

3. Application Procedures

UK NARIC APPLICATION PROCEDURES

All international qualifications are considered in the same manner to ensure that each is treated as fairly and efficiently as possible. This process includes the following procedures:

- Documentations submitted are analysed by UK NARIC Information Officer(s) who determines whether correct or required information has been provided
- An initial decision is made as to whether assessment can be provided
- Qualifications are evaluated in accordance with NARIC guidelines
- Validity of certificates considered
- Response drafted
- Verification and quality checking of all responses and evaluations.

In the event of further information required to ensure fair recognition of a given qualifications (as in the case of a new award and/or discontinued qualifications), further additional steps should apply:

- Appropriate authorities should be contacted in order to obtain further information on a given award. The applicant should be informed if the process will take longer than the standard timescale
- Information request chased up on a weekly basis until received
- Once a response has been received, the validity of this information is considered: if the response is insufficient to provide an evaluation, further information requests are considered
- Qualifications are then evaluated in accordance with the new information and in the context of previous evaluations for the country in question
- The conclusions of these cases are then presented to senior evaluators for: a) approval of the individual evaluation; and b) building the award-specific data into the system information range.

APPEALS PROCEDURE

If an individual is dissatisfied with the assessment provided by UK NARIC, they are entitled to make an appeal. The following are considered appropriate grounds for appeal:

- Disputing the comparable level of an award
- Disputing the information provided and used in the assessment
- Disputing level of service and conduct towards an individual during the assessment process

Should the application meet the grounds of appeal listed above, UK NARIC undertakes to re-examine the information originally provided and a re-evaluation of its initial assessment.

There are a number of different potential outcomes to this re-examination:

- Original Decision Upheld: The grounds upon which the appeal has been raised are considered unfounded. The individual is therefore informed that the original guidance is considered accurate and reasons for this outcome are provided.
- Further Detail required from the Individual: The line of argument used by the individual is based upon evidence that has not been provided or insufficiently provided. It is therefore requested that new documentation should be obtained from an authoritative source in the home country.
- Further Research Required by NARIC: The line of argument suggests that the information held by NARIC is insufficient to reach a definitive conclusion. In this situation, more in-depth research is conducted by a senior evaluator in order to determine the merit of the argument.
- Original Decision Reversed: The appeal is upheld and a reassessment of the qualification(s) is provided. This reassessment should then be communicated clearly to the applicant, and to be used to verify data held by UK NARIC;
- Decision referred to Appeals Committee.

APPEALS COMMITTEE

The Appeals Committee which includes UK NARIC staff and external assessors, represents an external source of objective evaluation.

This committee serves the following functions:

- To consider appeals received by UK NARIC and to advise on courses of action to ensure fair recognition.
- To analyse and validate information as a consequence of specific cases.
- To meet quarterly, with a mandate to meet more frequently in extraordinary cases.

The Appeals Committee will examine each case referred to it and determine the appropriate course of action, based on their body of knowledge and professional experience. The potential decisions of the Committee fall into three categories:

- Decision to amend assessment – the case for adjusting the level of the award relative to the UK education system is agreed upon unanimously.
- Decision to undertake further targeted research – the case remains uncertain, with a number of concerns raised. The NARIC team concerned is then provided with specific points to follow up and present at the following Committee Meeting.
- Decision to leave assessment unchanged – the case is not strong enough to merit changes to the existing evaluation.

REQUESTS FOR CLARIFICATION

Clarifications are distinctly different from appeal applications. Where an individual feels the need for clarification following an assessment of a given qualification, the following procedure should be followed.

Upon request, NARIC will provide clarification for the following:

- Any errors made in NARIC assessments
- Where the applicant requires an explanation of the comparison statement provided
- Where the applicant does not understand the format of the assessment provided
- Where the applicant queries the source of information used by NARIC
- These are answered by a member of the Information Team and will be quality checked by a senior member of staff.

For any further information please contact Dr Cloud Bai-Yun, Head of Review Group.

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