

# **Guideline on the Procedure for Recognition of Education Acquired by a Person with International Protection Status For Higher Educational Institutions**

LEPL – National Center For Educational Quality Enhancement  
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## Table of Contents

Introduction.....	2
Chapter 1: Situational Analysis .....	2
Chapter 2: Recognition of education received by a person with international protection status.....	4
Chapter 3: Procedure for recognition of education received abroad.....	8
Appendix 1:.....	11

## Introduction

This guidance document has been prepared for higher educational institutions of Georgia for the determination of the status of recognition of education acquired abroad for individuals holding a status of international protection. The document begins with a situational analysis within the context of Georgia. Subsequent sections discuss the recognition of education obtained by individuals with the status of international protection and the procedure for recognition of education acquired abroad. This document serves as a recommendation and contributes to the enhancement of awareness of universities regarding the recognition procedure and to establish standard/common approaches in the application review and decision-making process.

## Chapter 1: Situational Analysis

In 1999, Georgia ratified the Lisbon Recognition Convention (LRC) and undertook to fulfill its obligations under the Convention. According to LRC Article IV.1, “Each Party shall recognize the qualifications issued by other Parties meeting the general requirements for access to higher education in those Parties for the purpose of access to programmes belonging to its higher education system, unless a substantial difference can be shown between the general requirements for access in the Party in which the qualification was obtained and in the Party in which recognition of the qualification is sought.”

Under Article V.1, “Each Party shall recognize periods of study completed within the framework of a higher education programme in another Party. This recognition shall comprise such periods of study towards the completion of a higher education programme in the Party in which recognition is sought, unless substantial differences can be shown between the periods of study completed in another Party and the part of the higher education programme which they would replace in the Party in which recognition is sought.”

As stated in Article VI.1, “to the extent that a recognition decision is based on the knowledge and skills certified by the higher education qualification, each Party shall recognize the higher education qualifications conferred in another Party, unless a substantial difference can be shown between the qualification for which recognition is sought and the corresponding qualification in the Party in which recognition is sought.”

According to Article VII: “Each Party shall take all feasible and reasonable steps within the framework of its education system and in conformity with its constitutional, legal, and regulatory provisions to develop procedures designed to assess fairly and expeditiously whether refugees, displaced persons, and persons in a refugee-like situation fulfill the relevant requirements for access to higher education, to further higher education programs or to employment activities, even in cases in which the qualifications obtained in one of the Parties cannot be proven through documentary evidence.”

In Georgia, the procedure for recognizing educational achievements acquired abroad was not regulated by law before 2008. After Order No.1163 of the Minister of Education and Science of Georgia - “On approval of the formal recognition of educational documents issued abroad and the rules for determining the equivalence and authenticity of educational documents issued in Georgia” was issued in 2008, the above was defined as a legal entity under public law – the LEPL National Center for Education Accreditation.

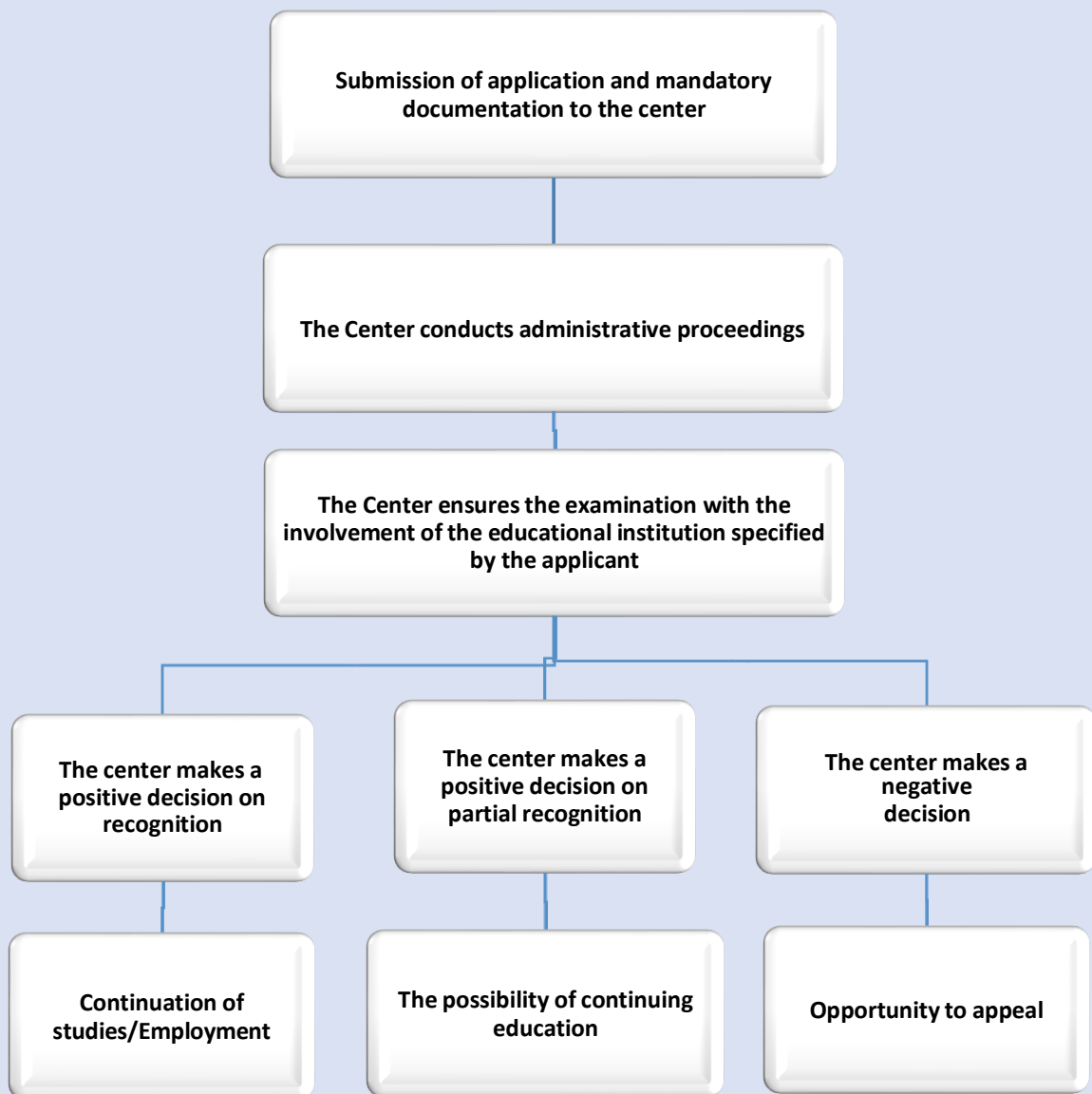
The LEPL National Center for Education Accreditation was reorganized into the LEPL National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement in 2010, taking on a new legal entity with a formally approved statute and defined functions - acknowledgment of education obtained overseas, even by refugees. "The rule On Approval of the Procedure of Validation of Georgian Educational Documents and Recognition of Foreign Education" was approved in the same year by Minister of Education and Science of Georgia with Order No. 98/N dated October 1, 2010. The procedure for the recognition of education acquired abroad is outlined in approved legislation (98/N).

From 2008 to 2019, the regulation simply stated that the center's function includes recognizing the education received by refugees, but in what way or by what type of procedure the center does this, it was not specified. In the framework of the implementation of the Lisbon Recognition Convention, based on the study of international practice, in 2019, the procedure for recognition of education received by a person with international protection status was clarified, which is regulated by Article 5<sup>1</sup> of the "Rule On Approval of the Procedure of Validation of Georgian Educational Documents and Recognition of Foreign Education" - (Order N 98/N Of the Minister of Education and Science of Georgia 1 October 2010 ). The procedure was completely developed based on existing theoretical knowledge and has not yet been implemented in practice, since no one has applied yet.

As per the aforementioned regulation, the center acknowledges education acquired abroad by individuals who have international protection status. This entails ascertaining the fact that these individuals have received education and assessing the compatibility of their foreign qualifications with Georgian qualifications.

The rule of recognition of education received by a person with the status of international protection is used only if the person with the status of international protection cannot present to the center a document confirming his education abroad.

## Chapter 2: Recognition of Education Received by a Person with International Protection Status



*Schedule 1*

Following the outlined procedure, the center acknowledges the education obtained abroad by individuals holding the status of international protection. This involves verifying the completion of education by these individuals and assessing the alignment of the qualifications earned abroad with those recognized in Georgia

#### **Required Documentation:**

1. An application;
2. A copy of the applicant's identity card (in case of foreign citizens, the notarized translation of the copy of passport);
3. In the case of filing an application by another person, the document certifying the authority thereof (power of attorney);
4. Notarized copy of the document confirming the status of international protection;
5. An individual with international protection status, who has received education, is required to submit all pertinent documents duly certified by the relevant authority or as indicated by the applicant, establishing the validation of their educational qualifications;
6. A document verifying the payment of the relevant fee. According to the law of Georgia "on international protection" - defined 70 GEL, for the recognition of education received abroad by a person with the status of international protection.

In addition, the educational institution, that carries out the exam determined by the procedure, is empowered to further establish the fee, considering the specific features of the qualifications/educational outcomes under evaluation.

After receiving the application, the center starts **searching for information** to determine the fact of receiving education abroad by a person with international protection status, for which it is authorized to conduct an oral hearing with the involvement of a person with international protection status and/or refer to the competent/relevant bodies of a foreign country that recognize the education received by the person with international protection status.

The process of recognizing education involves the participation of the higher education institution specified by the applicant. As part of this process, the institution **conducts an examination** aimed to determine whether individuals with international protection status possess the requisite knowledge, skills, and competencies of the qualification stated in the application. The higher education institution has the authority to define the format of the examination. It is recommended for the institution to establish an internal recognition policy, outlining the procedure, deadlines, involved parties, as well as their respective rights and responsibilities in detail.

The examination is conducted either in Georgian or in any foreign language, as agreed upon by the educational institution and the applicant. It is recommended for the higher education institution to predefine the specialties and program directions for which it can offer examinations in different languages.

The procedure for conducting the examination and the topic of the exam, as per the agreement with the higher educational institution, is determined by the individual administrative-legal act of the director of the LEPL National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement, the above-mentioned procedure must be notified to the applicant 10 (ten) working days before the examination.

Based on the examination results, the center issues one of the following **decisions**:

- a) Full recognition of the education acquired by a person with international protection status. In the case of full recognition, the person is entitled to be employed corresponding to the qualification or to pursue further education at the next level of higher education;
- b) Partial recognition of the education acquired by a person with international protection status. In the case of partial recognition, the person is entitled to continue studying at the same level of higher education for which the recognition was granted;
- c) Refusal to recognize the education acquired by a person with international protection status. In case of a refusal, the individual has the right to appeal the decision within one month from the recognition date, following the procedures established by legislation, including filing an appeal with the collegial administrative body of the Tbilisi City Court.

*It is important to note that:*

*The decision specifies the alignment of the education received by a person with international protection status with the national qualification framework. In the case of partial recognition, the decision outlines the specific part of the education that is recognized.*

*In conjunction with the decision, the center creates an information card containing:*

- a) The date of card issuance;*
- b) Personal identification details of the person with international protection status (name, surname, etc.);*
- c) Information regarding the qualifications under assessment;*
- d) Additional details provided by the applicant (language proficiency, work experience, etc.);*
- e) Details about the educational institution conducting/evaluating the examination and the evaluation results.*

*The information card is written in both Georgian and English and is handed to the applicant alongside the document indicating the recognition/partial recognition/refusal of education.*

For comprehensive details about the procedure, refer to the center's website.

Scan the QR code for direct access: [QR Code].





## Chapter 3: Procedure for Recognition of Education Received Abroad

In the scenario where the persons with international protection status are able to provide the documentation confirming their foreign-acquired education, the standard procedure for the recognition of education received abroad is applicable. This recognition process encompasses education received in the following categories:

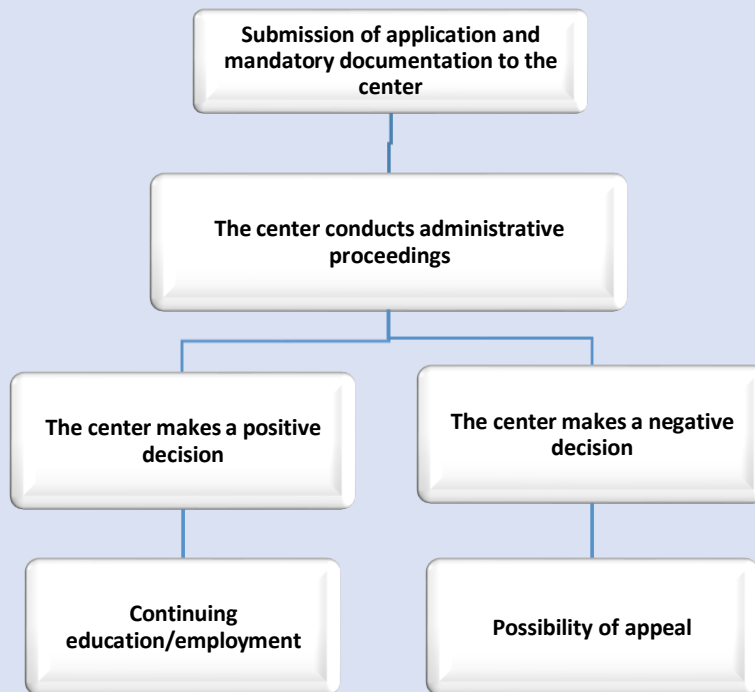
Recognition is valid to:

- General Education
- Vocational Education
- Higher Education

### Required Documentation:

- Secondary (complete) general education certificate and its supplement / annex
- Certificate of basic education and its supplement / annex
- A document verifying the general education obtained throughout the study period, serving as the source of evaluations
- Professional diploma and its supplement, source of evaluations
- Diploma of higher education and its supplement, source of evaluations
- A document confirming the academic qualification awarded

### Recognition of education received abroad:



#### *Schedule 2*

***The documentation to be submitted to the center for the implementation of the mentioned procedure is:***

1. Application (application form)
2. A copy of the applicant's identity document (a notarized translation of a copy of a foreign citizen's passport)
3. In case of submission of the application by another person, a document confirming authority (power of attorney)
4. In case of submission of the application by the parent, the notarized copy of the child's Birth Certificate
5. Notarized translation of a copy of the educational document\*
6. Receipt confirming the payment of the fee
  - For recognition of education received abroad - 40 GEL regular production (one month);
  - Accelerated production :
    - 15 working days - 80 GEL
    - 5 working days - 120 GEL
    - 1 working day - 250 GEL
7. In case of requesting the recognition of the education received during the period of study (school grades/ ECTS), conclusion of the host educational institution on compliance of education received in the period of studying abroad must be submitted
8. Those wishing to enroll in Georgian universities must have the consent of the receiving educational institution regarding the vacancy

During administrative proceedings, the center determines:

- a) Whether the educational document is issued in the name of the person indicated in this document, and whether the educational institution issuing the document is recognized under the legislation of the country where this institution carries out the educational activities (verification of authenticity);
- b) Compliance of qualifications obtained abroad with existing qualifications in Georgia (determining compliance).

***To recognize the education received abroad, the center contacts to the authorized body of the relevant country and/or the educational document issuing institution. In establishing compliance, the center determines the conformity of the qualifications obtained abroad, the study results achieved during the period of study, with the existing qualifications in Georgia.***

To resolve the issue, the center is authorized to request additional documentation, including for recognition of education received abroad, and confirming the person's life abroad.

After the completion of administrative proceedings, the center:

- a) **Recognizes the education received abroad** – in case of recognition, the person is entitled to be employed in accordance with the qualifications, or to continue studying
- b) **Refuses to recognize foreign education** - in case of refusal, the person has the right to appeal the decision in accordance with the law, within one month from the date of notification in the collegial administrative body of the Tbilisi City Court

Detailed information about the procedure is available on the center's website. ***See the QR code:***



## Appendix 1:

### **Information Card**

Date and place of drawing up the card:

#### **Personal information of the cardholder:**

Name:

Surname:

Father's name:

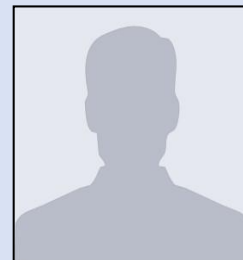
Mother's Name:

Date of Birth:

Place of Birth:

Nationality:

Gender:



#### **Information about education/qualification received abroad:**

Name of the educational institution in which the education was received:

Country where the educational institution was located:

Name of educational program:

Name of qualification awarded:

Years of education:

Name of the educational institution conducting/evaluating the exam:

Results of evaluation

#### **Additional information about the applicant:**

Language skills:

Work experience:

Other:

Signature:

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