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**DESCRIPTION OF PROCEDURE FOR ASSESSMENT AND ACADEMIC
RECOGNITION OF THE QUALIFICATION ACQUIRED ABROAD AT
VYTAUTAS MAGNUS UNIVERSITY**

I. GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. The Description of Procedure for Assessment and Academic Recognition of Qualification Acquired Abroad at Vytautas Magnus University (hereinafter referred to as the “University”) shall govern the course and responsibilities of the qualification assessment and recognition process.

2. The Description was drawn up in accordance with the Council of Europe and UNESCO Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region (hereinafter referred to as the Lisbon Recognition Convention) and accompanying legal acts, international treaties of the Republic of Lithuania, the Law of the Republic of Lithuania on the Ratification of the Council of Europe and UNESCO Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region, the Law on Higher Education and Research of the Republic of Lithuania, the Law on Education of the Republic of Lithuania, the Resolution No. 212 of February 29, 2012, of the Government “On the Approval of the Description of the Procedure for the Recognition of Education and Qualifications Related to Higher Education and Acquired Under Education Programs of Foreign Countries and International Organizations”, the Order No. V-589 of July 21, 2017, of the Minister of Education and Science “On Granting the Right to Vytautas Magnus University to Carry Out Academic Recognition of Education and Qualifications Related to Higher Education and Acquired Under Education Programs of Foreign Countries and International Organizations”, the University Study Regulations, and other legal acts.

3. The assessment and recognition of the qualification acquired abroad shall be carried out at the University in order to make a decision regarding the compliance of the acquired

qualification with the secondary education provided in the Republic of Lithuania or a higher education qualification of a corresponding level.

4. The process of the assessment and recognition of the qualification acquired abroad shall be carried out only upon entering studies at the University. The assessment of the qualification shall be an integral part of the admission process to the University.

5. Qualifications of secondary education, Bachelor's degree, Master's degree, as well as qualification degrees gained in a foreign country shall be evaluated.

II. PRINCIPLES AND CRITERIA FOR THE ASSESSMENT OF THE QUALIFICATION

6. The qualification acquired abroad shall be recognized as equivalent to secondary education provided in the Republic of Lithuania or a higher education qualification of an appropriate level if there are no significant differences between the general requirements of the country where the foreign qualification was acquired and those of the Republic of Lithuania.

7. The recognition of the qualification acquired abroad shall be carried out in accordance with general or individual (in the absence of general) recommendations of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education (hereinafter referred to as the "SKVC") and, where necessary, in consultation with responsible staff of the SKVC.

8. The assessment of the qualification acquired abroad shall be based on the following assessment criteria:

8.1. The education system and qualifications framework of the country in which the qualification was acquired.

8.2. The type of the institution in which the qualification was acquired in accordance with the national education system and the status of accreditation.

8.3. The duration, content, learning outcomes, aim, scope, and accreditation status of the study program in which the qualification was acquired.

8.4. The correspondence of the study program in which the qualification was acquired and the degree awarded to the European and national qualifications frameworks.

8.5. The authenticity of the documents certifying the acquired qualification.

8.6. An assessment of the correspondence of the value and level of the qualification in its country of origin, taking into account the admission requirements in force in that country.

8.7. The comparison of the acquired qualification with the most similar qualification provided in the Republic of Lithuania, i.e., the comparison of the requirements for content,

purpose, scope, quality of learning (studies), learning outcomes with the corresponding requirements established in the Republic of Lithuania.

8.8. The compliance of the acquired qualification with the conditions for admission to the relevant study program implemented by the University.

9. Information relating to sex, race, language, religion, political beliefs, nationality, ethnic or social origin, as well as other information not related to the academic essence of the qualification shall not be taken into account in the assessment of the qualification acquired abroad.

III. SUBMISSION OF DOCUMENTS AND ASSESSMENT OF THE QUALIFICATION

10. Upon entering studies at the University, a person shall fill in an application to assess the qualification acquired abroad and shall submit the following documents:

10.1. For admission to the first cycle study program: documents certifying the completion of secondary education or equivalent education giving entitlement to higher education.

10.2. For admission to the second cycle study program: documents certifying the completion of the first cycle education.

10.3. For admission to the third cycle study program: documents certifying the completion of the first cycle education and documents certifying the completion of the second cycle education.

10.4. If the documents referred to in Paragraphs 10.1.–10.3. were issued in languages other than Lithuanian or English, in addition, a translation of the documents into English or Lithuanian must be submitted. The translation must be stapled to a copy of the document certified by a notary or an authorized body of the country concerned. The stapling must be stamped by the translation agency and signed by the translator. According to the 1961 Hague Convention, documents may be subject to an Apostille endorsement.

10.5. Copies of the appendices to the documents certifying education, providing information on the content and scope of the completed study program as well as evaluations.

10.6. A copy of an identity document.

10.7. The Letter of Concurrence in the form established by the University.

10.8. Document(s) certifying the change of name and/or surname or a duly certified copy(-ies) thereof, if documents proving the level of education have been issued under another name and/or surname.

10.9. Other additional documents specified by the institution implementing the academic recognition of the qualification acquired abroad, which are necessary for the objective assessment of the qualification acquired abroad.

10.10. Other special requirement documents applicable to qualifications by countries in which they were acquired. The requirements can be found on the University website www.vdu.lt/en.

11. Upon completion of the academic recognition of the qualification acquired abroad, the applicant shall submit within the specified deadlines, the originals of digital copies of all submitted documents. If, after the submission of the original documents, it turns out that the document(s) certifying the qualification acquired abroad has(have) been forged, the decision on the academic recognition of the qualification acquired abroad shall be annulled and the Study Contract shall be terminated.

12. The assessment of the qualification shall be carried out according to 5 qualification elements: *level, volume (duration), quality, purpose, outcomes*.

13. The assessment of the qualification shall be carried out by the staff of the International Cooperation Department.

14. The service of the assessment of the qualification acquired abroad shall be provided free of charge as part of the procedure of the admission to the University. The qualification assessment shall begin after the applicant has paid the registration fee and submitted all the documents necessary for the admission to the University.

IV. DECISION-MAKING ON THE ASSESSMENT OF THE QUALIFICATION AND NOTIFICATION OF THE DECISION

15. The assessment of the qualification shall be carried out within 1 month from the date of the submission of all documents. This term may be extended if additional information is required for the academic recognition of the foreign qualification.

16. The assessment may lead to the following decisions:

16.1. To recognize the qualification as equivalent to the qualification provided in the Republic of Lithuania and to grant the right to enter studies at the University.

16.1. Not to recognize the qualification as equivalent to the qualification provided in the Republic of Lithuania and not to grant the right to enter studies at the University.

16.3. To partially recognize the qualification and impose additional conditions: to offer to take a test of knowledge and skills and/or an additional year of studies.

17. The decision made shall be recorded in the Register of Assessment and Recognition of Qualifications Acquired Abroad. The person shall be notified by e-mail of the decision made.

**V. SPECIAL RECOGNITION PROCEDURE FOR QUALIFICATIONS OR
PARTIAL STUDIES WITHOUT SUBMISSION OF DOCUMENTS
CERTIFYING EDUCATION**

18. A special procedure may be applied to persons with refugee and/or similar status granted by the Migration Department under the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania, when

18.1. the person does not have appropriate documents certifying education.

18.2. the person's documents certifying education are questionable and cannot be authenticated.

18.3. the circumstances surrounding the acquisition raise serious doubts that the results have been achieved.

19. The procedure shall be initiated only after it has been ascertained that

19.1. the person cannot provide documents certifying education for objective reasons.

19.2. they cannot be replaced by other similar information.

20. The person must give consent to such a procedure.

21. Stages of the procedure shall be as follows: preparation of the restoration document, collection of additional information, interview of the candidate with a credential evaluator and/or specialist in the field, and adoption of the recognition decision.

22. Preparation of the restoration document, which consists of the information provided by the person and additionally collected by the institution (intended to reconstruct the qualification or completed partial studies), shall be carried out in the following way:

22.1. According to the established questionnaire (Annex 1), the person shall be asked to provide information about the completed learning or studies or part thereof (in the case of partial studies) and the acquired qualification.

22.2. The person shall be asked to provide any indirect evidence of studying (professional licencing, student card, student record book, exam cards, etc.).

22.3. The employees of the International Cooperation Department performing the recognition (credential evaluators) shall also collect general information about the system and studies of the country of origin of the studies/qualification, requirements for obtaining the declared qualification, previously held analogous qualifications, etc.

22.4. The additional information shall be compared with the form filled out by the person, and the credibility of the person's statements shall be assessed.

22.5. If there are doubts about the credibility of the information provided by the person, the process may be terminated at this stage of the procedure.

22.6. At this stage of the procedure, the recognition decision may be taken when additional documents and information gathered make it possible to be sure that the qualification has been obtained or that partial studies have been completed.

23. If the information provided by the person seems reliable and consistent, a person's interview shall be organised with a credential evaluator and/or specialist(s) in the relevant study field, who have previously been familiarised with the objectives of the interview, the education system of the foreign country, the restoration document (if any), or documents certifying education.

24. The purpose of the interview can be twofold:

24.1. To determine whether the person has actually acquired the qualification claimed or completed part of the studies.

24.2. To determine whether the person's knowledge and skills could be equivalent to the qualifications provided by the Republic of Lithuania.

25. If the result of the interview is positive, the recognition decision shall be made and a document confirming this shall be issued (prepared taking into account the recommendations of the SKVC).

26. An interview can also be organised in cases where a person has documents certifying education, but they are questionable and cannot be authenticated, or where the circumstances in which the qualifications were obtained give rise to serious doubts that the results have been achieved. In such cases, the restoration document shall not be drawn up.

VI. FINAL PROVISIONS

27. The decision made by the University on the assessment and recognition of the qualification acquired abroad may be appealed to the SKVC. The complaint shall be submitted to the SKVC within 14 calendar days from the date of the receipt of the decision on the academic recognition.

28. If a person misses the deadline for submitting a complaint due to reasons which objectively prevented him/her from submitting a complaint in a timely manner and which did not depend on the person, the deadline for submitting a complaint may be extended by the SKVC.

29. The deadline for submitting a complaint may be extended by a decision of the SKVC if the person submits a reasoned application stating the reasons why it is not possible to submit the complaint in a timely manner and attaching evidence supporting these reasons.

30. The quality of the process of the assessment of the qualification acquired abroad shall be assessed and ensured by the SKVC.