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Pursuant to Article 2, indent 9 of the Act on Recognition of Foreign Education Qualifications (Official Gazette, 158/03, 198/03 and 138/06), Agency for Science and Higher Education promulgates

CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION OF FOREIGN HIGHER EDUCATION QUALIFICATIONS

I.

These criteria define basic elements of evaluation of foreign higher education qualifications, which is in the case of professional recognition carried out by the professional body at the Agency for Science and Higher Education or, in the case of academic recognition, professional body of a higher education institution as determined by its statute.

II.

In accordance with the Convention on Recognition of Higher Education Qualifications in European Area ("Official Gazette", International Contracts, no. 9/02), in the process of evaluation of foreign higher education qualification no discrimination shall be made on any ground such as gender, race, colour, disability, language, religion, political or any other opinion, property, birth or other status, or on the grounds of any other circumstance not related to the merits of the qualification for which recognition is sought.

III.

Evaluation of foreign higher education qualification is done exclusively on the basis of acquired knowledge, skills and competences.

To the extent that a recognition decision is based on the knowledge, skills and competences based on foreign higher education qualification, foreign higher education qualification shall be recognised, unless a substantial difference can be shown between the qualification for which recognition is sought and the corresponding qualification in Croatia.

IV.

During evaluation of foreign higher education qualification, into account are taken characteristics of higher education institution where qualification is acquired, that is accreditation of higher education institution and its study programme.

Accreditation means that a competent accrediting body of a country recognises the higher education institution as part of its higher education system.

Accreditation is the result of review which evaluates compliance of a study programme or institution with previously agreed standards. It can be defined as recognition of study programme or institution, if they comply with agreed standards.

V.

During evaluation of foreign higher education qualification into account is taken minimum level of the qualification necessary to access study programme which leads to sought qualification. Previously acquired qualifications are not taken into account.

VI.

During evaluation of foreign higher education qualification taken into account are characteristics of the most important content of the study programme which awards foreign higher education qualification for which recognition is sought.

VII.

Recognition of foreign higher education qualifications may be requested in order to continue education in the Republic of Croatia (academic recognition) and/or for the purpose of employment in the Republic of Croatia (professional recognition). Evaluation of foreign higher education qualification takes into account the purpose recognition is sought for, and recognition decision should clearly state the purpose it is valid for.

VIII.

In accordance with Article 9 of the Act on Recognition of Foreign Education Qualifications (Official Gazette, issue 158/2003, 198/2003 and 138/2006), once carried out positive evaluation of a specific foreign higher qualification is not liable to renewed evaluation and is valid for all subsequent cases of recognition of the same higher education qualifications.

During evaluation of qualifications, previous evaluations are taken into account. If there is a prior decision concerning evaluation of corresponding qualification, then the qualification is evaluated in accordance with that decision. In order to take into account previous evaluation decision, it is necessary for the qualification requested to be recognised to reflect previous qualification in the following elements: i) institution which issued documents, ii) curriculum and study programme, iii) name of qualification, iv) year of admission into study programme and v) year of acquiring qualification.

IX.

Evaluation of foreign higher education qualification in the Republic of Croatia recognises qualification that is most similar to foreign qualification in level, volume and type of acquired competences, taking into account purpose recognition is sought for. Evaluation of foreign higher education qualification takes into account its relative place and function compared to other qualifications in the same education system.

X.

Evaluation of foreign higher education qualification ascertains the following:

- (a) are differences in acquired competences between foreign higher education qualification and corresponding qualification in Croatia substantial enough to prevent recognition of foreign higher education qualification. If yes, then the evaluation must ascertain whether to grant alternative, partial and/or conditional recognition;

- (b) are differences in access to further education and/or employment between foreign higher education qualification and corresponding higher education qualification in Croatia substantial enough to allow recognition of foreign higher education qualification. If yes, then the evaluation must ascertain whether to grant alternative, partial and/or conditional recognition;
- (c) are differences in key elements of one or more programmes leading to foreign higher education qualification compared to programme leading to higher education qualification in the Republic of Croatia substantial enough to prevent recognition of the foreign higher education qualification. If yes, then the evaluation must ascertain whether to grant alternative, partial and/or conditional recognition. However, comparability of elements of the programme should be analysed only to compare acquired knowledge and access to further activities and not as a necessary condition for recognition in itself.

XI.

If the process of recognition verifies that there is a substantial difference between the quality of programme and/or institution in which foreign higher education qualification is issued and the quality of programme and/or institution issuing corresponding higher education qualification, preventing recognition of foreign higher education qualification as asked by applicant, then the professional body in charge of evaluation has to document the difference and, on that basis, suggest alternative, partial and/or conditional recognition.

XII.

If a specific foreign higher education qualification gives formal rights in the issuing country, then the qualification has to be evaluated in order to give its holder corresponding formal rights in the Republic of Croatia, to the extent they exist and stem out of competences confirmed by the qualification.

XIII.

During the course of evaluation, knowledge, skills and competences from foreign higher education qualifications may be compared with the following qualification levels in the Republic of Croatia:

- professional study with less than 180 ECTS, if the following criteria are fulfilled:
 - minimum condition for access is high school education level
 - adequate skills are acquired to a larger extent than knowledge
 - the volume of acquired skills and knowledge corresponds to those that are comparable with at least 120 ECTS, i.e. those that may be acquired with full-time study lasting at least 2 years, with included time necessary for full completion of study
 - there exist corresponding competences with at least 60 ECTS which are conditioned with successful acquisition of other basic competences during the education.
- professional study with 180 or more ECTS, if the following criteria are fulfilled:
 - minimum condition for access is high school education level
 - adequate skills are acquired to a larger extent than knowledge
 - the volume of acquired skills and knowledge corresponds to those that are comparable with at least 180 ECTS, i.e. those that may be acquired with full-time

study lasting at least 3 years, with included time necessary for full completion of study

- there exist corresponding competences with at least 90 ECTS which are conditioned with successful acquisition of other basic competences during the education.
- undergraduate university study, if the following criteria are fulfilled:
 - minimum condition for access is high school education level
 - adequate knowledge is acquired to a greater extent than skills
 - the volume of acquired skills and knowledge corresponds to those that are comparable with at least 180 ECTS, i.e. those that may be acquired with full-time study lasting at least 3 year, with included time necessary for full completion of study
 - there exist corresponding competences with at least 90 ECTS which are conditioned with successful acquisition of other basic competences during the education.
- graduate university study, if the following criteria are fulfilled:
 - minimum condition for access is the level of undergraduate university study or adequate level of qualification, except in cases when graduate study is organised as study integrated with undergraduate study (in that case, minimum condition for access is high school education level)
 - adequate knowledge is acquired to a greater extent than skills
 - the volume of acquired skills and knowledge corresponds to those that are comparable with at least 60 ECTS, i.e. those that may be acquired with full-time study lasting at least 1 year, with included time necessary for full completion of study
 - there exists corresponding knowledge with at least 60 ECTS that is at the forefront of appropriate discipline or interdisciplinary field.
- specialist professional graduate study, if the following criteria are fulfilled:
 - minimum condition for access is the level of undergraduate university study or adequate level of qualification
 - adequate skills are acquired to a larger extent than knowledge
 - the volume of acquired skills and knowledge corresponds to those that are comparable with at least 60 ECTS, i.e. those that may be acquired with full-time study lasting at least 1 year, with included time necessary for full completion of study
 - there exist corresponding skills with at least 60 ECTS that are at the forefront of appropriate discipline or interdisciplinary field.
- postgraduate specialist study, if the following criteria are fulfilled:
 - minimum condition for access is the level of graduate university study or adequate level of qualification
 - adequate knowledge is acquired to a greater extent than skills
 - the volume of acquired skills and knowledge corresponds to those that are comparable with at least 60 ECTS, i.e. those that may be acquired with full-time study lasting at least 1 year, with included time necessary for full completion of study

- there exists corresponding knowledge with at least 60 ECTS that is at the forefront of accepted knowledge, with 30 ECTS very specific to narrow field of appropriate discipline or interdisciplinary field.
- postgraduate university study (*magistar znanosti/umjetnosti*), if the following criteria are fulfilled:
 - minimum condition for access is the level of graduate university study or adequate level of qualification
 - adequate knowledge is acquired and developed to a greater extent than skills
 - there has been developed new original knowledge in the appropriate discipline or interdisciplinary field on a recognizable international level
- postgraduate university study, if the following criteria are fulfilled:
 - minimum condition for access is the level of graduate university study or adequate level of qualification
 - adequate knowledge is acquired and developed to a greater extent than skills
 - there has been developed new original knowledge in the appropriate discipline or interdisciplinary field on a recognisable international level. Recognisable international level is confirmed by publication of scientific/artistic works.

XIV.

On the day these Criteria for evaluation of foreign higher education qualifications enter into force, the Criteria for evaluation of foreign higher education qualifications passed by the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports passed on 3rd January 2005, class: 023-01/05-01/01, file no.: 533-01-05-1, shall cease to be valid.

XV.

These Criteria for evaluation of foreign higher education qualifications shall enter into force on the date of their promulgation.

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