RECOMMENDATIONS

on the Recognition of Foreign Higher Education Qualifications

Acquired through Joint Programmes
Pursuant to Article 45, Paragraph 1, Subparagraph 7, of the Framework Law on Higher Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Official Gazette of BiH, Nos. 59/07, 59/09), Director of the Centre for Information and Recognition of Qualifications in Higher Education (hereinafter CIP), hereby issues the following:

RECOMMENDATIONS

on the Recognition of Foreign Higher Education Qualifications Acquired through Joint Programmes

I. INTRODUCTORY PROVISIONS

Recommendations on the Recognition of Foreign Higher Education Qualifications Acquired through Joint Programmes (hereinafter the Recommendations), have been made in order to improve the overall academic and professional mobility and facilitate and improve the process of recognition of foreign higher education qualifications in Bosnia-Herzegovina through developing good practices of recognising foreign higher education qualifications acquired through joint programmes, as well as through promoting and introducing modern standards in recognition of foreign higher education qualifications in Bosnia-Herzegovina by the competent authorities of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

II. SCOPE OF APPLICATION

These Recommendations contain principles and guidelines that should be followed by all recognition authorities in Bosnia-Herzegovina while carrying out their policies and procedures for the recognition of foreign higher education qualifications acquired through joint programmes. Those authorities are: the Ministry of Education and Culture of Republic of Srpska, cantonal ministries of education in the Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Department of Education of the Government of the Brčko District of Bosnia-Herzegovina, as well as the professional bodies of the higher education institutions in Bosnia-Herzegovina defined by their statutes.

Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region – Lisbon Recognition Convention (Official Gazette of BiH – International Treaties, No. 16/03), and its subsidiary texts, and they primarily apply to the recognition of qualifications issued by countries that signed the Lisbon Convention.

Principles and guidelines from these Recommendations can also apply to the recognition of qualifications issued in other countries, those that are not signatories of the Lisbon Convention.

III. TERMS

Terms used in these Recommendations have meanings given to them by the provisions of the Lisbon Convention.

In order to clearly and comprehensively define the terms related to joint degrees, these Recommendations particularly define the following terms.

Degree is any diploma or another document issued by a competent authority that confirms successful completion of a higher education programme.
Joint programme is a programme set up, coordinated and jointly offered by at least two higher education institutions, which results in a double, multiple, or dual degree.

Joint degree is a higher education qualification in the form of one document awarded by at least two higher education institutions involved in a joint programme, which confirms a successful completion of such programme.

Multiple degree means separate degrees awarded by higher education institutions that offer a joint programme, which confirms a successful completion of such programme.

Double degree is a special type of multiple degree. Those are two degrees awarded by higher education institutions that offer a joint programme, which confirms a successful completion of such programme.

Dual degree means two degrees awarded separately and confirm successful completion of two separate curricula with potential overlapping. If more than one institution is involved, each one is primarily responsible for its own degree. Dual degree is not awarded for a joint programme.

Education institution awarding a qualification is a higher education institution awarding qualifications, that is, degrees, diplomas, or other credentials. In case of joint degrees, education institution awarding a qualification is one of two or several institutions involved in the process of awarding a joint degree, and therefore officially recognising achievements of a student attending a joint programme.

Consortium (of a joint programme) is a group of two or more higher education institutions and other associates (e.g. research centres) whose goal is to integrate the teaching and learning activities in providing a joint programme, although not all participants necessarily need to award (joint) degree.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

Competent authorities in Bosnia-Herzegovina are recommended to:

1. Enable recognition of higher education qualifications acquired through joint programmes;

2. Recognise foreign higher education qualifications acquired through joint programmes unless significant differences are found to exist between the qualifications whose recognition is sought and the comparable qualifications within the higher education systems of Bosnia-Herzegovina;

3. When developing procedures for recognition of foreign higher education qualifications acquired through joint programmes, to use recommendations, opinions, assistance, and experience provided by CIP;

4. If higher education institutions in BiH are involved in a joint programme and/or awarding of a joint degree, to carry out the procedure of recognition of those qualifications with the greatest possible flexibility;

5. When evaluating the qualification awarded to joint programmes, to check the following:
   - Whether all institutions involved in the joint programme are recognised and/or accredited in their systems of origin;
• Whether a joint programme is recognised by all higher education institutions participating in the programme, that is, those on which a student actually studied;
• If a joint programme is being carried out in a limited number of institutions, and a joint degree was awarded on behalf of a larger consortium, credential evaluators are recommended to check the following:
  - Are all members of the consortium appropriately recognised/accredited higher education institutions;
  - Was at least assessment of the quality (of the programme) of the institutions in which a student studies made.
• What are the regulations on joint programmes and joint degrees in the countries involved in a joint programme/awarding a joint degree;
• Was the joint degree awarded in accordance with all the legal frameworks of the education institution awarding the qualification;
• Is the joint degree signed by the competent bodies of the institution(s) awarding the qualification.

6. In case that a joint degree was awarded with a national qualification, or several national qualifications were awarded, all of those qualifications are evaluated as one credential of joint qualification.

V. FINAL PROVISIONS

These Recommendations will enter into force on the eighth day from the day of publishing in the Official Gazette of BiH.

Ref.no. 03-33-1-1211/15

Mostar, 1st October 2015

DIRECTOR

Professor Borko Sorajić, Ph.D.

in his own hand