

APPROVED
By the Senate of
Mykolas Romeris University
2018 January 29
Resolution No. 1SN-23

**PROCEDURE OF MYKOLAS ROMERIS UNIVERSITY
FOR EVALUATION AND ACADEMIC RECOGNITION OF EDUCATIONAL
DOCUMENTS ISSUED ABROAD**

I. GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. The Procedure for the Evaluation and Academic Recognition of Educational Documents Issued Abroad (hereinafter – the Procedure) stipulates education and qualifications related to higher education and acquired in accordance with the educational programs of foreign states and international organizations (hereinafter - Foreign qualifications) as well as the provisions of principles of the assessment and academic recognition for those seeking (opportunities) to study at Mykolas Romeris University according to degree study programs.
2. The procedure has been prepared and the recognition of foreign qualifications is carried out in accordance with Resolution No. 212 of 29 February 2012 of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania, approved by the “Description of the Procedure for Recognition of Education and Qualifications Related to Higher Education and Acquired in the Curricula of Foreign States and International Organizations” (hereinafter - the Description), the Director of the Study Quality Assessment Centre by March 14 2017 Order No V-21 version approved the “Methodology for the Assessment of Education and Qualifications Related to Higher Education and Acquired in the Education Programs of Foreign States and International Organizations” (hereinafter - the Methodology), the Convention of the Council of Europe and the UNESCO Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications Concerning Higher Education in the States Belonging to the European Region (hereinafter - the Lisbon Recognition Convention), ratified by the Republic of Lithuania on October 15 1998 by the Law on the Ratification of the Convention of the Council of Europe and UNESCO on the Recognition of Qualifications Concerning Higher Education in the States of the European Region” and explanatory notes and documents adopted by the Lisbon Recognition Convention Committee, the ENIC / NARIC network, the Council of Europe or other competent bodies for the application and implementation of the Lisbon Recognition Convention and treaties of the Republic of Lithuania on recognition of International Recommendations: a) Recommendations on International Qualifications for Higher Education (1999); b) Updated Guidelines for the Recognition of Joint Degrees (2016); c) Updated Guidelines on the Criteria and Procedures for the Assessment of Foreign Qualifications (2010); d) Recommendation on the Use of the Qualifications Framework for the Assessment of Foreign Qualifications (2013); e) the Code of Good Practice for Transnational Education (2007); f) Recommendations on the Recognition of Qualifications of Refugees, Displaced Persons and Persons in a Similar Situation (2017), and other relevant recommendations, declarations and documents, the Guide to the Recognition of Qualifications in Europe (2012), the Guide to the Recognition of Qualifications in Europe for Higher Education Institutions, updated in 2016, good practices and guidance documents of the Member States of the European Union that have ratified the Lisbon Convention, The Law on Science and Studies of the Republic of Lithuania, treaties of the Republic of Lithuania, other documents and other legal acts

adopted by the Republic of Lithuania, the ENIC / NARIC network, the Council of Europe or other competent institutions.

3. Definitions used in the Procedure:

Applicant – a person who has acquired a foreign qualification and seeks to study in the study programs awarding the degree of Mykolas Romeris University.

All other concepts correspond to the definitions used in the Description and Methodology.

II. PRINCIPLES FOR THE EVALUATION AND ACADEMIC RECOGNITION OF FOREIGN QUALIFICATIONS

4. Mykolas Romeris University follows the same general principles of assessment of foreign qualifications, which are specified in the Methodology, Description, other legal acts of the Republic of Lithuania and international legal acts:

4.1. Each foreign qualification shall be assessed and the decision on its academic recognition shall be made individually, based on the available information and this Procedure.

4.2. The responsibility for providing true, correct and explicit information on foreign qualifications shall lie primarily with the Applicant.

4.3. In assessing foreign qualifications, there shall be no discrimination on grounds of sex, race, language, religion, political beliefs, national, ethnic or social origin, or for any other reasons unrelated to the essence of the academic qualification.

4.4. The diversity of educational traditions and systems in the world shall be taken into account when developing the procedure for the assessment of foreign qualifications, the requirements for the documents to be submitted and the assessment criteria.

4.5. The procedure and criteria for the assessment of foreign qualifications shall be transparent, explicit, consistently applied and reliable. Information about them shall be made public.

4.6. The procedure for the assessment of foreign qualifications and the requirements for the documents provided by the applicant shall be periodically reviewed and improved as necessary.

4.7. The academic recognition of foreign qualifications shall give the holder the same rights as in the country of origin, unless substantial differences are identified. Decisions on academic recognition shall be justified.

4.8. During the assessment of an individual foreign qualification, the practice of assessment of similar qualifications shall be taken into account, thus ensuring the consistency of practice of assessment of qualifications. Experience is systematised and accumulated and taken into account while making decisions on the academic recognition of qualifications. Any substantial change in the practice of assessment and recognition of qualifications shall be justified.

5. Other principles not specified in Clause 4 are defined in other legal acts of the Republic of Lithuania and international legal acts.

III. DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED FOR THE EVALUATION AND ACADEMIC RECOGNITION OF FOREIGN QUALIFICATIONS AND THEIR SUBMISSION

6. An Applicant seeking to study at degree programs of Mykolas Romeris University shall complete an application for admission and submit all documents required for admission. If his / her previous

education took place abroad, the Applicant shall be considered **to have applied for academic recognition of the foreign qualification as an integral part of the accession process.**

6.1. **The Applicant** shall fill in the accession application in the online accession database (hereinafter -the IS database) and upload digital copies of all the documents required for accession (in PDF format or its analogue). When applying to the University, digital copies of the following documents shall be uploaded in the IS database:

6.1.1. digital copies of **the foreign qualification document(s) (graduation certificate, diploma) and its appendix(es)** or copies certified in accordance with the prescribed procedure, providing information on the content, scope (credits and hours) of the completed program and the assessments received in the original language;

6.1.2. if the documents listed in Part 1 of Clause 6.1.1. were issued in a language other than English or Russian, in addition to the original copy, digital copies of the translation of the education document and its appendix into Lithuanian, Russian or English shall be submitted;

6.1.3. a digital copy of **the identity document** or a copy certified in accordance with the prescribed procedure (the authorized person shall additionally submit a digital copy of the duly authorized power of attorney and his or her identity document);

6.1.4. a digital copy of **the document(s) certifying the change of name and / or surname** or the copy(ies) certified in accordance with the established procedure, if the educational documents are issued under another name and / or surname;

6.1.5. a valid certificate of the English language proficiency (TOEFL, IELTS, etc.), or to pass an English language exam organized by the University in accordance with the electronic remote examination procedure of Mykolas Romeris University and the foreign language proficiency test procedure of Mykolas Romeris University. Foreign citizens whose official state language is English and foreign citizens who have fulfilled the requirements of a course organized by Mykolas Romeris University taught in English shall not be required to submit documents proving proficiency in English;

6.1.6. a letter / report of financial commitment signed by the parents / sponsors, reflecting the commitment that the Applicant will be financially supported during the whole study period or a statement from the bank account of the parents / sponsors about the available income, which is not less than necessary to cover the cost of studies and living expenses (0.5 of minimum monthly salary per month) in Lithuania;

6.1.7. the receipt of the registration fee;

6.1.8. digital copies of **other documents** (if any) required for the objective assessment of foreign qualifications, confirming other education or documents acquired by the Applicant and issued by the country in which the education was obtained by the responsible institutions explaining the acquired qualifications or the submitted educational documents;

6.1.9. Mykolas Romeris University shall reserve the right to request from the applicant's additional documents required to perform the document evaluation and recognition procedures in a qualified manner;

6.1.10. Mykolas Romeris University shall reserve the right to request a document legalization procedure (approval certificate "Apostille"), except in the case of educational documents issued by institutions of the European Union, EEC, the USA, Russia, Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine or by partners of Mykolas Romeris University in other countries.

6.2. After the academic recognition of a foreign qualification, the applicant (or his / her legally notarized person) shall submit the original digital copies of all the submitted documents within the set deadlines and sign the study agreement. If the submission of the original documents reveals inconsistencies with the data declared during registration and / or it turns out that the document(s) certifying the foreign qualification is forged, the decision on the academic recognition of the foreign qualification and the place won during the competition shall be annulled and the study contract shall be terminated.

6.3. The applicant shall have the right to send the originals of all the listed documents by post to the specified address if he /she is unable to arrive by the deadline.

IV. EVALUATION OF FOREIGN QUALIFICATIONS AND PAYMENT FOR ACADEMIC RECOGNITION

7. The service of assessment and academic recognition of foreign qualifications is provided free of charge as part of the procedure for admission to Mykolas Romeris University. The assessment of foreign qualifications begins after the Applicant has paid the registration fee, the amount of which is determined in the Admission Rules.

V. STAFF PERFORMING EVALUATION AND ACADEMIC RECOGNITION OF FOREIGN QUALIFICATIONS

8. The evaluation of foreign qualifications and the activities of academic recognition are organized and assessed in accordance with the general requirements and appointed by the order of the Rector of Mykolas Romeris University by the specialists (hereinafter - responsible employees) who meet the requirements for work with recognition of foreign qualifications.

VI. DURATION OF EVALUATION OF FOREIGN QUALIFICATIONS AND ACADEMIC RECOGNITION AND DECISION-MAKING

9. The responsible employees inform the Applicant in writing about the received documents regarding the recognition within five working days from the receipt of the educational documents in the IS database.

10. The assessment of a foreign qualification consists of the following stages (depending on the data provided in the information sources or other circumstances, the stages may overlap or change their sequence):

10.1. determining the value of a foreign qualification in the country of its issuance;

10.2. determining the level of foreign qualification in the country of its issuance;

10.3. comparison of a foreign qualification with the most similar qualification provided in the Republic of Lithuania, i.e. comparison of the requirements for the content, purpose, scope, quality of learning (studies), study results with the corresponding requirements established in the Republic of Lithuania;

10.4. determination of whether the differences found between the foreign qualification and the qualification provided in the Republic of Lithuania are essential, regarding the purpose of the assessment - whether the foreign qualification is suitable for admission to the study program (s) of Mykolas Romeris University selected by the Applicant;

10.5. Special requirements set out in the admission rules e.g. the requirements set for the field of law (Bachelor of Law, etc.) are assessed by the responsible staff in cooperation with the representatives

of the faculties / institutes (via the online application processing platform IS database – providing the faculty representatives access to the received documents). The final decision rests with the responsible staff.

11. The purpose and criteria of the evaluation stages are set out in the Methodology and are followed by the responsible employees when conducting the evaluation of foreign qualifications.

12. In cases where the foreign qualification does not comply with the provisions of Clause 33 of the Methodology or Sub-Clause 35.1 of the Methodology, no further evaluation of the qualification shall be performed and the Applicant shall be informed thereof in writing.

13. In cases when, following the action provided for in Sub-Clause 35.2 of the Methodology, it is established that a similar qualification is not provided in the Republic of Lithuania (for example, short-cycle qualifications are usually associated with Level 5 of the European Qualifications Framework), no further qualification evaluation is performed. In the cases referred to in this paragraph, at the request of the Applicant, he / she shall be informed about the further possibilities of his / her foreign qualification submitted for evaluation for studies at Mykolas Romeris University or the Republic of Lithuania.

14. The decision on the academic recognition of a foreign qualification and its suitability for studies at Mykolas Romeris University shall be made within one month from the receipt of all required documents in the IS database, counting from the day of informing the responsible employee (as provided in point 9). If additional information needs to be collected for academic recognition of foreign qualifications, this term may be extended by the decision of the Rector or his / her authorized person (but not longer than 3 months or until the end of the organization of admission to MRU as provided for in the Admission Rules). If the Applicant fails to submit the documents required for the academic recognition of the foreign qualification within the set deadline, the examination of the application shall be terminated and the Applicant shall be informed thereof in writing.

15. Academic recognition of foreign qualification and suitability for studies at Mykolas Romeris University is formally stated by an internal document and the Applicant continues to participate in the competition for admission to the study program (s) specified by him / her.

16. In cases where the identified fundamental differences do not allow full academic recognition, the possibility of "conditional recognition" of foreign qualifications is considered, specifying the additional requirements that the applicant must meet by passing a test of knowledge and skills, taking additional subject courses or preparatory courses. The knowledge and skills test may be applied at Mykolas Romeris University if an additional test (such as a general skills test) is organized in the country of origin for the same purpose; if the applicant has been granted refugee status and his / her qualifications cannot be documented, as well as in case of reasonable doubt about the quality of studies (learning). The decision to grant "conditional recognition" and the additional requirements shall be notified in writing.

17. If the proposed conditions of recognition satisfy the Applicant, he / she may continue to participate in the competition and, upon his / her acceptance, the fulfillment of these conditions must be provided for in the "supplementary study agreement" (or the relevant annex to the Study Agreement).

18. In cases where the decision on academic evaluation is "non-recognition", the responsible employees must provide the Applicant with a written justification for the decision by sending it to the Applicant in an e-mail indicated in the online submission platform.

19. Decisions on academic recognition are based on the information that Mykolas Romeris University has in its possession during the evaluation of foreign qualifications.

20. If, at the time of the application for academic recognition of a foreign qualification, the information provided by a competent authority reveals that the document (s) certifying the foreign qualification are forged, the decision on the academic recognition of the foreign qualification shall not be made and the examination of the application shall be terminated. The Applicant shall be informed in writing.

VII. PROTECTION OF PERSONAL DATA

21. Mykolas Romeris University ensures the protection of personal data of applicants in accordance with the Law of the Republic of Lithuania on the Legal Protection of Personal Data.
22. Documents of foreign qualifications of applicants shall be stored during and after their evaluation procedures on the premises adapted for this purpose.

VIII. QUALITY ASSURANCE AND COOPERATION WITH ACADEMIC RECOGNITION ISSUING INSTITUTIONS

23. The quality of the evaluation and academic recognition of foreign qualifications at Mykolas Romeris University is ensured in accordance with the provisions of the Mykolas Romeris University study and research quality policy and with these basic principles:

23.1. The quality of foreign qualifications evaluation and academic recognition administration activities is monitored and assessed as an integral part of the overall quality assurance of Mykolas Romeris University;

23.2. To assess the quality of decisions on the academic recognition of foreign qualifications, the Admission Commission is invited to cooperate in valuation of the admission application by the Applicant to a specific degree study program. At least once a year, the responsible employees submit reports to the Vice-Rector for Studies and Research and the Academic Affairs Centre, participate in meetings with the Study Program Committees, Study program managers, other stakeholders interested in ensuring the quality of international studies at the University, which will discuss the practice of academic recognition of foreign qualifications, the relationship between academic recognition and admission, problems encountered in studies, monitoring of student progress, and actions to improve the quality of activities and decision-making;

23.3. External quality assurance of foreign qualifications evaluation is guaranteed in cooperation with the Study Quality Assessment Centre (hereinafter - SQAC);

23.4. The responsible employees must follow the general recommendations of SQAC, published and regularly updated on the SQAC website, or may apply to SQAC for an individual recommendation provided for in Item 17 of the Description, together with copies of educational documents and the purpose of academic recognition;

23.5. The responsible employees consult with SQAC in all unforeseen complex cases.

24. Mykolas Romeris University annually by the deadline set by SQAC submits a report, information on recognized qualifications and copies of educational documents and other information to SQAC upon request, and ensures good cooperation with SQAC in its monitoring of qualification recognition activities.

IX. SUBMISSION AND EXAMINATION OF APPEALS AGAINST ACADEMIC RECOGNITION OF FOREIGN QUALIFICATIONS

25. The Applicant, within 10 calendar days from the notification of the decision "recognize with conditions" (as provided in sub-clauses 30.2 or 30.3 of the Description) or "not to recognize" the foreign qualification or if the decision on the recognition of a foreign qualification does not satisfy (e.g. does not agree with the recognition of a foreign qualification as a lower postgraduate qualification than is necessary for admission to MRU second or third cycle of study programs), has the right to appeal to Mykolas Romeris University, if :

25.1. procedural requirements were violated;

25.2. the decision is contrary to a previous decision taken in another institution;

25.3. new circumstances emerge that were not known at the time of the previous academic recognition of the foreign qualification.

26. An Applicant who does not agree with the decision of Mykolas Romeris University on the academic recognition of foreign qualifications after the appeal procedure may, within 14 calendar days from the date of receipt of the decision, appeal to the SQAC Education and Qualifications the Recognition Appeal Commission, acting in accordance with the regulations of this commission coordinated and approved by SQAC with the Ministry of Education and Science, or the Administrative Court in accordance with the procedure established by the Law on Administrative Proceedings of the Republic of Lithuania.