

The Recognition of the Accreditation  
Granted by a Foreign Quality Assurance  
Agency/Organization by LEPL - National  
Center for Educational Quality Enhancement

Guidelines



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Tbilisi, 2021

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## 1. Introduction

This document has been prepared by LEPL - National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement (hereinafter - the Center) aiming at informing the stakeholders about the Center's consistent procedures of the recognition of the accreditation granted to the higher education programme by the foreign quality assurance agency/organization.

The Center welcomes the initiative and efforts of the higher education institutions to obtain appropriate accreditation for a higher education programme from a foreign quality assurance agency/organization and, at the same time, it creates favorable conditions for the institutions to recognize obtained accreditation by using appropriate mechanisms.

According with the legislation of Georgia, the legal consequences of accreditation apply equally to the accredited programme recognized by the Center.

## 2. Legislative Basis

- Article 19(3) of the [Law of Georgian on Education Quality Improvement](#); Article 63(13) of the Law of Georgia "On Higher Education".

• "Higher education programmes, including accreditation of a joint higher education programme, can be carried out by a foreign organization with the relevant competence recognized by the Center. The recognition is carried out according with the procedure established by the [Accreditation Charter](#).

- Article 28 of [The Charter for the Accreditation](#) of Educational Programmes of the General Education Institutions and Higher Education Institutions" approved by the Order N65/N of 4 May 2011 by the Minister of Education and Science of Georgia (hereinafter - the Accreditation Charter) provides regulations on the recognition of the accreditation granted by the foreign quality assurance agency/organization.

## 3. Recognition of the Accreditation Granted by a Foreign Organization

According to the [Accreditation Charter](#), the Center recognizes an accreditation which is granted by:

- the organizations operating on the territory of the European Union member states and by the organizations that are members of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) and are registered in the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR), having such an authority granted by the legislation of the relevant country.
- the organization operating in the territory of the United States, which has such an authority according to the applicable law, and the external evaluation mechanism used by that organization, in terms of quality assurance, is compatible with the national accreditation standards and procedures;

- by any other quality assurance agency if the external evaluation mechanism of the organization granting the accreditation, in terms of quality assurance, is compatible with the accreditation standards and procedures operating on the national level and the reservation of such recognition is envisaged by the international agreement.

According to the [Accreditation Charter](#), the part of the procedures distinguishes the procedures of recognition of the accreditations granted by the agency operating on the territory of EU member states, which is member of ENQA (registered in EQAR), by the organization operating on the territory of the USA and by any other quality assurance agency. Besides, the terms are defined for submission of an application to the Center for the recognition of the granted accreditation.

It is beneficial that institutions have the opportunity to make a preliminary application to the Center before contacting a foreign agency, which will enable them to ascertain in advance the validity of their decision regarding the choice of an agency and, subsequently, the possibility of obtaining recognition.

### 3.1. Recognition of the Accreditation Granted by the Agency Operating on the Territory of EU member states and the member of ENQA (registered in EQAR)

The recognition procedure and conditions are simplified for the recognition of accreditation granted by the EU Member State and ENQA member agency (registered in EQAR). To obtain recognition, a higher education institution shall submit the relevant documents to the Center.

At the initial stage, the higher education institution addresses relevant organization with accreditation application based on prior consent from the Center.

To obtain consent, the following documentation shall be submitted to the Center:

- A respective application on requesting advance recognition;
- The following information on the educational programme:
- title of the programme, qualification/qualifications to be granted, components of the programme, number and distribution of credits.

The recognition is carried out based on the submission of the following respective documents to the Center:

- A report of the accreditation expert panel created by a foreign organization;
- A decision on the accreditation of an educational programme made by a foreign organization.

In this case, accreditation standards and procedures are not compared with the national standards and procedures since ENQA member quality assurance agencies rely on and are guided by the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) while implementation of external higher quality assurance mechanisms.

### 3.2. Recognition of the Accreditation Granted by an Organization Operating in the United States

A higher education institution shall apply to the organization operating in the United States for accreditation on after prior approval from the Center to get accreditation and recognition by that organization.

To obtain preliminary consent, the following documentation shall be submitted to the Center:

- A respective application on requesting advance recognition;
- A document confirming payment of the fee for the application review (annex 4, Article 1 of the Accreditation Charter) *which equals to 1000 GEL*;
- The following information on the educational programme: title of the programme, qualification/qualifications to be granted, components of the programme, number and distribution of credits.
- Information on the status and authority of the accreditation body, accreditation standards and procedures.

The Center examines the compliance of the characteristics and external quality assurance mechanisms of an educational programme with the legislation of Georgia.

Prior consent of the Center shall be issued based on the compatibility of the national accreditation standards and procedures with the external quality assurance assessment mechanism used by the organization. Otherwise, the Center refuses to recognize the accreditation granted by the organization indicated by the educational institution.

The recognition is carried out based on the submission of the following respective documents to the Center:

- A report of the accreditation expert panel created by a foreign organization;
- A decision on the accreditation of an educational programme made by a foreign organization.

### 3.3. Recognition of Accreditation Granted by any Other Foreign Organization

The Center is also authorized to recognize accreditation granted by any other foreign organization if the external quality assurance assessment mechanisms used by that organization is compatible with national accreditation standards and procedures and if the stipulation about such recognition is considered by the international agreement.

To obtain preliminary consent, the following documentation shall be submitted to the Center:

- Addressing the body responsible for drafting an international agreement on requesting prior recognition;
- The following information on the educational programme: title of the programme, qualification/qualifications to be granted, components of the programme, number and distribution of credits.

The Center examines the compliance of the characteristics and external quality assurance mechanisms of an educational programme with the legislation of Georgia.

Prior consent of the Center shall be issued based on the compatibility of the national accreditation standards and procedures with the quality assurance assessment mechanism used by the organization. Otherwise, the Center refuses to recognize the accreditation granted by the organization indicated by the educational institution.

The recognition is carried out based on the submission of the following respective documents to the Center:

- Copy of the signed international agreement (approved accordingly);
- A report of the accreditation expert panel created by a foreign organization;
- A decision on the accreditation of an educational programme made by a foreign organization.

The higher education institution submits an application to the Center for prior approval of the accreditation recognition 30 calendar days before applying to the agency/organization;

The Center decides on recognition within 30 calendar days after the submission of the application for recognition. While if a period of more than 30 calendar days is necessary to establish the circumstances relevant to the case, the Center is authorized to increase this period up to 60 calendar days at the beginning of the administrative proceedings.

#### **4. Examining the Conditions of the Accreditation Granted by a Foreign Organization**

According to the regulation defined by the [Accreditation Charter](#), in the part of checking the accreditation conditions granted by a foreign organization, the Center has developed a mechanism in case of necessity to check the accreditation conditions granted by a foreign organization through unscheduled monitoring and based on prior agreement with that organization.

The expert report elaborated as a result of the above-mentioned monitoring mechanism shall be sent to the relevant foreign organization.

Besides, it should be noted that the higher education institution is obliged to provide the Center with any changes in the accreditation decision granted by a foreign organization, as well as information on the results of the examination (monitoring) of the accreditation conditions by a foreign organization.

See the scheme on Recognition of the Accreditation  
Granted by a Foreign Organization

