

REGULATION ON RECOGNITION AND EQUIVALENCE OF FOREIGN HIGHER EDUCATION DIPLOMAS

PART ONE

Purpose, Scope, Basis and Definitions

Purpose and Scope

ARTICLE 1 – (1) The purpose of this regulation is to specify the procedure and principles regarding the equivalence of Associate's, Bachelor's and Master's degree diplomas received from foreign higher education institutions.

Basis

ARTICLE 2 – (1) This regulation has been prepared on the basis of Article 7 of the Higher Education Law dated 4/11/1981 and numbered 2547 and the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications Concerning Higher Education in the European Region dated 11/4/1997, approved by law dated 23/2/2006 and numbered 5463.

Definitions

ARTICLE 3 – (1) Stated in this regulation as follows:

a) Open learning: A type of education and training, excluding face to face and distance learning in higher education institutions, that isn't based on the mutual interaction of students and instructors, nor requires location

b) Accreditation Organizations: International quality assurance organizations that have been granted authorization or acknowledgement of registration by the Council of Higher Education

c) ECTS: European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System

d) Sub-commission: A commission, consisting of associates who are experts in their field, formed for the purpose of consulting in the event that the Recognition and Equivalence Commission needs a second opinion during the evaluation of applications

e) Equivalence: The confirmation of the equivalence of Associate's, Bachelor's and Master's degree diplomas taken from a foreign higher education institution that is recognized by CoHE with Associate's, Bachelor's and Master's degree diplomas taken from the higher education institutions in Turkey in terms of achievement corresponding to each educational level

f) Certificate of Equivalence: A certificate that records which discipline and level the requested diploma equates to in the Turkish higher education system

g) Equivalence Unit: A unit of CoHE responsible for the implementation of the procedures regarding recognition and equivalence

h) Commission: A recognition and equivalence commission consisting of a chairperson elected by the council members assigned by the CoHE President and at least three members elected by the council of CoHE

i) Level and Competence Placement System (SYBS): All of the procedures aimed at assessing, evaluating and determining the achievements gained using one, a few, or all of the implementation requirements such as course completion, internship completion, project creation or subjecting the applicant to test depending on the qualification of the program in case deficiency is determined and/or any doubt arises regarding the fundamental achievements related to the program the applicant graduated from, medium of instruction,

quality of the program, theoretical and applied courses, internships and projects

j) Certificate of Recognition: A document that is not a certificate of equivalence but records the graduation of the applicant demanding recognition from a recognized foreign higher education institution

k) Distance learning: A type of education and training in which the instructor teaches in mutual interaction with the students concurrently without location and the education-related events concerning the higher education institutions are planned and conducted based on information and communication technology

l) Higher education: The whole education and training on each level following secondary education consisting of at least four terms in the national education system

m) Recognition of higher education institutions and programs: The recognition of a higher education institution and program issuing the diploma as an authorised body and program acknowledged to grant academic degrees by the authorities or the quality assurance and accreditation organizations assigned by CoHE and the authorities in the country in which they operate

PART TWO

Recognition and Equivalence Process

Common Protocol and Documents

ARTICLE 4 – (1) The recognition and equivalence application is made personally or by the person possessing power of attorney that is issued by the authority in the frame of procedure and principles determined by CoHE with the documents stated below:

- a) An application form
- b) A copy of the birth certificate that bears the TC identity number
- c) Original diploma or graduation certificate requested for recognition or equivalence along with a copy and translation certified by a notary republic or the Foreign Representative Office of the Republic of Turkey
- d) Original official transcript that records all of the course grades and number of periods taken during higher education studies, original diploma supplement requested for the diploma taken from the members of the European Union and translation certified by the notary or the Foreign Representative Office of the Republic of Turkey, or an explanatory document obtained from a relevant higher education institution or authority of the country concerned for those who cannot present a diploma supplement
- e) Original official transcript that records the transferred course grades in case there are course grades that have to be transferred from another higher education institution and translation certified by the notary or the Foreign Representative Office of the Republic of Turkey
- f) Original diploma or graduation certificate regarding the previous education received in Turkey or copy certified by the institution the student graduated from, the notary, and the Foreign Representative Office of the Republic of Turkey
- g) Original high school equivalence certificate from the student's institution and copy certified by the notary or the Foreign Representative Office of the Republic of Turkey
- h) Original recognition or equivalence certificate issued by the country, in which the education took place, for diplomas received from a higher education satellite institution, and translation certified by the notary or the Foreign Representative Office of the Republic of Turkey

i) Original recognition or equivalence certificate issued by the authority of the country the relevant higher education institution operates in for the diplomas taken from the higher education institutions that fall under the international organizations with whom Turkey is a member, and translation certified by the notary or the Foreign Representative Office of the Republic of Turkey

j) Originals of the passport(s) used during the higher education period or legible copy of the pages that record the entrance and exit dates and stamps certified by the notary or the Foreign Representative Office of the Republic of Turkey, and entrance and exit record taken from the provincial security directorate; for dual citizens, a document indicating residency during the study period

k) Document stating that the applicants, those who completed their secondary education in Turkey, received the necessary scores for the Higher Education Examination (YGS) / Undergraduate Placement Examination (LYS) in the first year of their higher education within the framework of substantial difference of Article 4 stated in the regulations of Higher Education in the European Region or equivalent as recognized by the Council of Higher Education

l) A certificate that records successful completion of the preparatory class taken in the first year of the higher education

m) Two copies of a Master's thesis, one printed and one electronic, and Turkish translation of the cover and summary of the thesis certified by the notary or the Foreign Representative Office of the Republic of Turkey for those who are applying for the Master's equivalence certificate

(2) In order to make a recognition or equivalence application for the Associate's, Bachelor's and Master's diplomas, foreign nationals should submit an identity certificate issued by their country of citizenship, and in addition to subparagraphs (b), (f), (j), (k) and (l) of the first paragraph, they should fulfill at least one condition of those listed below:

a) Foreign nationals wishing to work in Turkey should certify that they have applied to their chosen institutions in order to be employed

b) Those who are in the process of becoming a Turkish citizen should certify this matter

c) Those who are and will be employed as a foreign faculty member in a higher education institution should certify a copy of the approved contract

d) Those who will work on research and development projects carried out or supported by state institutions, organizations, higher education institutions and international programs coordinated by the respective institutions or projects that take place within the scope of European Union Framework Programs should certify this matter

(3) Those who will work as foreign faculty members in a higher education institution in Turkey and those who will work as foreign researchers in projects that are within the scope of the international programs coordinated by the state institutions and organizations and higher education institutions and the research and development projects that are carried out or supported by the mentioned institutions and organizations or European Union Frame Programs do not need to submit the document stated in subparagraph (g) of the first paragraph

(4) A document including the date and assigned number of the application taken is given to those who apply for the recognition or equivalence process

(5) A score taken from YGS/LYS or similar exams as stated in subparagraph (k) of the first paragraph is not needed from those who completed their secondary education in Turkey and graduated from one of the universities, as specified by the Council of Higher Education in

the first year of higher education, that is listed in the world university ranking lists conducted by the rating institutions recognized by CoHE

(6) If there is any deficiency in the requested documents, the applicants will be given thirty days to complete these documents. If the requested changes are not made within the allotted period, the individual's application will be rejected.

Evaluation and completion of application for recognition

ARTICLE 5 – (1) Applications that have all of the requested documents and fulfill at least one of the conditions listed below will move to the evaluation process:

a) The higher education institution that issues the diploma should be approved for taking part in its own higher education system by the competent authorities of the country the institution is operating in and recognized by the Council of Higher Education.

b) The higher education institution should be granted authorization by the appropriate authorities that issue the diploma and recognized by the quality assurance and accreditation organizations acknowledged by the Council of Higher Education.

c) A recognition or equivalence certificate should be issued by the authorities of the country, in which the applicant is studying, for diplomas taken from a higher education institution recognized by the country of origin and CoHE and is operating as a satellite institution.

d) Diploma of which recognition and equivalence certificate is issued by the competent authorities of a country should be taken from a higher education institution that falls under the international associations to which Turkey is a party.

(2) If the conditions in the first paragraph are met and the originality of the documents, absence of alterations such as scraping and erasure, ownership of the documents to the applicant, passport(s) used during the period of study, entrance and exit records taken from the provincial security directorate and completion of minimum time and credits needed for the study are confirmed, a preliminary survey report prepared by the Equivalence Unit is presented to the Commission. A final report prepared by the Commission is discussed in the CoHE Executive Council and a decision is made about the recognition certificate.

Evaluation of the application of equivalence

ARTICLE 6 – (1) In addition to the conditions and protocols mentioned in Article 5, the equivalence application is evaluated based on the factors listed below:

a) The diploma requested for equivalence and the program in the Turkish higher education system are evaluated to see if they are equal in terms of minimum achievements.

b) In the event that there is no matching or similar program in the Turkish higher education system and the rest of the conditions stated in this regulation are met, the program is evaluated as if it were equal to the Turkish higher education system in terms of Associate's, Bachelor's and Master's degrees.

c) When the usage of a title is required, an evaluation according to subparagraph (b) of the first paragraph of Article 43 in the Law of Higher Education is conducted.

(2) If deemed necessary by the Commission, additional information and documents, excluding the documents stated in Article 4, are requested directly from the applicant, the related higher education institution or the authorities of the related country regarding the originality of the diploma being evaluated and other documents and type, qualification and level of education program although the documents are taken from a recognized higher

education institution.

Procedure following the completion of the equivalence application analysis

ARTICLE 7 – (1) In consequence of the evaluation, diploma equivalence applications that comply with Articles 5 and 6 qualify to be put into process regardless of the Level and Competence Evaluation System (SYBS) procedure while reserving the right of the Council of Higher Education to evaluate in case hesitation were to arise regarding the qualification of the education and training of the institution where the diploma is taken from:

a) Diplomas issued from one of the universities, specified by the Council of Higher Education in the first year of the higher education, that are listed in the world university ranking lists conducted by the rating institutions recognized by CoHE in case of an equivalence in the Turkish higher education system,

b) Diplomas taken from the programs accredited by international quality assurance organizations that are granted the registration authorization by the Council of Higher Education or of which the registration is recognized by the Council of Higher Education in case of an equivalence of the program in the Turkish higher education system,

c) Diplomas of those who enrolled into a foreign higher education program that is included in the Student Selection and Placement System (ÖSYS) booklet or who had the same score as the last student being enrolled into the program and enrolled into the same program.

(2) In case the program, where the applicant graduated from, is equivalent to the program in the Turkish higher education system in line with the opinions and suggestions of the related sub-commissions and/or higher education institutions in terms of the fundamental achievements, compulsory theoretical and applied courses, compulsory internships and projects excluding the ones stated in the first paragraph, the equivalence procedure is put into process regardless of the SYBS procedure.

(3) In case deficiency is determined and/or any doubt arises regarding the program, where the applicant graduated from, compared to the equivalent program in the Turkish higher education system in line with the opinions and suggestions of the related sub-commissions and/or higher education institutions in terms of the fundamental achievements, medium of instruction, qualification of the program, compulsory theoretical and applied courses, compulsory internships and projects excluding the ones stated in the first paragraph, those involved are subject to SYBS procedures, of which the structure, procedure and principles are defined by Council of Higher Education, in respect to the deficient and/or ineligible theoretical and applied courses and compulsory internships and projects.

(4) In case there is no same or similar program, of which the applicant graduated from, regarding the area and degree of the program in the Turkish higher education system and the rest of the conditions stated in this regulation are met, the equivalence procedures for the field of study stated in the diploma at the level of Associate's, Bachelor's, Master's with thesis and Master's without thesis degrees are carried out.

(5) In consequence of the evaluation, the equivalence applications are rejected in the event that the conditions stated below are present:

a) The equivalence applications related to the diplomas received from a higher education institution that is operating abroad and is not recognized by the Council of Higher Education are rejected. However, the diplomas of those who studied in a higher education

institution that is operating abroad and is not recognized by the Council of Higher Education but completed their education in another higher education institution that is recognized by CoHE are subject to equivalence evaluation if at least 70% of the credits are retrieved from the recognized higher education institution.

b) The equivalence applications related to the diplomas taken at the end of an education period of which does not include compulsory attendance like open and external education, excluding distance learning, are rejected with a reasoned statement. However, the diplomas of those who took 70% of the classes in formal education in these programs are subject to equivalence evaluation.

c) In consequence of the evaluation process, the request of a diploma equivalence is rejected with a reasoned statement in case the higher education program the diploma was issued at has not been deemed as equivalent to the relevant programs in the Turkish higher education system in terms of the training program/field and degree.

d) Applications regarding the diplomas taken from the programs established by higher education institutions and where Turkish is the medium of instruction, excluding the programs of which Turkish is defined as the medium of instruction by the international agreements in which Turkey is a party or the Turkish higher education programs abroad that are recognized by the Council of Higher Education, are rejected.

e) In consequence of the evaluation of the passport(s) used and entrance and exit records taken from the provincial security directorate during the period of study, the applications are rejected in case deficiency regarding the time of residence during the period of study for each term is determined. The determination of the time of attendance allotted for education shall be guided by the higher education legislation regarding the education in Turkey.

(6) The preliminary survey report prepared by the Equivalence Unit in conformity with Article 5 regarding the application of equivalence is referred to the Commission. In consequence of the evaluation, a final report prepared by the Commission is discussed in the CoHE Executive Council and a decision is made.

Temporary certificate of equivalence

ARTICLE 8 – (1) A temporary certificate of equivalence that records the field and level the requested diploma/graduation certificate is equal to in the Turkish higher education system and is valid until the final equivalence is conducted, is issued if the application is made with a graduation certificate or a ruling is necessary.

Provisions regarding the procedures during the evaluation of various fields

ARTICLE 9 – (1) During the evaluation of the application for diploma equivalence taken from the fields of which practice is enacted by law, legislation provisions regarding the occupation mentioned and principals defined by the Council of Higher Education are reserved.

(2) The opinion of the Ministry of National Education is taken regarding the equivalence of the fields of teaching. A certificate of diploma equivalence is issued in the related field in the name of the diploma holder in the event of the diploma holder being proficient in the subject field knowledge, but is incompetent in the professional teaching knowledge and an annotation is put onto the certificate which states “In order for a teaching certificate to be issued in the area stated above for this certificate holder, the person concerned should pass

the placement test called Public Personnel Selection Examination (KPSS) in educational sciences". In case the certificate holder passes the exam, the annotation is removed and a new equivalence certificate is issued on behalf of the person concerned that includes the area of teaching.

(3) Regarding the procedures of the equivalence of diplomas taken from foreign language and literature programs, foreign language and literature teaching programs, philology and translation and interpreting programs in foreign higher education institutions except the ones in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, the applicant should get at least 80 points out of 100 in Foreign Language Exam (YDS) of the program language or an equivalent score in an exam that is recognized internationally and acknowledged by the Council of Higher Education in case the language of the program the applicant graduated from is not the same as the official language of that country.

(4) Certificate of Equivalence is issued to diplomas taken from Turkish related programs such as Turkish Philology, Turkish Language and Literature Teaching, Contemporary Turkish Dialects and Literatures in foreign higher education institutions except the ones in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus in case the applicant passes the exam of the same field defined by the Council of Higher Education.

Procedure for the recognition and equivalence of distance education

ARTICLE 10 – (1) In addition to the principals of evaluation for full time education, the provisions listed below are taken into consideration during the procedures of recognition and equivalence of the diplomas taken from distance learning programs:

a) Turkish should not be the language of the foreign distance learning program excluding the higher education institutions established with international agreements or distance learning programs in countries where Turkish is the official language.

b) The attainments from distance learning programs conform to the attainments from full time programs.

c) The total credits needed to graduate from a distance learning program should be equal or more than the total credits needed for the full time education program in that country.

d) The distance learning program where the applicant graduated from should correspond to the distance learning programs in Turkey.

e) The applicant should have the scores the Higher Education Council determined from the exams determined by the Council in the language the applicant studies.

Other provisions regarding the procedures on the evaluation of the equivalence

ARTICLE 11 – (1) The structure and content of the certificate of recognition, certificate of equivalence and temporary certificate of equivalence, issued in consequence of the recognition and equivalence procedures of the diplomas taken from a foreign higher education institution, are determined by the Council of Higher Education.

(2) The applications of those who submitted false documents, falsified documents or submitted documents that belong to another person are rejected and a criminal complaint is filed against them to the Chief Public Prosecutor's Office in order to take legal actions.

Submission of Documents

ARTICLE 12 – (1) Following the finalization of the recognition or equivalence procedure:

a) The diploma and transcript subject to evaluation are stamped "Approved".

b) In case of a positive result, the recognition or equivalence certificate along with the cover letter and original documents are delivered by hand to the applicant or person who has the official power of attorney issued by competent authorities.

c) In the event of a negative decision, the original documents are delivered by signature to the applicant or person who has the official power of attorney issued by competent authorities.

d) In case the certificate of recognition or equivalence is lost, action is taken based on the procedure defined by the Council of Higher Education.

(2) Certified copies and certified translated documents submitted to the Council of Higher Education while applying aren't returned to the applicant and are kept on file under the applicant's name by the Council of Higher Education.

PART THREE

Miscellaneous and Final Provisions

Elimination of Uncertainty

ARTICLE 13 – (1) CoHE Executive Board has the authority to eliminate uncertainties that may arise during implementation of this regulation.

Repealed Regulation

ARTICLE 14 – (1) Regulation on Equivalence of Foreign Higher Education Diplomas which was published in the Official Gazette dated 6/11/2010 and numbered 27751 is repealed.

Interim Provision

PROVISIONAL ARTICLE 1 – (1) Legislation provisions in force during the time of the application except the procedural sentences are implemented for applications of equivalence made before the effective date of this regulation. However, provisions of this regulation are implemented in cases where the situation is in favor of the applicant.

Enforcement

ARTICLE 15 – (1) This regulation enters into force at the publication date.

Execution

ARTICLE 16 – (1) The provisions of this regulation shall be executed by President of the Council of Higher Education.