

GENERAL PROCEDURES AND CRITERIA FOR THE EVALUATION OF FOREIGN HIGHER EDUCATION QUALIFICATIONS AND QUALIFICATIONS GIVING ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

The Estonian ENIC/NARIC (Academic Recognition Information Centre), a unit of the Education and Youth Board, evaluates foreign educational qualifications according to the Government of the Republic of Estonia Regulation No 89 of 6 April 2006 “Criteria and Procedures for Assessment and Academic Recognition of Foreign Qualifications and for Use of Title of Qualification Granted in Foreign Education System“.

Assessment and academic recognition is guided by the purposes and tasks of the NARIC Network of the European Commission and the ENIC Network of the Council of Europe and UNESCO and the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications Concerning Higher Education in the European Region (Lisbon, 1997) and the subsidiary texts, and international or bilateral treaties.

The comparability of qualifications issued on the territory of the former USSR before 20 August 1991 is established by the Government of the Republic of Estonia Regulation No 120. The qualifications not included in the regulation are assessed by the Estonian ENIC/NARIC.

1. The applicant for assessment

Anyone who holds a foreign higher education qualification, a qualification giving access to higher education or a credential certifying completion of a part of a postsecondary education programme at a foreign or international education institution may apply for assessment.

Upon consent of the holder of qualification, the request for assessment may also be submitted by an employer, by a higher education institution or by any other institution to which a foreign education credential has been presented.

2. The purpose of assessment

In the process of assessment a foreign qualification shall be compared to the qualifications in the Estonian education system. The purpose of assessment is to establish a correspondence between the foreign qualification and a qualification within Estonian current system of education. The correspondence shall not be established if the qualification is not recognised in the country where it was issued or if substantial differences can be shown between a foreign and Estonian qualification.

The outcome of assessment enables the Estonian ENIC/NARIC to advise higher education institutions and employers and to make recommendations on access to:

- the studies at the higher education institutions belonging to Estonian education system;
- the labour market or acts or activities in Estonia where certain level of education or a qualification is required.

3. Required documents

3.1. If the holder of the qualification seeks assessment

Required documents:

- application (in Estonian, English or Russian);
- personal identity document or a page of personal data of the document;
- educational document (diploma or certificate);
- diploma supplement, transcript, grade report or any other additional documents annexed to diploma;
- authorised translations of the educational documents and supplements into Estonian, English or Russian. Documents in Estonian, English, Finnish, Swedish, French, Italian, Russian, Ukrainian and Belarussian languages are accepted without translation. In some cases the Estonian ENIC/NARIC may accept documents in other languages without translation as well.

When seeking assessment for a higher education qualification, documents with supplements attesting to previous education, beginning with the first post-secondary qualification, should be attached.

The Estonian ENIC/NARIC may ask the applicant to supply any other related documents if they are relevant to the evaluation of the qualification and to establishing the correspondence.

Applicant may submit documents as originals, certificated copies or electronically. Upon submission of documents electronically, the files must have been scanned in colour to PDF format, the recommended image resolution is 600x600 dpi.

This article (3.1) shall not apply to the assessment of the qualifications held by beneficiaries and applicants of international protection and aliens in a similar situation in cases the qualification obtained cannot be proven through documentary evidence.

3.2. If an educational institution or an employer seeks assessment

The educational institution or the employer, with the qualification holder's consent, shall submit the following documents to the Estonian ENIC/NARIC:

- all documents listed under 3.1. or their copies;
- a written request for assessment.

4. Assessment criteria

In assessment and establishing a correspondence the following criteria are taken into account:

- 1) The educational or any other institution which has awarded the qualification – type and status of awarding institution, accreditation or any other quality assurance decisions and recognition of institution by the competent authorities of home system;

- 2) The qualification. In assessment six main components are considered: level, quality, workload, learning outcomes and formal right in access to next level of education or cycle of higher education in the system the qualification is awarded. In addition to these six components, the access qualification to the programme, profile (professional/academic), nominal duration and grades will be taken into account.

5. The outcome of the assessment

As a result of the assessment the Estonian ENIC/NARIC issues a written statement as a recommendation about the foreign qualification, advising higher education institutions and employers as to the correspondence of the level of the foreign qualification to that within Estonian education system. The Estonian ENIC/NARIC can make a recommendation for full recognition, partial recognition or for denial of recognition. In case of partial recognition or denial of recognition the applicant shall be notified in writing of the reasons for the decision, and recommendations for further studies in order to obtain a recognised qualification can be made.

If the recommendation is for partial recognition or to deny recognition, no correspondence to a qualification in the Estonian education system is established.

6. The status of the evaluation statement

The evaluation statement concerning a foreign educational qualification issued by the Estonian ENIC/NARIC is informative, giving advice. The final recognition decision about the foreign educational qualification rests with the higher education institution, the employer or any other body giving access to an activity or rights to the holder of a qualification.

7. Application processing fees

The assessment of foreign educational qualifications by the Estonian ENIC/NARIC is free of charge.

8. Application processing deadlines

The Estonian ENIC/NARIC shall provide a written evaluation statement within 30 days, counted from the time all the necessary documents have been supplied.

9. Appealing the assessment decision

The applicant has the right to appeal the outcome of the assessment of a foreign educational qualification if:

- assessment procedures have been violated;
- the applicant believes that the information contained in the evaluation statement is not correct;
- the applicant contests the decision regarding the comparability of the foreign qualification to the qualification in Estonian education system;
- the applicant contests the recommendation to recognize the qualification partially or to deny recognition.

The applicant shall file a written appeal with the Estonian ENIC/NARIC within 30 calendar days of the date of the decision, stating the reasons for the appeal.

10. Final clauses

The applicant has the right to request information from the Estonian ENIC/NARIC about the Estonian education system and the relevant legal instruments, including agreements with foreign countries, regulating the recognition of qualifications.

Contact information:

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