Trinity College Dublin
Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath
The University of Dublin

Recognition of Foreign Qualifications – Procedure

Context:

As Ireland's oldest and highest-ranking university, Trinity strives to educate global citizens who will shape the world's future through research impact, global mobility opportunities, cultural exchange and international collaborations. The University aims for the highest standards of quality in all its admission related activities.

Applications for admission to Trinity are processed in adherence to the European Standard Guidelines, and the Lisbon Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications.

Purpose:

The purpose of the Recognition of Foreign Qualification Procedure is to ensure that applicants presenting foreign qualifications for admission are assessed in a transparent, equitable and timely manner as required under the European Standard Guidelines and the Lisbon Recognition Convention.

Definition:

For the purposes of this procedure, foreign qualifications are any qualification (second level, further and higher education) presented for admission obtained outside the State.

Scope:

The procedure spans both undergraduate and postgraduate applications for admission.

Procedure:

1. Undergraduate CAO Applications:

1.1   EU undergraduate applications are centrally processed at a sectoral level through the Central Applications Office (CAO). Recognition of EU/EFTA qualifications is therefore implemented at a sectoral level.

1.2   Trinity is a member of a national Admissions Officer Group from the participating CAO institutions. The expert Group publishes a document annually that details the entry requirements criteria for EU/EFTA applicants, with each institution assigned responsibility for a number of EU/EFTA countries.. The document sets out the framework for comparison of EU/EFTA qualifications for entry to undergraduate degree programmes in Irish Universities.

1.3   The annual publication is based on a combination of information available from:
   i.   international qualification recognition databases (ie, NARIC for Ireland, UK and others as required),
   ii.   historical admissions standards data for entry, and
   iii. examination performance statistics where available.

1.4   Where a qualification is not published by the Expert Group, requests for recognition of a qualification can come from

i. individual applicants to HEI directly, or

ii. if an institution becomes aware of changes in educational systems.

1.5 The request or notification of change is subsequently sent to the Admissions Officer of the institution/HEI within the Expert Group who has responsibility for that country.

1.6 The request for recognition or proposed change will be researched and brought to the expert group for discussion and recommendations.

1.7 The applicants are notified of the outcome and details published.

2. Undergraduate NonEU (Direct) Applications:

2.1 The Academic Registry has delegated responsibility for the assessment of Direct Applications to the University from the Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies (the Academic Officer with direct responsibility for undergraduate admissions).

2.2 Application is made direct to the university, and all applications are assessed in accordance with the published admissions criteria. Full details of admission requirements per country are published on the Trinity website (https://www.tcd.ie/study/undergraduate/).

2.3 Applicants must complete a mandatory declaration providing authorization for their qualifications to be verified from the institution(s) they attended.

2.4 Trinity provides specialised admissions training for Applications & Admissions staff in the Academic Registry responsible for reviewing and processing applications to Trinity College Dublin, including the use NARIC databases (Ireland, UK and others as required) to compare foreign qualifications against the published admission criteria, and validating the authenticity of applications.

2.5 For undergraduate direct applications, recommendations for any changes to the recognition of foreign qualifications are submitted to the Senior Lecturer / Dean of Undergraduate Studies for consideration (the Academic Officer with direct responsibility for undergraduate admissions) who submits them to the Undergraduate Studies Committee and University Council for final approval.

3. Postgraduate Applications:

3.1 The Academic Registry has delegated responsibility for the review and quality assurance of academically assessed postgraduate applications to the University from the Dean of Graduate Studies (the Academic Officer with direct responsibility for postgraduate admissions).

3.2 Application is made direct to the university, and all applications are assessed in accordance with the published admissions criteria. Full details of admission requirements per country are published on the Trinity website.

3.3 Applicants must complete a mandatory declaration providing authorization for their qualifications to be verified from the institution(s) they attended.

3.4   Applications are initially assessed by members of the academic community, usually course Directors/Co-ordinators, for academic suitability to a programme.

3.5   Subsequently, academic recommendations are submitted to the Academic Registry for quality assurance ensuring that offers are made to applicants that meet the entry requirements for that programme, and validating the authenticity of applications.

3.6   The assessment of postgraduate applications includes the use of NARIC databases (Ireland, UK and others as required) to compare foreign qualifications against the published admission criteria.

3.6   Recommendations for any changes to the recognition of foreign qualifications are submitted to the Dean of Graduate Studies for consideration (the Academic Officer with direct responsibility for postgraduate admissions) who submits them to the Graduate Studies Committee and University Council for final approval.

4.   Quality Assurance

4.1   Trinity's Recognition of Foreign Qualifications procedures are quality assured at a sectoral level through its membership of the IUA Admissions Officers' Group and observance of sectoral benchmarking criteria for EU/EFTA applicants and reference to NARIC databases.

4.2   Turnaround times for all EU and nonEU applications are actively monitored, reported and published on a monthly basis (www.tcd.ie/academicregistry).

4.3   Outcomes of application and admission data for all cohorts of students are reported annually in the Academic Registry's Annual Report and inform the Annual Reports of the Academic Officers including the Senior Lecturer's Annual Report, the Dean of Graduate Studies' Annual Report.

5.   Appeals

5.1   An applicant can appeal a decision where the qualification they are presenting for admissions purposes is not recognized by the University.

5.2   The appeal should be submitted to the Admissions Officer in the first instance.

5.3   The outcome of that appeal can be escalated, if required, to the Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies or the Dean of Graduate Studies, whichever is appropriate. (Ref. Admissions Appeal Process).

5.4   Applications from undocumented students will be assessed on a case by case basis.

6.   Responsibility

The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies and the Dean of Graduate Studies, as appropriate, are responsible for the oversight of this Procedure.

7. Related Documents

7.1. Admission & Transfer Policy (April (tbc) 2020)

7.2. Recognition of Prior Learning Policy

7.3. FAIR Report

7.4. NARIC Ireland Foreign Qualifications website

7.5. QQI Policy and Criteria for Facilitating the Academic Recognition of Foreign Qualifications (June 2015)

8. Document Control

The Admissions Officer is responsible for document control of this procedure.

Date approved: April 2020 (proposed)

Review date: Academic year 2023/24