

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

LEPL – National Center For Educational Quality Enhancement

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Introduction

This guidance document has been prepared for higher educational institutions of Georgia for the determination of the status of recognition of foreign-acquired education 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 received 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 Convention (LRC) and undertook to fulfill its obligations under the Convention. Pursuant to IV.1 of the above-mentioned Agreement, each Party shall recognize the qualifications issued by the other participating Party in accordance with its general requirements and shall allow their holder to be admitted to the study programs of its higher education system unless it is possible to demonstrate fundamental differences in the country's admission requirements, which issues the degree. Regarding the rules of the countries in which the reference is sought.

In accordance with Article V.1, each Party shall recognize the period of study completed within the framework of the higher education program of the other Party. The certificate refers to the periods of study required to complete a university degree in the area in which the certificate is sought. Except in cases where a fundamental difference can be identified between the period of study completed in the country of qualification and the period of study in higher education in the country where the degree is sought.

As stated in Article VI. 1. Unless there is evidence of a material discrepancy between the qualifications of the nation awarding the qualification and the country where recognition is sought, each Party shall recognize higher education credentials granted by the other Party.

According to Chapter VII: "Each Party shall, within the framework of its educational system and in accordance with its constitutional, legal and regulatory provisions, take all possible and reasonable measures to develop fair and expeditious assessment procedures to determine whether refugees, displaced persons, and refugees meet the relevant requirements, to be allowed to receive or continue higher education, or to be employed, even when the qualification received in the territory of one of the parties is not documented.

In Georgia, the procedure for recognizing educational achievements acquired abroad was not regulated by law before 2008. After the Order No. 1163 of the Minister of Education and Science of Georgia on approval of the formal recognition (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 National Center for Education Accreditation.

The National Center for Education Accreditation was reorganized into the National Center for the 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 Georgian Ministry of Education and Science issued an order dated October 1, 2010, No., which established the "Rules for Confirming the Authenticity of Educational Documents Issued in Georgia and Recognition of Education Received Abroad" in the same year. The procedure for the recognition of education received abroad is outlined in approved legislation (98/N).

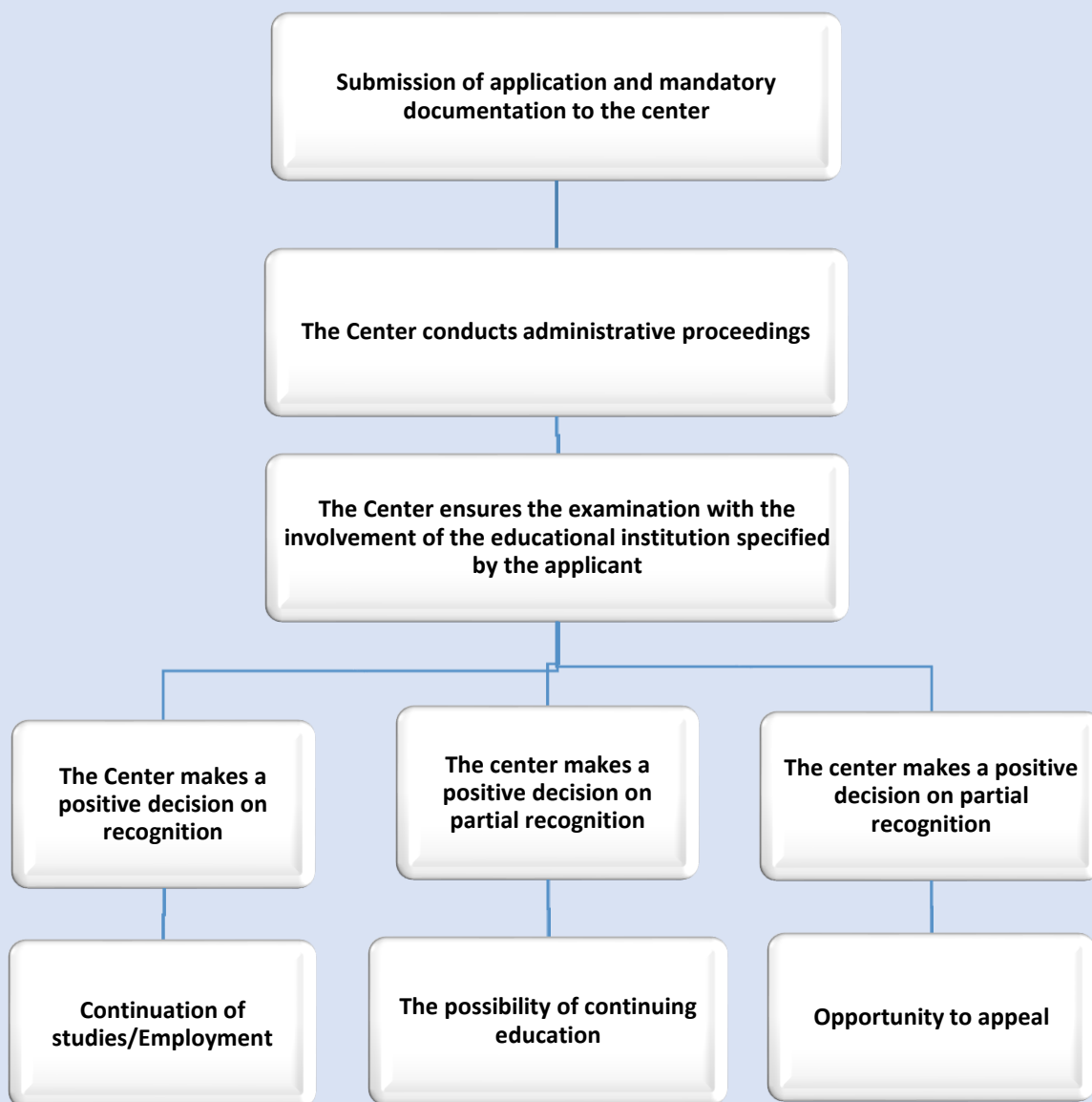
Between 2008 and 2019, the regulation simply stated that the center's function includes recognizing the education received by refugees, but did not specify the manner or procedure by which the center does this.

In the framework of the implementation of the Lisbon 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 51 of the "Rules for Confirming the Authenticity of Educational Documents Issued in Georgia and Recognition of Education Received Abroad" approved by Order No. 98/N. The procedure was completely developed on the basis of existing theoretical knowledge and due to the lack of management, it has not yet been implemented in practice.

As per the aforementioned regulation, the center acknowledges education obtained overseas by individuals who have international protection status. This entails ascertaining the fact that these individuals have received education and evaluating the suitability of their foreign qualifications with Georgia's educational offerings.

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



In accordance with 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, which 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 at assessing whether individuals with international protection status possess the requisite knowledge, skills, and competencies for 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 administered 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 National Center for Educational Quality Enhancement, which applicant 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 an individual with international protection status. In the case of full recognition, the person is entitled to employment corresponding to the qualification or to pursue further education at the next level of higher education;
- b) Partial recognition of the education acquired by an individual with international protection status. In the case of partial recognition, the person is entitled to continue education at the same level of higher education for which the recognition was granted;
- c) Refusal to recognize the education acquired by an individual with international protection status. In the event 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 Administrative Affairs Board of the Tbilisi City Court.

It is important to note that:

The decision specifies the alignment of the education received by an individual 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 individual 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 an individual holds the status of international protection and can provide 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:

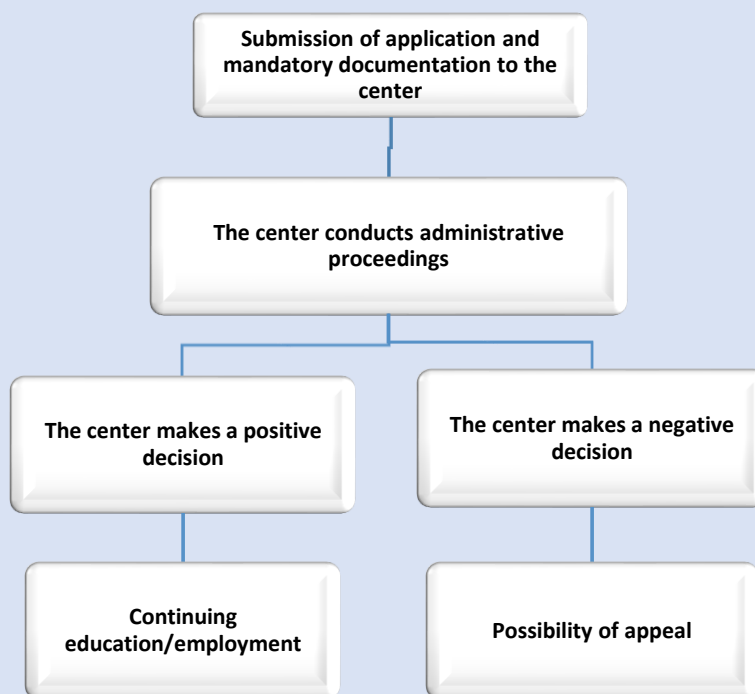
Recognition is valid to:

- General Education;
- Vocational Education;
- Higher Education.

Required Documentation:

- Secondary (complete) general education certificate and its annex;
- Certificate of basic education and its annex;
- A document verifying the general education obtained throughout the study period, serving as the source of evaluations;
- Professional diploma and its appendix, source of evaluations;
- Diploma of higher education and its appendix, 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, a notarized copy of the birth certificate of the minor child;
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 ordinary 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/credits), the conclusion of the receiving educational institution on the relevance of the education received during the period of study abroad must also be submitted.
8. Those wishing to enroll in the university must also 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 by the legislation of the country where this institution carries out educational activities (verification of authenticity);
- b) Compliance of qualifications obtained abroad with existing qualifications in Georgia (determining compliance).

In order to recognize the education received abroad, the center is connected to the authorized body of the relevant country and/or the educational document issuing institution. When determining the conformity, the center determines the conformity of the qualifications obtained abroad, the study results achieved during the study period, with the existing qualifications in Georgia.

In order to resolve the issue, the center is authorized to request additional documentation, including for the purposes of 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 receiving education;
- 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 Administrative Affairs Board 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:

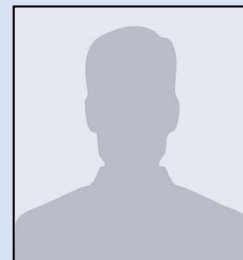
Mother's Name:

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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