

## **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) evaluates foreign qualifications according to the Government of the Republic of Estonia Regulation No 89 of 6 April 2006 “Conditions and Procedure for Assessment and Academic Recognition of Documents Certifying Education Completed in Foreign Education System and for Use of Title of Qualification Granted in Foreign Education System “.

In evaluation and academic recognition the Estonian ENIC/NARIC is guided by the purposes and tasks of the NARIC programme of the European Commission and the ENIC programme of the Council of Europe and UNESCO-CEPES and the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications Concerning Higher Education in the European Region (Lisbon, 1997) and the subsidiary documents.

The comparability of qualifications granted on the territory of the 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 evaluation**

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 evaluation.

The request for evaluation 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 evaluation**

In the process of assessment a foreign qualification shall be compared to the qualifications granted at different levels or at different stages of higher education of the Estonian system of education.

The purpose of evaluation is to establish a correspondence between the foreign qualification and a qualification within Estonia’s current system of education. The correspondence shall not be established if the qualification is not recognized in the country where it was granted or if it cannot be recognized in Estonia for some other reason.

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

- access to studies at the higher education institutions belonging to Estonia’s system of education
- access to the labour market in Estonia for people who have acquired their education in a foreign education system

### 3. Required documents

#### 3.1. If the holder of the qualification seeks evaluation

Required documents:

- application (in Estonian, English or Russian);
- personal identity document;
- original credential or a clear and legible certified copy;
- authorized precise word-for-word translation into Estonian, English or Russian if the credential is not in one of these languages;
- original official transcript and/or other additional documents or their clear and legible certified copies;
- authorized precise word-for-word translation into Estonian, English or Russian if the transcript or additional documents are not in one of these languages.

When seeking evaluation for a higher education qualification, documents with supplements attesting to previous education, beginning with the higher education access 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.

#### 3.2. If an educational institution or an employer seeks evaluation

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

- all documents enumerated under 3.1. or their copies certified by the educational institution or the employer as "*KOOPIA ÕIGE*" ("TRUE COPY");
- a written request for assessment.

### 4. Assessment procedures

In evaluation and establishing a correspondence the following information is taken into account:

- The educational or any other institution which has issued the credential.

In the assessment the following criteria are considered: whether or not the home country of the institution has joined the relevant international agreements, the type of the institution, its status, accreditation or any other quality assessment decisions, and recognition by a competent authority in the home country.

- The educational credential and the qualification it certifies.

In the assessment the following criteria are considered: the qualification and the level of education required by the programme completed, programme goals and content, specialization, learning outcomes and graduation requirements.

The rights of the credential holder for further studies or for access to the labour market in the system in which the credential was issued are also considered.

In evaluation, the requirements for the completion of the same or a similar programme within the Estonian system of education are taken into account.

## **5. The outcome of the assessment**

As a result of the assessment the Estonian ENIC/NARIC issues a written statement about the foreign qualification and the institution which has issued it, advising higher education institutions and employers as to the correspondence of the level of the foreign qualification to that within Estonia's system of education and to the respective stage of Estonian higher education.

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 recognized qualification can be made.

If the recommendation is for partial recognition or to deny recognition, no correspondence to an Estonian level of education or stage of higher education is established.

## **6. The status of the evaluation statement**

The evaluation statement concerning a foreign education credential and the qualification it certifies issued by the Estonian ENIC/NARIC is informative, giving advice both to the credential holder and to the higher education institution, the employer or any other institution to which the foreign credential is presented.

The final recognition decision about the foreign education credential and the qualification it certifies rests with the higher education institution, the employer or, in the case of regulated professions, the respective competent recognition authority.

## **7. Application processing fees**

The assessment of foreign educational credentials 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. In case of delays in processing, the applicant shall be notified in writing of the reasons for the delay.

## **9. Appealing the evaluation decision**

The applicant has the right to appeal the outcome of the assessment of a foreign education 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 levels of education or stages of higher education in Estonia;
- 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 system of education and the relevant legal instruments, including agreements with foreign countries, regulating the recognition of qualifications.

### **Contact information:**

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