

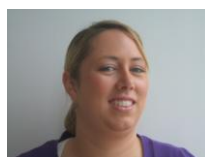


Welcome to another edition of our newsletter concerning the work of **Qualifications Recognition**: the national service responsible for coordinating the academic recognition of foreign qualifications in Ireland. These newsletters are produced on an occasional basis to update you on developments that may be of interest. The National Qualifications Authority of Ireland (NQA) hosts Qualifications Recognition which is part of the European Network of Information Centres / National Academic Recognition Information Centres (ENIC/NARIC) and acts as the National Reference Point (NRP) for further education qualifications.

## The Recognition Team



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Manager



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We hope this newsletter will be useful to you and any queries or observations are very welcome. We can be contacted by email at [info@qualrec.ie](mailto:info@qualrec.ie) or by telephone on (01) 8871500. Personal e-mail addresses consist of (initial of first name)+(surname)@nqai.ie.

**Qualifications Recognition** is an information service that aims to compare a foreign qualification to a qualification that is included at a particular level on the Irish National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ). The advice provided helps stakeholders place the foreign qualification in the context of the Irish education and training system. In addition to over 1,900 formal applications received during 2010 directly from award holders, the service also worked with education institutions amongst others and dealt with approximately 650 emails per quarter over the year. Calls to Qualifications Recognition are now being tracked and over 400 per month were received in the first quarter of 2011. Further details on the service and our involvement in various projects can be accessed in the publications section on the website.

## Clarifying our Role in Recognition

We often receive queries about our **role in recognition**. While we provide academic recognition of school, further and higher education qualifications, we do not provide professional recognition, assess incomplete applications or work experience and do not comment on grades or results achieved within a particular qualification. Information on the extent of our role in recognition is detailed on our website, [www.qualrec.ie](http://www.qualrec.ie).

## **New Qualifications Recognition Website**

The website, [www.qualrec.ie](http://www.qualrec.ie), as our main communication tool acts as a significant repository of advice detailing how many foreign awards are recognised through the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ). Traffic to the website continues to grow with almost 4,000 unique visitors per month for the first quarter in 2011. A review of the website over the last months has resulted in a new design and layout being launched in May to ensure ease of use and accessibility to the information it contains. Of particular note is the enlargement of the [International Qualifications Database](#) section and advice on the comparability of additional foreign awards is envisaged throughout 2011. We welcome comments or feedback on any published comparability by e-mail to [info@qualrec.ie](mailto:info@qualrec.ie) as such perspective will enhance the quality of the information contained on the website.

## **European Qualifications Framework (EQF)**

Qualifications Frameworks and the recognition function are intrinsically linked as both are aimed at increasing transparency and mobility. As a result of a call from the European Commission for NARIC projects for the year 2010-2011, a project was proposed with the aim of **exploring use of the EQF** in daily comparison work. France, the Netherlands, Belgium (French community) and Ireland are partners in the project. This work has involved outlining the different recognition procedures employed by these NARICs, the problems encountered by employing the EQF (Levels 4 – 8) and national frameworks, and their possible solutions. The working group aims to produce guidelines for NARIC centres to help increase understanding about how a national Qualifications Framework and its referencing to EQF may be used as a tool in the process of recognition of foreign qualifications. A final report will be available on our website in Autumn 2011.

## **Admissions Officers' Event**

Representatives of the NQAI were invited to speak at a continuing professional development event organised by the **Association of Professional Admissions Officers** in Institutes of Higher Education in Ireland which took place in late February at NUI, Galway. Jim Murray provided an update for those attending on the process being undertaken to amalgamate the NQAI, FETAC, HETAC and IUQB while Niamh Lenehan gave a presentation on the work of the recognition service with a particular emphasis on the treatment and recognition of school awards from outside the State. The invitation to speak at the event was very welcomed as an opportunity to liaise more closely with admissions officers to share information and expertise. In addition, the Association expressed interest in the formation of a group of stakeholders to discuss issues around the recognition of foreign awards and to exchange ideas and information on items of interest.

## **Annual ENIC-NARIC Conference 2011**

The annual conference of the **ENIC-NARIC network** ([www.enic-naric.net](http://www.enic-naric.net)) took place in Warsaw on 20-21 June. The event is an opportunity to network with colleagues and to discuss various issues in recognition such as the use of Qualifications Frameworks and the recognition of prior learning (RPL). A major project, coordinated by our Dutch colleagues (NUFFIC) with input from the entire network is currently underway to develop a 'European Area of Recognition' (EAR) manual. Further details are available from the project website, <http://www.eurorecognition.eu>. It is envisaged that the manual will be available to download in late 2011/early 2012.