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**Order N 98/N**  
**Of the Minister of Education and Science of Georgia**  
**1 October 2010      Tbilisi**  
**On Approval of the Procedure of Validation**  
**of Georgian Educational Documents and**  
**Recognition of Foreign Education and Fees**

Commensurate with Paragraph 3(d) of Article 2 of the Law of Georgia on Educational Quality Enhancement, Paragraph 1(r) of Article 26 of the Law of Georgia on General Education, subparagraph “f” of Article 15 of the Law of Georgia on Professional Education, Paragraph 1(o<sup>2</sup>) of Article 7 and Paragraph 22 of Article 89 of the Law of Georgia on Higher Education, Paragraph 2(l) of Article 3 of the Charter of the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia, approved by Resolution N37 of the Government of Georgia on 21 May 2004, I hereby order:

1. To approve the Procedure of Validation of Georgian Educational Documents and Recognition of Foreign Education, as given in Annex 1;
2. To approve Fees for the Validation of Georgian Educational Documents, Recognition of Foreign Education and State Recognition of Higher Education Acquired Students of Licensed Higher Education Institutions.
3. To put this Order into force upon its publication.

D.Shashkin

## **The Procedure of Validation of Georgian Educational Documents and Recognition of Foreign Education**

### **Article 1. Scope of Regulation**

1. The Procedure of Validation of Georgian Educational Documents and Recognition of Foreign Education (hereinafter the Procedure) shall regulate the conditions and procedure of validation of Georgian educational documents (except for the legalisation and certification with an apostille), recognition of foreign education, state recognition of higher education acquired by students of licensed higher education institutions and recognition of higher education of the refugees, internally displaced persons, also of the persons, who acquired their education at now liquidated institutions or the institutions, which have seized their educational activities, and who are unable to prove their education or qualification.
2. Legalisation and certification with an apostille shall be undertaken commensurate with Ordinance No.406 of the President of Georgia on Approval of the Legalisation Procedure, dated 14 July 2009 and Ordinance No.404 of the President of Georgia on Approval of the Procedure of Certification with an Apostille, dated 14 July 2009.
3. The recognition of foreign education shall cover the recognition of general secondary education or general education acquired during the study period, professional education, academic qualification/degree or education acquired during the period of study within the framework of a higher education programme.
4. The state recognition of higher education acquired by students of licensed higher education institutions (hereinafter the “recognition of higher education”) shall imply the establishment of the compatibility of learning outcomes, attained by a person, who enrolled in a licensed higher education institution, with the learning outcomes, envisaged by the components of relevant state-recognised educational programme.
5. The recognition of the education of the refugees, internally displaced persons, also of persons, who acquired their education at now liquidated institutions or the institutions, which have seized their educational activities, and who are unable to prove their education or qualification shall mean the establishment of the fact of acquiring education by these persons.
6. The object of validation of a Georgian educational documents and recognition of education shall be an educational document or a fact, certifying the accomplishment of a higher, professional or general education programme in full or partially.

### **Article 2. Responsible Authority for the Validation of Georgian Educational Documents and Recognition of Education**

1. The validation of Georgian educational documents and recognition of education shall be undertaken by the Legal Entity of Public Law – National Centre for Educational Quality Enhancement (hereinafter the EQE) commensurate with the International Agreements of Georgia, legal and sublegal act of Georgia and this Procedure.
2. The EQE shall exercise its authority under Paragraph 1 of this Article in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia (hereinafter the “Ministry”), territorial bodies of the Ministry – educational resource centres (hereinafter the “educational resource centres”), educational institutions operating on the territory of Georgia and other authorised persons, and in the case of recognition of foreign education – also with the representatives of the international information network.
3. In the case of validation of Georgian educational documents the educational institutions of Georgia and other authorised entities shall be required to provide the requested information in full to the EQE within timelines, envisaged by the General Administrative Code of Georgia.
4. The responsibility over the veracity of presented information shall be borne by an applicant and the entity/institution issuing the information concerned.
5. For the validation of Georgian educational documents the EQE shall be entitled to refer to the data of the Register of the Educational Institutions, and also to demand the entry of the necessary information into the Register from the educational institution authorised to enter the relevant information.
6. The EQE Director shall be entitled to define the forms of validation Georgian educational documents and confirmation of information necessary for the recognition of information by an individual administrative law act.
7. For the discharge of powers under this Annex the EQE Director shall be entitled to set up a commission by an individual law act, which commission shall provide the recommendations on the validation of Georgian educational documents and recognition of education.
8. The EQE shall develop general recommendations for the educational institutions and other interested persons regarding the validation of Georgian educational documents and recognition of education.

### **Article 3. Filing an Application and Documents**

1. For the validation of Georgian educational documents and recognition of education an owner of an education document, a duly authorised person thereof or the other interested party shall file an application with the EQE, completed in accordance with the form approved by an individual administrative law act of the EQE Director. An application and supporting documents can be filed with the EQE via mail, e-mail or fax in the Georgian or a foreign language, approved by the EQE.

2. An application for the state recognition of higher education shall specify the name of the licensed higher education institution, where the person concerned studied and also the educational programme for the purposes of which the interested person is requesting the recognition of higher education.
3. An application shall be accompanied with the following documents:
  - a) a respective educational document or a certified copy thereof, and in cases, envisaged by Paragraph 2 of this Article – a copy of the respective document of the licensed higher education institution or an enrolment certificate issued by the institution concerned, also a withdrawal certificate or the completion certification and the list of subjects, studied during the period of study, with the indication of ECTS credits or/and grades.
  - b) when an applicant is a natural person – a copy of an ID card;
  - c) when an application is filed by another person – an authorisation document;
  - d) receipt certifying the payment of relevant fee (whenever there is such) or a reference to the exemption from the payment of fee on grounds, envisaged by Annex 2.
4. The refugees, internally displaced persons, also the persons, who acquired their education at now liquidated institutions or the institutions, which have seized their educational activities, and who are unable to prove their education or qualification, shall accompany their application with all the available documents certifying the acquired education or/and shall make reference to any information related to these documents instead of filing the document, envisaged by Paragraph 3(a) of this Article.
5. Apart from documents, mentioned in Paragraph 3 of this Article an application of a person who enrolled in a licensed higher education institution shall be accompanied by a document, certifying the enrolment of the person concerned in the higher education institution commensurate with the procedure, envisaged by law.
6. An application of an interested person shall meet the requirements of the General Administrative Code of Georgia.
7. The EQE shall be entitled to request additional document for making a decision, amongst them, for the purposes of recognition of foreign education – the document certifying the stay abroad.

#### **Article 4. Application Review Procedure**

1. An application shall be reviewed within timelines, envisaged by the General Administrative Code of Georgia, except for the cases of accelerated procedures, envisaged by Annex 2 of this Order.
2. For the validation of Georgian educational documents the EQE shall establish the fact of completion of an educational programme by the person concerned either in full, or partially, the issuance of a document on awarding qualification, compliance of the document on the

completion of an educational programme by the person concerned either in full, or partially and on awarding qualification with the requirements of Georgian legislation.

3. Upon verification of the compliance with the requirements of Georgian legislation, the EQE shall verify the authority to issue the educational document concerned, the recognition of the educational document concerned by the state and the compatibility of the qualification, contained in this document or the learning outcomes, attained during the period of study with the qualifications, existing in Georgia, also the formal compliance of the document with the requirements, established by the state. Whenever the qualification awarded by the educational document concerned or the period of study is not recognised by the state, the EQE shall be required to make reference to the foregoing in its validation decision.
4. For the recognition of foreign education the EQE shall verify the authenticity of an educational document, issued by a foreign institution and establish the compatibility of the qualification, contained in this document or the learning outcomes, attained during the period of study with the qualifications, existing in Georgia.
5. Upon the verification of the authenticity of an educational document the EQE shall verify whether or not the educational document was issued on behalf of the person, who is mentioned in the document concerned, whether or not the educational institution is recognised under the legislation of the country, where the institution concerned is carrying out its educational activities. To this end the EQE shall contact the authorised body of the respective country or/and the institution issuing the educational document.
6. Whenever an educational document is legalised or is certified with an apostille, it is regarded for the purposes of validation thereof that the educational document is issued on behalf of the person, who is mentioned therein and only the recognition of the document issuing institution under the legislation of the country, where the institution concerned is carrying out its educational activities shall be verified.
7. Upon verifying the compatibility, the EQE shall establish the compatibility of a foreign qualification, the learning outcomes attained during the period of study with the qualifications, existing in Georgia.

#### **Article 5. Specific Features of Recognition of Foreign Education**

1. Against a document certifying the filing of an application for the recognition of education acquired during the period of study abroad, the interested person shall be entitled to apply to an educational institution before a final decision is made by the EQE with a view to establishing the compatibility of education acquired during the period of study abroad with the national study plan/educational programme of the institution. An application filed with the institution shall be accompanied with the copies of the documents, filed with the EQE.

2. Within a period of 2 weeks following the application of an interested person, a general education institution, based on the general recommendations developed by the EQE, shall establish the compatibility of the disciplines, mentioned in the presented document with the mandatory disciplines, envisaged by the national study plan and shall develop an opinion on the compatibility of general education acquired during the period of study abroad. The opinion shall specify the disciplines, studied by the person concerned during the period of study abroad, which are in line with the disciplines envisaged by the national study plan, the grades calculated through the conversion of grades awarded in the disciplines concerned into grades, envisage by the national study plan, the differing mandatory disciplines, envisaged by the national study plan, which are to be studied by the student concerned on the basis of an individual study plan, also the class of the general education, the person concerned should continue his/her studies in.
3. Based on the opinion, mentioned in Paragraph 2 of this Article, the EQE shall make a decision on the recognition of general education, acquired during the period of study abroad, what shall become the basis for the continuation of studies in a general education institution by the student concerned, in the class, specified in the decision, with due consideration of the age of the student concerned and specificities of an individual study plan.
4. The person shall be entitled to study mandatory disciplines, envisaged by the national study plan and mentioned in the decision, specified in Paragraph 3 of this Article, through the procedure of external studies envisaged by Georgian legislation.
5. With a view to recognition of professional or higher education acquired during the period of study abroad, the institution shall establish the compatibility of the learning outcomes, attained by the person concerned during the period of study abroad with the educational programmes offered thereby.
6. Subject to recognition shall be the credits acquired within the framework of that programme of an institution the person concerned enrolled for and studied commensurate with the procedure envisaged by law.
7. Following the scrutiny of the content, it shall be possible to establish the compatibility of the study courses studied by the person concerned abroad and envisaged by the educational programme of the receiving institution, irrespective of differences in their names.
8. It shall be admissible to recognise the study course, which is not envisaged by the educational programme of the recipient institution.
9. The institution shall be entitled to calculate student's workload in credits commensurate with the procedure, envisaged by law in the case of an educational programme, which is not accomplished according to the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS).
10. The credits of a higher education programme, on the basis of which the qualification was awarded, cannot be recognised for the purposes of other educational programme.

11. The recognition shall be documented in a well-substantiated opinion of the authorised body of the institution, which shall specify the compatibility of an educational programme, accomplished by the person concerned during the period of study abroad with the programme of the recipient institution and the number of credits.
12. Based on the opinion, mentioned in Paragraph 11 of this Article, the EQE shall make a decision on the recognition of professional/higher education acquired during the period of study abroad, what shall become grounds for the continuation of studies at a professional or higher education institution with due consideration of the compatibility with the educational programme, envisaged by the decision and the number of recognised credits.

#### **Article 6. Specific Features of Recognition of Higher Education**

1. The precondition for the recognition of higher education shall be the enrolment of the person concerned in a right education institution commensurate with the procedure, envisaged by Georgian legislation.
2. Following the acceptance of an application of the interested person the EQE shall request the programme from the relevant educational institution, for the purposes of which programme the applicant requests recognition. The educational institution shall be entitled, to involve its representative in the administrative proceedings on the recognition of higher education commensurate with the procedure, envisaged by the General Administrative Code of Georgia.
3. Following the scrutiny of the documents, presented by the applicant and familiarisation with the educational programme the EQE shall be entitled to consider it reasonable to appoint an examination in separate components of the educational programme and hold it under the involvement of the relevant educational institution, which examination shall aim at establishing whether or not the person concerned has competences, envisaged by a specific component of the educational programme.
4. The procedure of holding an examination for an applicant for the recognition of education and the content of the examination shall be approved by an individual administrative law act of the EQE Director with due consideration of the position of the recipient educational institution.
5. The interested party shall be informed about the examination at least 2 weeks prior to its holding, except for the case, when the party concerned requests the holding of the examination within tighter timelines.

#### **Article 7. Decision on the Validation of Georgian Educational Documents and Recognition of Foreign Education**

1. Following the accomplishment of relevant administrative proceedings, envisaged by Articles 3-6 of this Annex, the EQE shall:
  - a) Validate Georgian educational documents / recognise the education;
  - b) Refuse the validation of Georgian educational documents / refuse the recognition of the education;
2. A decision made under Paragraph 1 of this Article shall be well-substantiated and stem from the confirmation of existence of absence of relevant circumstances envisaged by Articles 3-6 of this Annex.
3. A decision on the recognition of foreign education shall be valid only together with the attached thereto certified copy of the educational document.
4. If it is established that the educational document was not issued by the educational institution, mentioned therein or is issued in violation of the procedure, envisaged by law, the EQE shall refuse the validation of Georgian educational documents / recognition of the education and apply measures, envisaged by law.
5. A decision on the recognition of education shall specify the part of education, which was recognised.

**Fees for the Validation of Georgian Educational Documents, Recognition of Foreign Education and State Recognition of Higher Education, Acquires by Students of the Licensed Higher Education Institutions**

**Article 1. Amount of Fees**

1. The fees shall amount to:
  - a) For the validation of Georgian educational documents – 25 GEL, and for the accelerated procedures for 15 business days – 50 GEL;
  - b) For the legalisation of Georgian educational documents or the attachment of an apoistille – 20 GEL;
  - c) For the recognition of foreign education – 30 GEL, and for the accelerated procedures for 15 business days – 60 GEL;
  - d) For the state Recognition of higher education, acquires by students of the licensed higher education institutions – 250 GEL;
2. Whenever an authorised body of a foreign country requests the payment of fee for the recognition or provision of information, the document, certifying the payment of this fee shall be filed with the EQE.

**Article 2. The Procedure of Payment of the Fee or the Refund of the Paid Fee**

1. The fee shall be paid in advance, before rendering services, through a bank transfer to the bank account of the EQE.
2. The fee paid for EQE shall be fully refunded, when:
  - a) An interested person refuses services before the registration of an application for requesting respective service;
  - b) No decision was made after the administrative proceedings due to the EQE's fault.
3. Whenever an interested person is not rendered services within timelines compatible with the amount of fee, paid thereby, due to reasons beyond his/her control, and is willing to enjoy the other timelines, for which the other amount of fee is provided for by law, the difference between these two amounts shall be refunded to the person concerned. An interested person shall be entitled to refuse services and demand the refund of the paid amount in full if the requested service was not rendered within respective timelines owing to the EQE.
4. If an interested person was refused to render services under this Order due to a deficiency in documents, filed with regard to recognition of Georgian educational documents or/and due

to submission of incomplete set of documents, the EQE shall be liable to render services on the basis of already paid fee in the case of removal of these deficiencies. In the case of refusal to rendering services the paid fee shall be subject to refund in full against an application of the applicant, except for the cases when a forged document was submitted for validation.

5. If the EQE made a mistake in the course of rendering service, specifically if the documents drawn or/and issued contained inaccurate data, the interested person shall be rendered services anew, without paying additional fee. In this case, if the interested person refuses to receive services anew the paid fee shall be refunded thereto.
6. Whenever the fee is paid in excess to the amount, set by this Procedure, the difference between the paid amount and the amount, set by this Procedure shall be subject to refund to the applicant.
7. The fee shall be refunded according to procedure, envisaged by this Article within a period of 10 business days following the submission of a written claim by the interested person. The claim should contain reasoning demonstrating the legality of demanding partial or full refund of the paid fee. The claim shall be filed within a period of 3 months following the payment of the fee. After the expiry of this period the paid fee shall not be subject to refund. This period shall not be subject to extension or restitution of missed period.

### **Article 3. Exemption from the Payment of Fee**

1. The following persons shall be exempted from the payment of fees under this Annex in the case of requesting the validation of Georgian educational documents or recognition of foreign documents.
  - a) Georgian citizens incapacitated in war actions conducted for the territorial integrity of Georgia, freedom and independence;
  - b) Participants of the World War II;
  - c) Veterans of war and armed forces – by 50%;
  - d) Markedly and substantially handicapped persons – by 50%.
2. The fees under this Procedure shall not be subject to payment in cases envisaged by international treaties/agreements of Georgia.