

EAR Higher Education Institutions

*Streamlining recognition from
principle to practice*

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Hamburg, January 2014

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Netherlands organization
for international cooperation
in higher education

Last two decades: recognition in “European” region

1. International legislation

- LRC Convention 1997
- 55 signatory countries

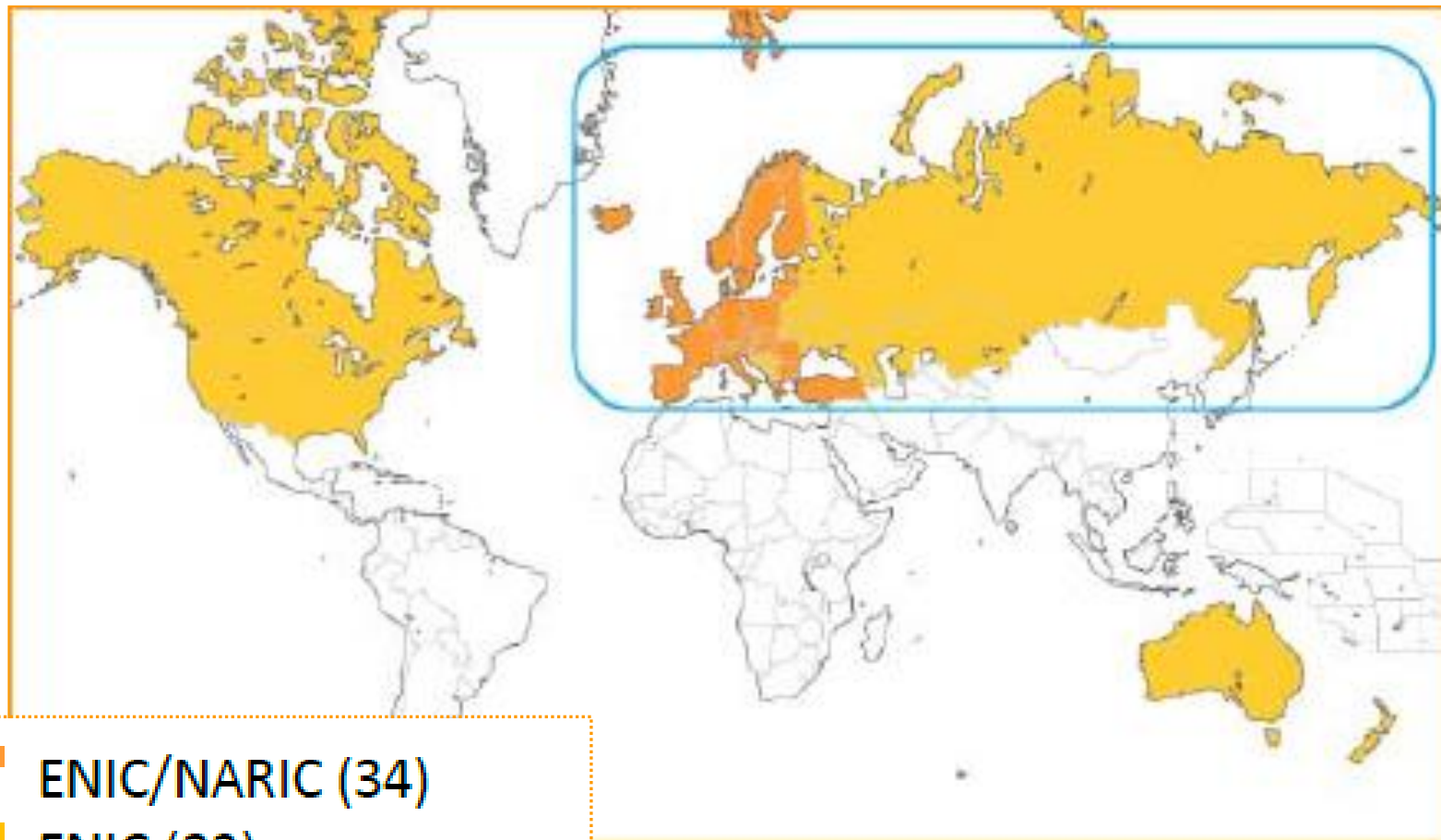
2. Political framework

- Bologna process / European Higher Education Area

3. Operational structure

- ENIC / NARIC Networks as national information centres

Overview ENIC/NARIC networks



- ENIC/NARIC (34)
- ENIC (22)
- Bologna countries (47)

Lisbon Recognition Convention

Principles for fair recognition

Practical implementation?

Study
2

WG α

WG y

Journal
article x

Project w

Subsidiary texts

Recommendations z

Working
GroupY

project ϵ

Recommendations z

Results
project y

WG3

Recognition instruments

?

?

?

?

?

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Streamlining recognition practices: A European Area of Recognition manual (1)

- Practical translation of the LRC
- Based on existing good practice:
 - ✓ LRC and subsidiary texts
 - ✓ Studies and projects (e.g. ENIC-NARIC networks)
- Frequent consultation ENIC-NARIC networks and other stakeholders
- Recommendations supported by ENIC/NARIC centres
 - ✓ European standard

EAR manual

- **Content EAR Manual:**
 - ✓ Schematic outline
 - ✓ 16 practical chapters:
 - Flowchart
 - Introduction
 - Recommendation
 - Examples
 - Sources and RCP

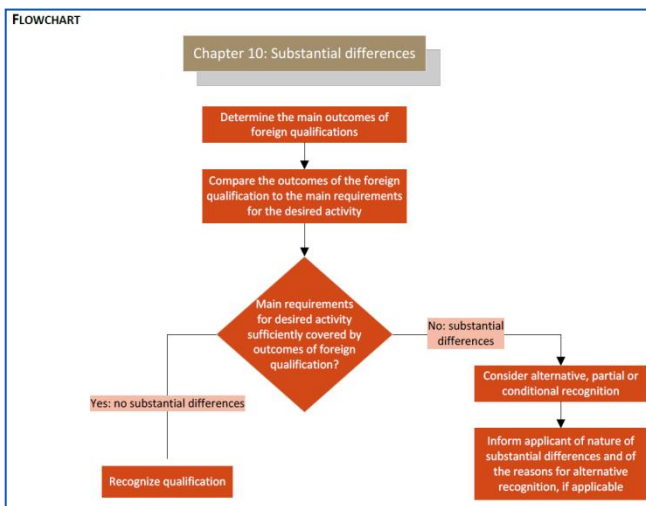


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Streamlining recognition practices: A European Area of Recognition manual (3)

- ENIC-NARIC networks (+ Council of Europe, UNESCO and European Commission)
- Interest from other Convention regions (Asia Pacific, Africa)
- Use of manual recommended by the 47 EHEA countries in the Bucharest Communiqué 2012.

Streamlining recognition practices: A European Area of Recognition manual (4)

*“Fair academic and professional recognition, including recognition of non formal and informal learning, is at the core of the EHEA.... **We welcome the European Area of Recognition (EAR) Manual and recommend its use as a set of guidelines for recognition of foreign qualifications and a compendium of good practices, as well as encourage higher education institutions and quality assurance agencies to assess institutional recognition procedures in internal and external quality assurance**”*

The EAR offspring

EAR
Recognition manual
2009 – 2012

EAR 2

- Training
- Web based

EARN

- Self evaluation
- Peer review

EAR HEI

- Recognition manual for HEI's

2012 - 2014

EAR HEI: a recognition manual for higher education institutions (1)

- Most recognition decisions made in higher education institutions
- Recognition manual geared to practice of higher education institutions
- Developed by ENIC/NARICs, representatives institutions (HRK, Tuning, EUA) and students (ESU).

Finalized in January 2014

EAR HEI: a recognition manual for higher education institutions (2)

Based on:

- EAR manual and principles LRC
- Two EHEA wide consultations
 1. Collection of new topics beginning project (2012):
 - ✓ Introduction to recognition, recognition versus selection, credit mobility and language tests
 2. Feedback on first draft (2013)

Positive reactions: examples, reference guide

NB: Germany nr 1 response rate!

- 2012: 81 of total 464 respondents (18%)
- 2013: 97 of 456 respondents (22%)

EAR HEI survey (1)

“Do you expect to use this manual in daily practice?”

Very positive outcome: 90% is likely to use the manual!

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	23,8%	57
Probably	40,4%	97
Perhaps	25,8%	62
No	10,0%	24
Please specify your choice:	90	90
<i>answered question</i>	<i>240</i>	<i>240</i>
<i>skipped question</i>	<i>216</i>	<i>216</i>

Explanations from ‘Perhaps’ and ‘No’ respondents:

- Not involved in recognition
- Use as reference guide not in daily practice

EAR HEI survey (2)

“Easy to read in terms of Style and Language?”

Answer Options	Very easy	Easy	Not really easy	Difficult	Did not read this chapter	Total
Chapter 2. Institutional recognition practices	18	113	38	4	72	245
Chapter 3. Qualifications	19	100	44	3	81	247
Chapter 4. How to find information	45	106	19	3	70	243
Chapter 17. Credits, grades, credit accumulation and credit transfer	23	107	40	5	72	247
Chapter 22. Recognition of credit mobility	25	104	28	3	80	240
Please specify if you have any comments and/or suggestions on the style and language used						26

EAR HEI survey (3)

“Do the examples provided in the chapter(s) provide you with a better understanding of the topic?”

Answer Options	Yes, all do	Yes, most do	Not really	No	Did not read this chapter	Response Count
Chapter 2. Institutional recognition practices	49	103	18	0	65	235
Chapter 3. Qualifications	51	93	18	1	74	237
Chapter 4. How to find information	61	91	20	0	66	238
Chapter 17. Credits, grades, credit accumulation and credit transfer	48	93	27	3	65	236
Please specify if you have any comments and/or suggestions on the examples provided (when referring to specific examples, please indicate the number):						14
<i>answered question</i>						251
<i>skipped question</i>						205

EAR HEI survey (4)

“Are the information and recommendations provided in the chapter useful in your daily work?”

Answer Options	Very useful	Useful	Not really useful	Not useful	Did not read this chapter	Response Count
Chapter 2. Institutional recognition practices	30	110	22	1	57	220
Chapter 3. Qualifications	32	99	25	3	64	223
Chapter 4. How to find information	50	94	21	2	58	225
Chapter 17. Credits, grades, credit accumulation and credit transfer	38	99	21	5	58	221
Chapter 22. Recognition of credit mobility	35	77	33	6	64	215
Please specify if you have any comments and/or suggestions on the information and recommendations:						13
<i>answered question</i>						238
<i>skipped question</i>						218

Survey comments

Strongest point
is that it is ever
going to be
published

*Admissions officers
don't always have
access to experienced
colleagues to ask
"stupid" questions.
I'd like to think that this
go-to manual represents
that colleague in writing!*

These guidelines will impact
on standards and quality of
output we commonly strive for
in our international programs.

Implementation EAR-HEI manual

Send the manual to our NARIC so they can translate it and distribute it to all HEI's in our country.

Develop online training based on the manual

Each of our professors responsible for admission should have a copy of the manual

We follow the guidelines of the Ministry of Education. If they ask us to use the manual, we will.

Not all recommendations can be implemented due to national law

EAR HEI manual Content & Structure

- 24 chapters divided into six parts:
 - I. Introduction to recognition
 - II. The evaluation process
 - III. Institutional recognition practices
 - IV. Information Instruments
 - V. Specific Types of Qualifications
 - VI. Credit Mobility

- Structure
 - ✓ Summary
 - ✓ Flow chart
 - ✓ Introduction of topic chapter
 - ✓ Recommendations
 - ✓ Practical examples for each recommendation (= more examples)

EAR HEI Manual Content (2)

PART I INTRODUCTION TO RECOGNITION

1. Introduction to recognition
2. The five elements of a qualification

PART II THE EVALUATION PROCESS

3. Accreditation and quality assurance
4. Diploma and accreditation mills
5. Authenticity
6. Purpose of recognition
7. Learning outcomes
8. Credits, grades, credit accumulation and credit transfer
9. Substantial and non-substantial differences
10. Alternative recognition and the right to appeal

PART III INSTITUTIONAL RECOGNITION PRACTICES

11. Transparency and information provision
12. Institutional recognition practices

PART IV INFORMATION INSTRUMENTS

13. How to find and use information
14. Diploma Supplement and other information tools
15. Qualifications frameworks

PART V SPECIFIC TYPES OF QUALIFICATIONS

16. Access qualifications
17. Qualifications gained after flexible learning paths
18. Qualifications awarded through transnational education
19. Qualifications awarded by joint programmes
20. Qualifications awarded by institutions not recognised by national education authorities
21. Qualification holders without documentation

PART VI CREDIT MOBILITY

23. Recognition of periods of study abroad
24. Schematic overview recognition process

Example 1: Substantial differences (1)

Definition of substantial differences: “Substantial differences are differences between the foreign qualification and the national qualification that are so significant, that they would most likely prevent the applicant from succeeding in further study or research activities.”

Recommendations (summary):

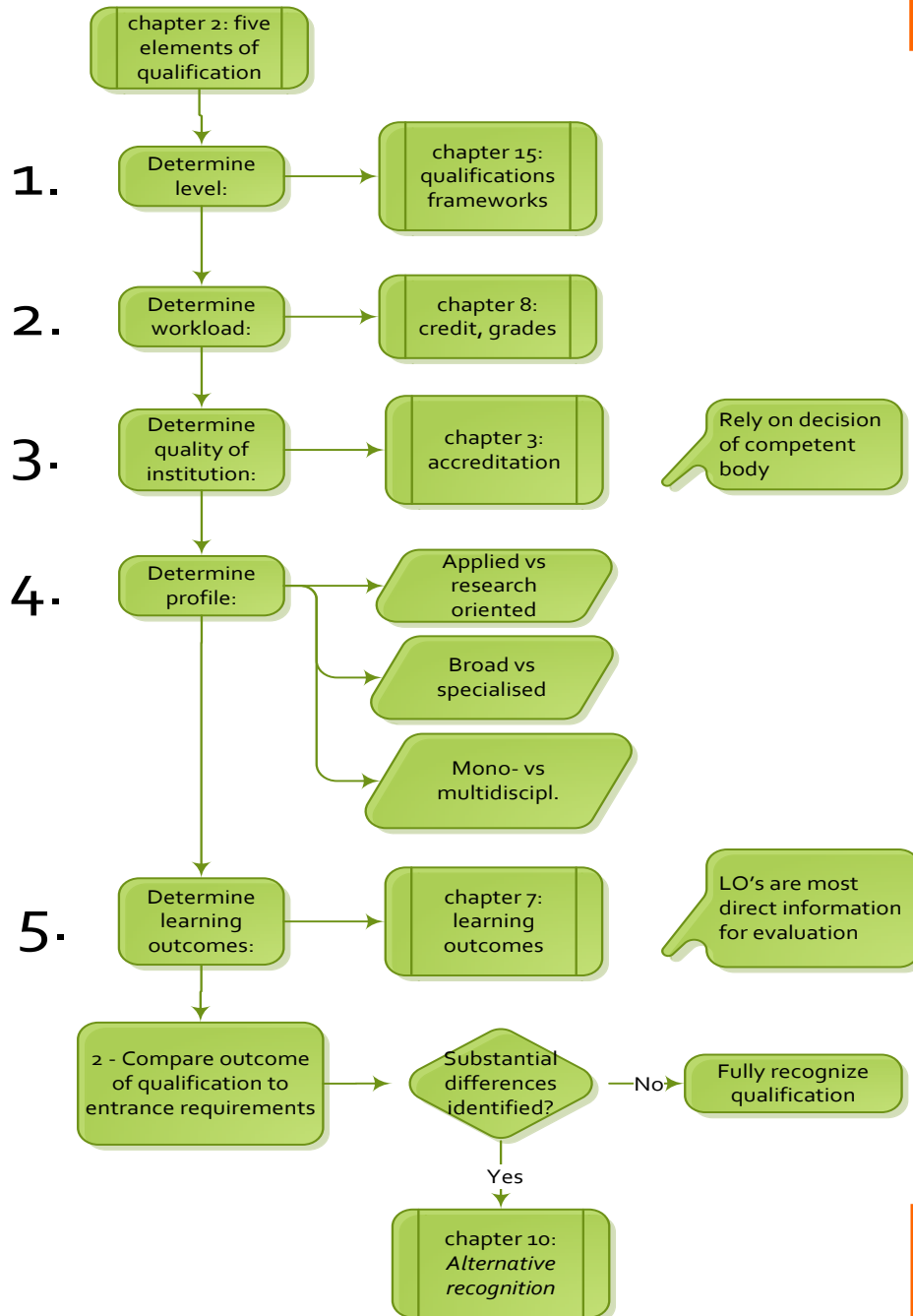
1. Determine the key elements of the qualification and relate them to the entrance requirements of the programme (level, workload, quality, profile and learning outcomes).
2. Determine whether the main requirements for admission to the programme are sufficiently covered by the outcomes of the foreign qualification.
 - ✓ If non-substantial differences have been identified, accept the qualification
 - ✓ If substantial differences have been found, report them to the applicant and consider other ways of recognizing the qualification.

Example 1: Substantial differences (2)

An applicant submits a Bachelor of Engineering degree from Iraq for admission to a Master programme. In the country of origin, one of the requirements for admission to Master programmes is that the Bachelor degree should be obtained with a certain GPA.

The required GPA level to have access to a Masters programme in Iraq was not obtained.

A competent recognition authority in another country decides to admit the applicant to a Master programme without further requirements, since the qualification is found to have the right level, orientation, quality, workload and learning outcomes.



Flowchart

Substantial differences

Example: Substantial differences (3)

Question: Is this decision in line with the EAR HEI chapter on Substantial Differences?

- A. No, there is a substantial difference in the rights attached to the qualification;
- B. No, the rules of the system of education in origin (in this case Iraq) should always be respected;
- C. Yes, because the level of the qualification is the most important aspect to be considered;
- D. Yes, a (substantial) difference may be ignored if the overall outcomes of the qualification are sufficient.

Example: Substantial differences (4)

- D. Yes, a (substantial) difference may be ignored if the overall outcomes of the qualification are sufficient.

Example 2: Institutional recognition practices - Recognition versus Selection

Recognition and selection are related because often part of the same process. However:

- Recognition focus on determining whether applicants qualifications are sufficient for entry to the programme.
- Selection poses additional criteria.

Recommendation (summary):

1. Policy: Develop a standard integrated admissions policy, that encompasses fair and non-discriminatory recognition and selection procedures and criteria and outlines the different steps in the admissions process, their outcomes, appeal procedures, etc.
2. Practice: Establish criteria:
 - ✓ Eligibility (recognition part)
 - ✓ Specific requirements (if applicable)
 - ✓ Admit the candidate or select a limited number

Example 2: Recognition versus Selection

The candidate from Iraq with a Bachelor of Engineering applies to a Master Programme in Engineering in both institution A and institution B in the same country with the same general access requirements. Institution A, which has an open admissions system, takes a positive admission decision. Institution B, which selects candidates according to their grade average, takes a negative admission decision.

Question: Is this in line with good practice in recognition?

A – No, this is not in line with good practice as described in the LRC. The student should be submitted to both programmes.

B – Yes, because recognition is separate from admissions criteria and both institutions have different criteria for admissions.

Example 2: Recognition versus Selection

B – Yes, because recognition is separate from admissions criteria and both institutions have different criteria for admissions

Thank you for your attention

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