

Qualifications Recognition

Údarás Náisiúnta
Cáilíochtaí na hÉireann
National Qualifications
Authority of Ireland



Newsletter 1: Qualifications Recognition

September 2009

Welcome to the first newsletter concerning the work of **Qualifications Recognition**: the national service responsible for coordinating the academic recognition of foreign qualifications in Ireland. The National Qualifications Authority of Ireland (NQAI) 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. This initial newsletter follows on from our very successful event last year – ‘Different Roles, Different Responsibilities: Developing a Consistent Approach to the Recognition of Foreign Qualifications in Ireland’ - which many of you attended. In the course of the seminar, the need for enhanced communication was noted; hence, this newsletter is intended to update you on developments in the area of qualifications recognition, thereby providing opportunities for sharing information.

I hope this newsletter will be of interest to you and any queries or observations are very welcome. We anticipate that these newsletters will be circulated quarterly or as appropriate. We can be contacted by email at info@qualrec.ie or by telephone on (01) 8871500.



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Qualifications Recognition: An overview

Qualifications Recognition is an information service that helps education institutions, amongst others, compare foreign qualifications with Irish qualifications. The service aims to compare the foreign qualification to a qualification that is included at a particular level on the Irish National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ). The advice provided places the foreign qualification in the context of the Irish education and training system.

Qualifications Recognition Website

Our website, www.qualrec.ie, is a useful resource and has received, on average, over 3,500 unique visitors per month in 2009. Important features of the site include information on the recognition application process and the Irish education and training system. In addition, the **International Qualifications Database** currently stores advice on the comparability of awards from 16 different countries as well as 7 comprehensive country education profiles. A review of the website will take place in late 2009 to ensure ease of use and to improve accessibility to the information it contains.

Country Education Profiles

The NQAI has instituted a programme of developing country education profiles designed to help individuals with foreign qualifications, and other interested parties, to understand how these qualifications compare to Irish qualifications. The profiles provide in-depth information on the education system of a particular country, with an emphasis on awards gained following completion of all stages of education and training. Following verification of a profile by a contact in that country, comparability of awards are discussed, agreed and published. As noted at the seminar last November, the compilation of further profiles offers stakeholders an opportunity to share resources and information. Thus, as draft profiles become available, we will be inviting you, by e-mail, to offer feedback on each profile prior to publication in the International Qualifications Database on www.qualrec.ie. Such feedback and perspective will add to the quality of the information contained in the profiles.

Overarching Frameworks

The NQAI is the National Coordination Point for the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (EQF). This overarching Framework acts as a translation device, making it easier to compare further, higher and school qualifications across Europe. The higher education levels of the EQF (6-8) are compatible with the cycles of the Qualifications Framework for the European Higher Education Area (QF-EHEA) or the 'Bologna' Framework. Ireland verified the compatibility of its NFQ to the Bologna Framework in 2006 while the process of referencing the Irish NFQ to the EQF was completed in June 2009. These 'meta-frameworks' make it possible to compare national qualifications frameworks to each other in terms of learning outcomes and competences, thus, making it easier to recognise qualifications and periods of study and improving the mobility of learners and workers. Further information on the Bologna Process and the EQF is available on our website, www.qualrec.ie and the NQAI website, www.nqai.ie.

Election to the NARIC Advisory Board (NAB)

The NQAI has been elected to the NARIC Advisory Board (NAB) for a second year running. The NAB, made up of representatives of 3 member countries, is responsible for helping to manage the ENIC-NARIC Network and offers advice to the Secretariat (consisting of the European Commission, the Council of Europe and the UNESCO-CEPES) on the design, implementation and monitoring of the annual work programme. In addition, members of the NAB may suggest agenda items for the annual meetings of the network. Membership of the Board allows the Authority raise issues of concern in the area of qualifications recognition in a European context.

The Recognition Team

There are 3 further members of staff directly involved in the qualifications recognition service. Please feel free to contact any of us directly!



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