



Workshop on the International Recognition of Degrees and Diplomas in Croatia

Zagreb, September 20-22, 2005

Accreditation and Recognition 5.

Topics

- **Relevance to the field of credential evaluation**
- **Definition and characteristics**
- **Developing expertise**

Relevance to the field of credential evaluation

- Evaluator can be confident that degrees that are recognized/accredited in the home country represent an appropriate level of education
- First step in credential evaluation process: determine if institution or degree is recognized/accredited in home country, according to regulations that apply in that country
- General rule of good practice: if the degree isn't recognized/accredited in home country, it can't

Definition

Accreditation and recognition refer to the process through which an institution acquires a status indicating that a specified standard has been attained and that its degrees and programmes of study warrant acceptance by other institutions in the same country and in other countries.



Characteristics

Accreditation

is carried out by an agency which in most countries is independent of the state. Its purpose is to provide some form of guarantee that a given institution, or a programme of study, meets certain minimum standards of quality.



Characteristics, cont.

Accreditation:

- **voluntary**
- **non-governmental (in its original form)**
- **examines institutions as well as programmes of study**
- **evaluation process involves self-evaluation and peer review**
- **aims at some form of quality assurance**



Characteristics

Recognition

in Western Europe is provided through legislation. The law formulates standard criteria which apply to an entire system of education, usually not to individual institutions or programmes.

Characteristics

Recognition:

- a generic term, encompassing various forms of approval, such as *validation, certification, registration*
- state legislation
- national
- does not examine, but prescribes the overall mission of education, sometimes including the course content and examination requirements
- is in itself not a form of quality control

Developing Expertise

- What is the terminology used in the country in question with regard to accreditation (i.e., accredited, recognized, chartered, approved)?
- What is the name of the authority responsible for accreditation?
- Can you verify the status of the accrediting body to be sure it is official?
- Is education governed by national legislation, and if so, what are the relevant laws?

Developing Expertise

- Are institutions or programmes accredited, or both?
- Is there a standard way of indicating the accredited status of an institution in the documentation issued by the degree granting authority?
- Where can further information be found on accreditation and quality assurance in the country in question?
- Is a list of accredited or recognized institutions available from an official source?