

# 3. Application Procedures

## UK NARIC APPLICATION PROCEDURES

All international qualifications are considered in the same manner to ensure that each is treated as fairly and efficiently as possible. This process includes the following procedures:

- Documentation submitted is analysed by UK NARIC Information Officer(s) who determine(s) whether correct or required information has been provided
- An initial decision is made as to whether assessment can be provided
- Qualifications are evaluated in accordance with NARIC guidelines
- Validity of certificates considered
- Response drafted
- Verification and quality checking of all responses and evaluations.

In the event of further information required to ensure fair recognition of a given qualification (as in the case of a new award and/or discontinued qualifications), further additional steps should apply:

- Appropriate authorities should be contacted in order to obtain further information on a given award. The applicant should be informed if the process will take longer than the standard timescale
- Information request chased up on a weekly basis until received
- Once a response has been received, the validity of this information is considered: if the response is insufficient to provide an evaluation, further information requests are considered
- Qualifications are then evaluated in accordance with the new information and in the context of previous evaluations for the country in question
- The conclusions of these cases are then presented to senior evaluators for:  
a) approval of the individual evaluation; and b) building the award-specific data into the system information range.

## COMPLAINTS, REQUESTS FOR CLARIFICATION, REQUESTS FOR REASSESSMENT AND APPEALS

### Customer Complaints

UK NARIC places particular importance on the service provided to all customers. Complaints are different to requests for clarification and appeals as they are not about qualifications, rather about the service provision. These should be addressed to the manager of the division that provided the service and will be answered by them within 15 working days after receipt.

If an individual remains dissatisfied with the information that has been provided following a complaint, the case will be passed on to a senior manager for further consideration and a written response will then be provided to the individual.

Please note that the timeframe for submitting complaints is six months after the service has been provided. Any complaints submitted after that period cannot be considered.

## Requests for clarification

Requests for clarification concern the NARIC assessment and the statements issued. The procedure for submitting these requests is outlined below.

## Requests for reassessment

Requests for reassessment are different to requests for clarification as they challenge the NARIC assessment. The procedure for submitting these requests is outlined below.

## Appeals

Appeals follow on from requests for reassessment. Appeals can only be submitted once the reassessment route has been exhausted. The procedure for submitting these requests is outlined below.

## REQUESTS FOR CLARIFICATION, REQUESTS FOR REASSESSMENT AND APPEALS

The following information explains the procedures to follow if an individual is dissatisfied with the assessment provided by UK NARIC, requires further information to explain the outcome of an assessment or wishes to appeal against a decision that has been made. There are different steps to the process and each of these is explained in more detail below.

Please note that the timeframe for submitting these requests is six months after the service has been provided. Any requests submitted after that period cannot be considered.

### Requests for clarification

Clarifications are distinctly different from reassessment and appeal applications. Most cases are successfully resolved by providing the individual with more information about the reasons behind an assessment or a more detailed explanation of the UK NARIC assessment process.

Upon request, UK NARIC will provide clarification for the following:

- Any errors made in NARIC assessments
- Where the applicant requires an explanation of the comparison statement provided
- Where the applicant does not understand the format of the assessment provided
- Where the applicant queries the source of information used by NARIC

Clarification requests should be addressed in writing to the Information Officer who completed the initial assessment. These are answered by a member of the Information Services Team and will be quality checked by a senior member of staff.

## Requests for reassessment

If an individual is dissatisfied with the assessment provided by UK NARIC, they are entitled to request a reassessment of their qualification(s).

The following are considered appropriate grounds for a reassessment request:

- Disputing the comparable level of an award
- Disputing the information provided and used in the assessment
- Disputing level of service and conduct towards an individual during the assessment process

### [Step 1]

Reassessment requests should be addressed in writing to the Information Officer who completed the initial assessment. Provided the application meets the grounds for reassessment listed above, a reassessment of the qualification(s) will be carried out by a member of the Information Services Team who will re-consider the information originally provided and re-evaluate the initial assessment accordingly. All reassessment requests will be quality checked by a senior member of staff.

There are a number of different potential outcomes to this process:

- **Original Decision Upheld:** The grounds upon which the request for reassessment has been raised are considered unfounded. The individual is therefore informed that the original guidance is considered accurate and additional reasons for this outcome are provided.
- **Further Detail Required from the Individual:** The line of argument used by the individual is based upon evidence that has not been provided or insufficiently provided. It is therefore requested that new documentation should be obtained from an authoritative source in the home country.
- **Further Research Required by NARIC:** The line of argument suggests that the information held by NARIC is insufficient to reach a definitive conclusion. In this situation, more in-depth research is conducted by a senior evaluator in order to determine the merit of the argument.
- **Original Decision Reversed:** The request for reassessment is upheld and a reassessment of the qualification(s) is provided. This reassessment should then be communicated clearly to the applicant, and will be used to verify data held by UK NARIC.

### [Step 2]

If an individual remains dissatisfied with the information that has been provided following a reassessment request, the case will be passed on to a manager for further consideration. A written response will then be provided to the individual by a senior member of staff.

There are a number of different potential outcomes to this second re-examination:

- **Original Decision Upheld:** The grounds upon which the request for reassessment has been raised are considered unfounded. The individual is therefore informed that the original guidance is considered accurate and reasons for this outcome are provided.

- **Further Detail Required from the Individual:** The line of argument used by the individual is based upon evidence that has not been provided or insufficiently provided. It is therefore requested that new documentation should be obtained from an authoritative source in the home country.
- **Original Decision Reversed:** The request for reassessment is upheld and a reassessment of the qualification(s) is provided. This reassessment should then be communicated clearly to the applicant, and will be used to verify data held by UK NARIC.

[Step 3]

## Appeals – Appeals Committee

If a case is still unresolved following the reassessment process described above, it may be referred to the Appeals Committee by the Review Group. The Review Group is made up of UK NARIC senior members of staff and meets quarterly, with a mandate to meet more frequently in extraordinary cases. The Appeals Committee, which includes UK NARIC staff and external assessors represents an external source of objective evaluation.

This committee serves the following functions:

- To consider appeals received by UK NARIC and to advise on courses of action to ensure fair recognition.
- To analyse and validate information as a consequence of specific cases.

The Appeals Committee will examine each case referred to it and determine the appropriate course of action, based on their body of knowledge and professional experience. The potential decisions of the Committee fall into three categories:

- **Decision to amend assessment:** the case for adjusting the level of the award relative to the UK education system is agreed upon unanimously.
- **Decision to undertake further targeted research:** the case remains uncertain, with a number of concerns raised. The NARIC team concerned is then provided with specific points to follow up and present at the following Committee Meeting.
- **Decision to leave assessment unchanged:** the case is not strong enough to merit changes to the existing evaluation.

Please note that the Appeals Committee will only consider cases that remain unresolved following a reassessment request. It is possible that a case will be referred back to the relevant member of staff to provide the required response before being considered further by the Appeals Committee if necessary.

Please note that that the decision of the Appeals Committee is final and UK NARIC is unable to consider any further correspondence once this decision has been made.

For any further information regarding the appeals procedures set out above please contact the Review Group.

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**FLOW CHART**

