Recognition in the Digital Age: Opportunities & Challenges

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Katrien Bardoel & Jenneke Lokhoff
Team International Recognition

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How does digitization drive the way foreign qualifications are recognized?

Two angles:

1. Catalyst for flexible, online forms of learning
2. Impact of digitization on the credential evaluation process

Q&A
First: Recognition of foreign qualifications?

✓ Academic recognition for access to work or further study

✓ Qualifications, not so much periods of study (credit mobility)

✓ Lisbon Recognition Convention
  • International binding Treaty
  • Applies to signatory countries and HEIs
  • In all EHEA countries (!)
  • Recognize a qualification unless there is a substantial difference
Angle I
Catalyst for flexible, online forms of learning
MOOC certificates are starting to hit our desks!
Developments pushed by digitization

• (Collection of) MOOCs instead of coherent study programme
• MOOC providers outside formal HE
• Unbundling of content development, assessment and certification

➢ Flexibility supports LLL and inclusion
➢ Consequences for recognition
Erasmus+

2016 – 2018 New paradigms in recognition (PARADIGMS) project

Co-funded by EC, in collaboration with partners from the Enic-Naric networks
Three scenarios for Evaluation of MOOCs

1. MOOCs as part of a degree programme
   No problem

2. (a collection of) MOOCs as separate modules
   Collection of credits is not a degree (EAR HEI manual)

3. MOOCs in addition to a traditional qualification
   May add learning outcomes in case of deficiencies
Criteria for Evaluation of MOOCs

1. Quality of the study programme
2. Level of the study programme
3. Learning outcomes
4. Workload
5. Verification of the certificate
6. The way study results are tested
7. Identification of the participant

Starting point: EAR HEI manual
Test phase – using the traffic light model

NARIC test team:

➢ Able to find most of the relevant info, but it takes a long time
➢ Flexible in awarding ‘green lights’
➢ Legal mandate does not always permit evaluation of MOOCs
Recommendations

• Balance the added value of assessing a MOOC against the time needed;
• Make an inventory of MOOCs / MOOC providers that are trustworthy and of high quality.

Next phase e-VALUATE: collaboration with HEI.
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Angle II
Digitization of the recognition process?

✓ Some scenario’s
✓ Opportunities
✓ Challenges
✓ Solutions
✓ DigiRec
Scenario 1

Electronic student data drives credential evaluation out of existence

- Trusted source
  - Electronic qualification
    - NQF level
    - Accreditation
    - # of ECTS
    - Field of study

Electronic qualification

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- Accreditation
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Selection/admission
Scenario 2

Electronic student data drives credential evaluators crazy!
Scenario 3

Electronic student data drives recognition (and the other way around)
Opportunities

✓ Faster procedures
✓ More consistent procedures (streamlining!)
✓ Automatic recognition on system level
✓ Applicant friendly (ie convenience, ownership, portability)
✓ Fraud prevention
✓ Environment
✓ Security
✓ Control
✓ Cost-efficiënt
Good news for mobility in the EHEA!

Right?
Challenges

✓ Very diverse developments and different actors
✓ Standards & Infrastructure
✓ Privacy laws
✓ Requirements in the national legislation (only paper docs are accepted)
✓ Public access to data / fees
✓ Archiving
✓ Trusted source
Solutions?

✓ Diversity of technologies, initiatives, countries, but...

✓ Infrastructure for cooperation: EHEA, ie ENIC-NARIC networks
DigiRec project

Main Outcome
A White Paper on the link between recognition and the use of electronic student data

Funding and duration
✓ European Commission Erasmus+ Key Action 3, NARIC call
✓ March 2018 – March 2020

Partners
NARICs of: France, Italy, Poland, Sweden and The Netherlands (coordinator), ENIC Canada, President ENIC Bureau, President LRCC, EMREX, GDN
General findings desk research (1)

✓ mostly paper-based: 55%
✓ scanned documents uploaded by applicant: 40%
✓ evaluations produced via database: 45%
✓ evaluations issued in electronic format: 20%
Majority of paper-based ENIC-NARIC offices are attempting to digitize;

A few centres issue digital evaluations, using different technologies (secure PDF, blockchain).
DigiRec: questions for White Paper

✓ How can digital solutions support fair recognition in the various stages of the credential evaluation process?
✓ What are the advantages for your office?
✓ What are obstacles?
✓ Acceptance by your stakeholders/clients?
Thank you for your attention!

Questions?

Jenneke Lokhoff: jlokhoff@nuffic.nl

Katrien Bardoel: kbardoel@nuffic.nl