scientific as well as professional knowledge, insights and skills. On the one hand, it focuses on the development of a scientific attitude allowing you to perform research on gerontological topics. On the other hand, it provides you with knowledge on biopsychosocial aspects of ageing.

Boost your career

The skills that you acquire in the Master in Gerontological Sciences will give you the opportunity to grow professionally and move towards an executive or management position, a policy function or a scientific career. The VUB holds a unique PhD programme in Gerontology, offering you the possibility to pursue a scientific career.

Furthermore, the VUB assists you in taking your first steps on the job market. It’s Career Center offers workshops, networking events, job fairs, and tips for job interviews. All you need to kick start your career.
## Master Year

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<th>Course</th>
<th>ECTS</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Gerontology</strong></td>
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<td>Ethics Related to Ageing</td>
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<td>Intercultural Aspects of Gerontology and Geriatrics</td>
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<td>Biological Gerontology: biomedical aspects and ageing, clinical geriatrics and gerontology, neurophysiological aspects and ageing</td>
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<td>Comprehensive Gerontological Assessment</td>
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<td>Psychological Gerontology</td>
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<td>Social Gerontology</td>
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<td><strong>Research methodology</strong></td>
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<td>Quantitative and qualitative research methods in Gerontology</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td>Master Thesis</td>
<td>15</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>60</strong></td>
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The programme is subject to change. Check [www.vub.ac.be/en](http://www.vub.ac.be/en) for the latest information about the programme.

**ECTS (European Credit Transfer System):**
1 credit represents 25-30 hours of study activity.

### Programme

The courses in the programme can be divided into two themes: gerontology and research methodology. The former focuses on the biogerontological, biomedical, psychological and social aspects of gerontology, making you an expert in the field. The latter offers you skills to do research in the field of gerontology. This is a one-year programme of 60 credits. The organisation of the courses is modular, with 5 weeks of classes each, followed immediately by an exam. This way credits can be easily spread out over two years.
Reflecting on gerontology from an international perspective

The programme reflects on gerontological issues from an international point of view. Since ageing of the population is a global phenomenon, it also attracts an international student group. This international setting, combined with small student groups, allows for discussion and exchange of ideas. This offers an interesting international perspective on biogerontological, biomedical, ethical, social and psychological themes.

Study at the heart of the EU

Brussels appeals to a lot of international students, and each year about 70,000 students seek higher education in the city. This shouldn’t come as a surprise. Belgian education is internationally renowned for its high standard, and Brussels is a multicultural, cosmopolitan city. It’s a hub for cultural activities and it houses numerous international institutions, companies and embassies.

Brussels is the sixth leading European business city according to Cushman & Wakefield. This means, studying Gerontological Sciences here opens up a world of opportunities for your career. The short travel times by high-speed train to cities like Amsterdam (2h), London (2h) or Paris (1,5h) put Brussels at the heart of Europe. There is no better location for you to study and start your career.
“In the health care sector, every stakeholder must realize that the development of a short-term and long-term vision is both urgent and necessary. The VUB can rely on excellent scientists and researchers that are the image of progress and medical expertise. The VUB is also known as a source of inspiration thanks to its broad social commitments.”

Yolande Avontroodt, Fellow of the Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Chairperson of the General Management committee of National Institute of Health and Disability Insurance
ADMISSION CRITERIA

Admission is based on the review of each application: proof of meeting academic and language requirements, personal motivation, etc.

LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS

Prospective students can provide proof of sufficient knowledge of English as language of instruction by meeting one of the following criteria:

- having successfully completed one of the following language proficiency tests:
  - TOEFL: minimum level: 213 for the computer-based test (CBT); 72 for the internet-based test (IBT); 550 for paper-based test
  - TOEIC: minimum level: 785
  - IELTS: minimum level academic module 6
  - CAE: minimum grade B
  - CPE: minimum grade C
  - ITACE for Students certificate with ERK/CEFR score B2
  - Cambridge English First (FCE)
  - Cambridge English: Business Vantage (BEC Vantage)
  - Cambridge Michigan ECCE
  - Trinity College London: ISSE II, GESE Grade 7-9; or ALTE Q mark
  - The Pearson Test of English General (PTE General): minimum level 3
  - The Pearson Test of English Academic (PTE Academic): minimum level 59

- having successfully completed at least one year of secondary education with English as language of instruction, or having successfully completed secondary school in a Belgian institution;

- having successfully completed programme units in higher education with a minimum of 54 ECTS-credits where English was the language of instruction.


SPECIFIC ADMISSION CRITERIA

The master is open for students with a master degree, obtained in an officially recognized university. This degree should refer to a discipline for which gerontology can make a substantial contribution.

In some cases, students with a professional bachelor degree can be accepted, provided they can document relevant professional experience in a domain for which gerontological information can be useful, and the required knowledge.

Admission of students is evaluated through a complete application file.

Application deadline

Prospective students are advised to apply as soon as possible, even if they have not yet obtained their degree. Applications can only be submitted through our website [www.vub.ac.be/en/apply](http://www.vub.ac.be/en/apply)

- Students who require a visa (non-EU/EEA nationals) need to submit their application before June 1st
- Students who do not require a visa must apply before June 1st
- Note: if the proof of English proficiency or APS certificate is not ready before the deadline, you can always submit it later instead of missing the deadline

Tuition fees

The tuition fee for the Master of Science in Gerontological Sciences is euro 2,333/year, given you take up all 60 credits in one year. A detailed overview of the tuition fee and its calculation can be found on: [www.vub.ac.be/en/tuition-fees](http://www.vub.ac.be/en/tuition-fees)

Contact

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