GUIDELINES FOR NATIONAL INFORMATION CENTRES

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4 August 2014
THE GUIDEBOOK/TOOLKIT

Guidelines for National Information Centres

A Reference for Asia-Pacific Practitioners
January 2014
BACKGROUND (BRIEF HISTORY)

- **1983**: Regional Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas, and Degrees in Higher Education in Asia and the Pacific signed by 14 countries.
- **1985**: October 23 Convention implemented.
- **2005**: 8th Regional Committee Meeting in Kunming proposed to revise the Regional Convention.
- **2011**: International Conference of States in Tokyo agreed to the Asia-Pacific Regional Convention on the Recognition of Higher Education Qualifications in Higher Education.
- **2012**: It was also agreed that Toolkits be developed.
- **2013**: Toolkit for the Recognition of Foreign Qualifications.
CONTENTS OF THE GUIDEBOOK/ TOOLKIT

- Section 1: Introduction and Background
- Section 2: Rationale for Establishing NICs
- Section 3: Information Required of NICs
- Section 4: Guidelines and Procedures
- Section 5: Coordination of Regional NICs
- Section 6: Model of NIC – Australia
- Section 6: Examples of NIC Information
SECTION 1: OBJECTIVES

- to create incentives for countries to establish NICs
- to stress substantial administration and creation of new entities is not necessary
- to provide practical information on what may constitute a NIC
- To ensure that the guidelines provide flexibility for countries to develop a NIC which meets their needs
- To include case studies
The Asia-Pacific Regional Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications in Higher Education (2011) requires Parties to have an NIC. Parties need to provide a single point of contact from within existing ministries and organisations or a new entity. This does not mean creating a new structure or organisation.
GOALS FOR NICS

- Provide information to assist a NIC to work collaboratively with other NICs in sharing information from their higher education system
- Provide information to support the recognition of qualifications
- Promote the UNESCO Diploma Supplement
Each country should seek to establish a system, a unit or a centre that acts as the single point of contact for providing information on qualifications and higher education systems.

To assist the mobility of students, teachers and researchers

The scope of NICs will vary from country to country
Establishing a NIC may seem a formidable task.
This section provides guidance for countries wishing to establish a NIC.
Much of the information suggested is often available but sometimes is not centralised in one location.
NICs can provide the one-stop-shop for all this information.
BASIC NIC INFORMATION

- Provide the NIC’s name, full address, phone number, fax number, email address, website link,
- Provide the name or title of the person to contact. This could be a division within a government ministry or department such as the Equivalency of Certificates Division; or an independent organisation

National Information Centres

Educational and Professional Recognition Unit (also known as AEI-NOOSR)
GPO Box 1407
Canberra ACT 2601
Australia
Phone: +61 3 5454 5245
Fax: +61 2 6123 7892
E-mail: noosrenquiries@education.gov.au
Web Site: http://www.aei.gov.au/Services-And-Resources/Pages/AEINOOSR.aspx
Contact person: Liz Campbell-Dorning, Director, AEI-NOOSR
DESCRIPTION OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

- provide a brief overview of the
  - schooling,
  - technical,
  - vocational, and
  - higher education sectors
- the roles of government at both national and provincial/state level.
DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM

- Gives overview of the education system
- Provides pathways to higher education
- Discusses the national qualifications framework
- Provides diagram of the national qualifications framework and the education ladder
- Provides information on higher education courses
- A brief statement about admission requirements and types of institutions
QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION

- Gives information on quality assurance system
- Provide an overview of national and/or regional education bodies that are involved with higher education;
- A brief statement about their role;
- Include links to the quality assurance agencies websites which may be contacted for further details and validation.
brief description about the qualification systems

Provides qualifications diagram or framework or system for organising higher education qualifications within the country.

Provides background on different levels of the education

It may give information on international comparability of qualifications

this could also be included in the section on more detailed description of the higher education sector.
PROCEDURES FOR THE RECOGNITION OF FOREIGN QUALIFICATIONS

This could include:

- national legal or regulatory framework for recognition and assessment, including competence of different stakeholders;
- requirements regarding information applicant must provide;
- fees for recognition (where applicable);
- possible requirements regarding the translations;
- Agencies and bodies responsible for recognition of foreign qualifications.
SECTION 4: GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES IN THE OPERATION OF NICS

- Information on Recognition
- Role of National Information Centres
- Terminology
- Standards of Information Provision
- Target Groups
- Types of Information
- Information Dissemination
- Networking and Information Exchange
Information is of key importance to assist students.

Information on recognition is important in ensuring acceptance of qualifications from other countries.

Information can help further study, for gaining access to regulated professions, and for employment in non-regulated parts of the labour market.

It is important to provide information that is authoritative, adequate, relevant, well-targeted, and easily available.

Accurate, reliable and easily accessible information on own and foreign higher education systems and on the recognition of qualifications.
NICs should be the principal providers of authoritative information on recognition which could include:

- Higher education systems and qualifications of the country where they are located
- Recognition of foreign qualifications in the country where they are located
- Foreign education systems to serve enquirers in the country for which they are responsible

NICs should either be in a position to answer enquiries (“one stop”) or to refer enquirers to the appropriate body that can provide authoritative answers (“two stop”).

At international level, NICs should represent their respective countries in the Asia-Pacific Network of Information Centres.
TERMINOLOGY

- NICs should explain their use of specialised terminology
- Define technical terms that are important in the context of the information provided
- Provide information where it significantly differs from common international use of these terms.
NICs should high quality information. Be meaningful to users and should respond to their needs.

- Recognise that different users or user groups have different information needs
- Seek to provide information that is relevant to each group without overburdening them with irrelevant information
- Be accessible in terms of content, language, and style
- Be accurate
- Keep to the information provided
- Be up-to-date
- Be timely
Each NIC should consider the main target groups but allowances should be made for the diversity of national situations:

- Higher Education Institutions
- Credential Evaluator
- Individuals wishing to study and work abroad
TYPES OF INFORMATION

- on higher education systems and qualifications frameworks
- on the status of individual institutions, programmes, and qualifications
- that is most likely to be of interest to each of their main target groups.
NIC should use a variety of means to provide information including:

- Information technologies in accordance with internationally accepted standards
- Printed information sheets, leaflets, and booklets
- Interviews and articles in appropriate journals, newspapers, and other media
- Standardise information where possible
- Maintain close communication with stakeholders to ensure information is up to date
- Use a variety of means to disseminate information
It is suggested that NICs

- establish regular contact with their main organised target groups such as ministries, HEIs, student organisations, employers and their organisations, quality assurance agencies, student loan and grant authorities, immigration authorities, and others.

- consider establishing networks of stakeholders and cooperation partners for regular exchange of information.

NETWORKING AND INFORMATION EXCHANGE
The Regional Convention has a mandatory requirement to establish a network of NICs which will have a primary focus on the recognition of foreign diplomas, degrees, and other qualification.
The Network will aim to improve academic recognition of qualifications in higher education and periods of study in the Member States of the Asia-Pacific region while acknowledging that in the majority of States, institutions of higher education are autonomous.

Provide advice on foreign education systems and qualifications.
MECHANISMS TO ASSIST NICS

APARNET

Regional Committee Meetings

Regional Workshops
SECTION 6: MODELS OF NIC
ENIC – NARIC MODELS OF NIC

Welcome to the enic-naric website

This site, a joint initiative of the European Commission, the Council of Europe and UNESCO, has been created primarily as a tool to assist the ENIC-NARIC Networks in carrying out the tasks they have been mandated to accomplish within their own jurisdiction, by directing them to up-to-date information supplied and maintained by the competent bodies in each member country and by each member organisation. It is also its express purpose to help other interested organisations and individuals easily find information on current issues in international academic and professional mobility, and on procedures for the recognition of foreign qualifications.
CONTENT OF NIC (BASED ON ENIC-NARIC MODEL)

- Country page contains the following information
  - National Information Centres
    - National education bodies
    - System of education
    - University education
    - Quality Assurance in Higher Education
    - Post-secondary non-university education
    - Recognised higher education institutions
    - Policies and procedures for the recognition of qualifications
    - Qualifications Framework
    - Diploma Supplement Information
New Zealand

National Information Centres
System of education
Quality Assurance in Higher Education
Recognised higher education institutions
Qualifications Framework

National education bodies
University education
Post-secondary non-university education
Policies and procedures for the recognition of qualifications
Diploma Supplement (DS) Information
USEFUL LINKS TO NIC

National Information Centres

New Zealand Qualifications Authority
Mana Tohu Mātauranga o Aotearoa
PO Box 160, Wellington 6140
New Zealand
Phone: +64-4-463 3000
Fax: +64-4-802 3401
E-mail: pamela.hulston@nzqa.govt.nz
Web Site: http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/
Contact person: Mrs. Pamela Hulston, Manager

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National education bodies

Ministry of Education
Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga
The Ministry of Education is the Government’s lead advisor on the education system, shaping direction for education agencies and providers and contributing to the Government’s goals for education.
Link(s): English
System of education

The New Zealand Education System - An Overview is a Ministry of Education produced document.
Link(s): English

University education

Universities New Zealand
Universities New Zealand - Te Pōkai Tara is responsible for the quality of university programmes, administers a range of scholarships and represents the universities in the public interest, both nationally and internationally.
Link(s): English

StudyLink
Is a Ministry of Social Development service. This service connects people with the information they need to make informed decisions about student finances and other study-related issues, and provide financial support to students.
Link(s): English
SECTION 7: EXAMPLES OF NIC INFORMATION
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>You need information on recognition issues as</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Higher Education Institution</td>
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<tr>
<td>➤ More details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credential evaluator</td>
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<tr>
<td>➤ More details</td>
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<tr>
<td>Employer</td>
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<tr>
<td>➤ More details</td>
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<tr>
<td>Individual wishing to study/work abroad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➤ More details</td>
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National Register of higher education providers

Search the Register

You can use the National Register to:
- find a Provider
- or find a Course.
Information on the Register

The National Register Guidelines outline the provider and course information that TEQSA must include on the register, including providers whose registration has been cancelled by TEQSA. TEQSA may also include other information.

Registered higher education providers must notify TEQSA of a material change that would require an updating of details on the National Register.

The National Register is not designed to be a tool for searching or finding information about courses of study or the range of courses offered by a particular provider or institution. This information can be found on the Australian Government’s Study Assist website, or MyUniversity’s Course Finder.

Decisions

TEQSA has commenced the public reporting of regulatory decisions made on or after 1 July 2013. TEQSA will note a decision on the National Register after the provider has been notified of the decision and has had the opportunity to comment on the information to be published.

TEQSA will not, except where there are exceptional circumstances, note a decision on the register, or publish a public report on the National Register until the period for applying for review of the decision that is the subject of a report has expired, or in cases where a review application is made, until the review is completed.

TEQSA will consider whether exceptional circumstances exist having regard to the three regulatory principles, and to the principles in the TEQSA Public Disclosure Policy.

Disclaimer

The information on the National Register is as current as practicable. Information will be updated monthly. For information about the use of this website, or about how TEQSA deals with personal information on this website, please read the site disclaimer and privacy notice.
To provide a tool to assist countries in carrying out the tasks they have been mandated to accomplish within their own jurisdiction, by directing them to up-to-date information supplied and maintained by the competent bodies in each member country and by each member organisation.

It may also help individuals to easily find information on policies and services in international academic and professional mobility, and on procedures for the recognition of foreign qualifications.
THANKS