



---

## Recognition of Foreign Qualifications – Procedure

### 1. Context:

As Ireland's oldest and highest-ranking university, Trinity strives to educate global citizens who will shape the world's future through research impact, global mobility opportunities, cultural exchange and international collaborations. The University aims for the highest standards of quality in all its admission related activities.

Applications for admission to Trinity are processed in adherence to the [European Standard Guidelines](#), and the [Lisbon Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications](#).

### 2. Purpose:

The purpose of the Recognition of Foreign Qualification Procedure is to ensure that applicants presenting foreign qualifications for admission are assessed in a transparent, equitable and timely manner, as required under the European Standard Guidelines and the Lisbon Recognition Convention.

### 3. Definition:

For the purposes of this procedure, foreign qualifications are any qualification (second level, further and higher education) presented for admission obtained outside the State.

### 4. Scope:

The procedure spans both undergraduate and postgraduate applications for admission.

### 5. Procedure:

#### 1. Undergraduate CAO Applications (EU/EFTA/UK applicants):

- 1.1 The majority of undergraduate applicants who qualify for EU fee status are admitted centrally through the [Central Applications Office \(CAO\)](#). Recognition of EU/EFTA/UK qualifications is therefore implemented at a sectoral level.
- 1.2 Trinity is a member of a national EU Qualifications Group from the participating CAO institutions. This expert group publishes a document annually, ratified by the IUA Registrars Group, that details the [entry requirements criteria for EU/EFTA/UK applicants](#), with each institution assigned responsibility for a number of EU/EFTA countries. The document sets out the framework for equivalencies of EU/EFTA qualifications for entry to undergraduate degree programmes in Irish universities. Trinity will adhere to these equivalencies and related policies except where different equivalencies have been specifically approved by Council.
- 1.3 The annual publication is based on a combination of information available from:
  - i. international qualification recognition databases (i.e. NARIC Ireland, the ENIC-NARIC



Networks, ECCTIS (formerly UK NARIC) and other resources as required),

- ii. historical admissions standards data for entry, and
  - iii. examination performance statistics where available.
- 1.4 Where a qualification is not published by the EU Qualifications Group, requests for recognition of a qualification can come:
- i. from individual applicants to the HEI directly, or
  - ii. if an institution/HEI becomes aware of changes in the educational system of a particular country.
- 1.5 The request or notification of change is subsequently sent to the Admissions Officer of the institution/HEI within the EU Qualifications Group who has responsibility for that country.
- 1.6 The request for recognition or proposed change will be researched and brought to the EU Qualifications Group for discussion and recommendations.
- 1.7 The applicants are notified of the outcome and revisions to the annual list are made.

## **2. Undergraduate Non-EU (Direct) Applications:**

- 2.1 The Academic Registry has delegated responsibility for the assessment of Direct Applications to the University from the Senior Lecturer / Dean of Undergraduate Studies (the Academic Officer with direct responsibility for undergraduate admissions).
- 2.2 Applications are made direct to the University, and all applications are assessed in accordance with the published admissions criteria. Details of admission requirements per country are published on the Trinity website ([www.tcd.ie/study/undergraduate/](http://www.tcd.ie/study/undergraduate/)).
- 2.3 Applicants must, at the point of application, authorise Trinity to verify their prior qualifications with the institution(s) they attended.
- 2.4 Trinity provides specialised admissions training for Admissions staff in the Academic Registry responsible for reviewing and processing applications to Trinity College Dublin, including the use NARIC databases (Ireland, others as required, as well as ECCTIS, formerly UK NARIC) to compare foreign qualifications against the published admission criteria, and validating the authenticity of applications.
- 2.5 For undergraduate direct admissions, recommendations for any changes to the recognition of foreign qualifications are submitted to the Senior Lecturer / Dean of Undergraduate Studies for consideration (the Academic Officer with direct responsibility for undergraduate admissions) who submits them to the Undergraduate Studies Committee and University Council for final approval.
- 2.6 Where an application is submitted that is based on qualifications for which Trinity does not have agreed criteria, the Head of Admissions will make a determination on the eligibility and competitiveness of the application in line with existing Trinity admissions criteria based on documentation provided by the applicant and drawing from NARIC Ireland, the ENIC-NARIC Networks, ECCTIS (formerly UK NARIC) and other resources as required.



### **3. Postgraduate Applications:**

- 3.1 The Academic Registry has delegated responsibility for administering and quality assuring academically assessed postgraduate applications to the University from the Dean of Graduate Studies (the Academic Officer with direct responsibility for postgraduate admissions).
- 3.2 Application is made direct to the University, and all applications are assessed in accordance with the published admissions criteria.
- 3.3 Applicants must, at the point of application, authorise Trinity to verify their prior qualifications with the institution(s) they attended.
- 3.4 Applications are initially assessed by members of the academic community, usually course Directors/Co-ordinators, for academic suitability to a programme.
- 3.5 Subsequently, academic recommendations are submitted to the Academic Registry for quality assurance ensuring that offers are made to applicants that meet the entry requirements for that programme, and validating the authenticity of applications.
- 3.6 The assessment of postgraduate applications includes the use of NARIC Ireland, the ENIC-NARIC Networks, ECCTIS (formerly UK NARIC) UK and other resources as required to compare foreign qualifications against the published admission criteria.
- 3.7 For postgraduate admissions, recommendations for any changes to the recognition of foreign qualifications are submitted to the Dean of Graduate Studies for consideration (the Academic Officer with direct responsibility for postgraduate admissions) who submits them to the Graduate Studies Committee and University Council for final approval.

### **4. Quality Assurance**

- 4.1 Trinity's Recognition of Foreign Qualifications procedures are quality assured at a sectoral level through its membership of the IUA Admissions Officers Group and observance of sectoral benchmarking criteria for EU/EFTA applicants and reference to NARIC databases.
- 4.2 Turnaround times for all EU and non-EU applications are actively monitored and reported and a KPI report is published on a monthly basis (<https://www.tcd.ie/academicregistry/service-reporting>).
- 4.3 Outcomes of application and admission data for all cohorts of students are reported annually in the Academic Registry's Annual Report and inform the Annual Reports of the Academic Officers including the Senior Lecturer's Annual Report, the Dean of Graduate Studies' Annual Report.



## **5. Appeals**

- 5.1 An applicant can appeal a decision where the qualification they are presenting for admissions purposes is not recognized by the University.
- 5.2 The appeal should be submitted to the Head of Admissions in the first instance, except in relation to decisions made under the provision of 2.6 above, in which case the appeal should be made to the Senior Lecturer / Dean of Undergraduate Studies or the Dean of Graduate Studies, whichever is appropriate.
- 5.3 The outcome of an appeal to the Head of Admissions can be escalated, if required, to the Senior Lecturer / Dean of Undergraduate Studies or the Dean of Graduate Studies, whichever is appropriate. (Ref. [Admissions Appeal Process](#)).
- 5.4 Applications from students who are refugees, asylum seekers, or who, for similar reasons, do not have access to formal academic documentation, will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

## **6. Responsibility**

The Senior Lecturer/Dean of Undergraduate Studies and the Dean of Graduate Studies, as appropriate, are responsible for the oversight of this Procedure.

## **7. Related Documents**

- 7.1. [Admission & Transfer Policy](#)
- 7.2. [Recognition of Prior Learning Policy](#)
- 7.3. [FAIR Report](#)
- 7.4. [NARIC Ireland Foreign Qualifications website](#)
- 7.5. [QQI Policy and Criteria for Facilitating the Academic Recognition of Foreign Qualifications \(June 2015\)](#)
- 7.6. [EAR HEI Manual: The European Recognition Manual for Higher Education Institutions](#)

## **8. Document Control**

The Admissions Officer is responsible for document control of this procedure.

- 8.1 Approved by: University Council
- 8.2 Date of initial approval: May 2020
- 8.3 Date revised policy approved: 16 April 2025
- 8.4 Date policy effective from: 29 August 2025
- 8.5 Date of next review: Academic Year 2027/2028