



# PRINCIPLES AND PROCEDURES ON RECOGNITION AND QUALITY ASSURANCE OF PRIOR LEARNING

## SECTION ONE

### Purpose, Scope, Legal Basis and Definitions

#### Purpose and scope

**ARTICLE 1** - (1) The purpose of these working principles and procedures is to set forth the principles and procedures for the recognition and quality assurance of prior learning.

#### Legal Basis

**ARTICLE 2** - (1) The principles and procedures rely on Article 255 of the Presidential Decree no. 4 and Article 8 of the 'Regulation on Principles and Procedures for Implementation of Turkish Qualifications Framework', which entered into force upon being published in the Official Gazette no. 29537 dated 19.11.2015.

#### Definitions

**ARTICLE 3** - (1) For the implementation of these principles and procedures;

- a) Framework shall refer to the Turkish Qualifications Framework,
- b) Department shall refer to the Turkish Qualifications Framework Department,
- c) Validation shall refer to the review, improvement, and approval actions by experts of the subject matter that include the phases of identification, documentation, assessment, and certification in order to document a candidate's prior learning,
- ç) Quality assurance shall refer to the activities of planning, implementation, evaluation, reporting and quality improvement that enable the qualifications to meet the pre-defined quality standards and criteria,
- d) Coordination Council shall refer to the Turkish Qualifications Framework Coordination Council,
- e) Council shall refer to the Turkish Qualifications Framework Council,
- f) Authority shall refer to the Vocational Qualifications Authority,
- g) Learning outcome shall refer to the knowledge, skills and competences acquired by an individual after the completion of any learning process,
- ğ) Recognition of prior learning shall refer to recognition of a candidate's credits or learning outcomes acquired through formal, non-formal, and informal learning in order for



that individual to be awarded with a qualification or be exempted from a portion of an education program,

h) Responsible Body shall refer to public bodies that issue legal instruments and undertake acts and coordination activities regarding the identification, definition and implementation of qualifications in the education and training system,

i) Turkish Qualifications Framework shall refer to the national qualifications framework, which is designed in line with the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and indicates the principles for the qualifications obtained through vocational, formal and academic education and training programs, including in elementary, secondary and higher education, and through other means of learning,

i) Turkish Qualifications Data Base shall refer to the data base aligned to Turkish Qualifications Framework where all qualifications are defined according to the learning outcomes approach.

j) Qualification shall refer to official documents, such as diplomas, certificates and vocational qualification certificates issued by responsible bodies after recognizing that the individual achieved the learning outcomes based on certain criteria at the end of an evaluation and validation process,

k) Qualifications forms shall refer to document in which the general information related to the qualification as the objective, learning outcomes, level, assessment and evaluation methods, entry and achievement requirements, and progression routes are defined,

l) Qualification type shall refer to groups of qualifications in which qualifications are classified at the same level of Turkish Qualifications Framework that are similar in terms of their functions, learning outcomes, credit values or orientations,

## **SECTION TWO**

### **Duties, Authorities and Responsibilities regarding Recognition of Prior Learning**

#### **Duties, Authorities and Responsibilities**

**ARTICLE 4 - (1)** The responsible bodies are tasked with ensuring the implementation of the process for recognition of prior learning is in line with Article 12 of these principles and procedures and is continuously conducted following the phases defined in Article 6 and also with providing requested information and forms. Responsible body informs the Authority if there is an update in their procedure for recognition of prior learning.



(2) The Authority is responsible for reviewing the procedures submitted by responsible bodies and carrying out necessary acts and actions to submit those procedures to the Council and the Coordination Council.

(3) The Council is responsible for assessing the responsible bodies' procedures and providing guidance.

(4) The Coordination Council is responsible for approving the responsible bodies' procedures for recognition of prior learning following the presentations from the bodies and also considering the recommendations of the Council.

### **Responsible Bodies**

**ARTICLE 5** - (1) The responsible bodies within the scope of these principles and procedures are:

- a) Ministry of National Education for education and training qualifications under the responsibility of Ministry of National Education,
- b) Higher education institutions, upon approval from Council of Higher Education, for education and training qualifications under the responsibility of higher education institutions,
- c) The Authority for the vocational qualifications under the responsibility of Vocational Qualification Authority,
- ç) The bodies and institutions defined in the relevant legislation or international conventions for other qualifications.

(2) The authority decides which responsible bodies shall be included within the scope of paragraph 1, clause (ç).

## **SECTION THREE**

### **Components of Recognition and Quality Assurance of Prior Learning**

#### **Recognition of prior learning phases**

**ARTICLE 6** - (1) The procedures for recognition of prior learning shall include the following phases;

- a) Identification
- b) Documentation
- c) Assessment
- ç) Certification

#### **Identification**

**ARTICLE 7** - (1) In the identification phase, the candidates' knowledge, skills, and competences to be assessed for recognition are selected. The candidates become aware of their past achievements.



(2) This phase could be assisted with standardized information processing technologies that allow self-assessment, however, this process requires interviews by consultants and counselors where they engage in dialogue with the candidates and direct them to proper options and tools.

(3) At this stage the individual should be briefed about the cost and benefits of the validation process comparing it to further education and training.

(4) If the individual prefers validation, then the proper method should be chosen for it.

### **Documentation**

**ARTICLE 8 - (1)** In the documentation phase, evidence about the learning outcomes selected during the identification phase is presented.

(2) At this stage, a file containing the resume and career background of the individual is prepared.

(3) This file may also contain miscellaneous documents and product samples proving the learning outcomes of the individual.

(4) Validation practices should be open to different types of evidence from written documents to product samples and examples of practices, and the evidence should give an idea about the learning outcomes achieved.

(5) Listing previous tasks or positions is not sufficient evidence for learning outcomes.

### **Assessment**

**ARTICLE 9 - (1)** Assessment is a method to measure a candidate's learning outcomes against certain references and/or standards.

(2) Therefore, written and documented evidence as well as other proofs may be taken into account during assessment.

(3) At this stage, assessment tools and processes should be as transparent as possible to ensure the reliability of recognition.

(4) Mutual trust depends on robust quality assurance packages that make all phases of the validation process, including assessment, open to critical review and inspection.

(5) For quality assurance, standards based on learning outcomes should be used.

(6) In an assessment phase that focuses on learning outcomes, the focus is on what the individual knows, understands and is able to do instead of such inputs as the place and time of the learning.



(7) The validation methodology requires different assessment tools, such as written exams and practical applications, to be used together since learning outcomes are unique.

### **Certification**

**ARTICLE 10 - (1)** This phase is the certification of learning outcomes that are identified, documented and assessed.

(2) To finalize the certification phase, a final assessment of the results should be made to officially confirm that learning outcomes have been achieved.

(3) This final assessment could be used to decide whether a candidate should be awarded with a qualification, should be qualified to take an exam or training that would result being awarded with a qualification, or should be exempted from some credits or program conditions required for being awarded with a qualification.

(4) If the final decision is that the candidate has not achieved any learning outcomes, this decision is notified in writing to the candidate with justifications.

(5) The same qualifications should be awarded for all types of learning as much as possible. Different documents could be awarded to document the candidate's learning outcomes if it is not possible to award the qualification in full.

### **Quality Assurance**

**ARTICLE 11 - (1)** The quality assurance of qualifications to be revised within the scope of recognition of prior learning shall be conducted in line with Quality Assurance Regulation.

(2) The assessment of qualifications' quality assurance shall be based on quality assurance paper submitted to the Council by the responsible bodies.

### **Principles for recognition of prior learning**

**ARTICLE 12 - (1)** The phases of recognition of prior learning are carried out by the responsible bodies in line with the criteria below;

- a) The necessary phases for recognition of prior learning are secured legally.
- b) The individuals and units in charge of all actions to be implemented in this process are clearly defined.
- c) Relevant units are allocated with appropriate resources for the phases to be carried out.
- ç) Qualifications are defined with learning outcomes and appropriate assessment methods are used.
- d) Minimum levels of learning outcomes necessary for validation are defined for each qualification.



- e) Quality assurance of qualifications to be revised within the scope of recognition of prior learning is ensured in line with the Quality Assurance Regulation.
- f) All certifications carried out within the scope of recognition of prior learning are ensured to be connected to the Framework and an appropriate level is assigned.
- g) Support and guidance services are provided for the candidates during all phases of the process.

## **SECTION FOUR**

### **Review, Publication and Approval of Recognition of Prior Learning Procedures**

#### **Review of Recognition of Prior Learning Procedures**

**ARTICLE 13 -** (1) The responsible bodies prepare a guide for the procedures for the recognition of prior learning and submit it to the Authority.

(2) The department reviews the guide to ensure it includes all the phases and criteria specified in the principles and procedures. If that is the case, the guide is submitted to the Council.

(3) The guide is finalised with the recommendations from the Council members.

#### **Publication of Recognition of Prior Learning Procedures**

**ARTICLE 14 -** (1) The finalised guide is published on TQF website and on all communication channels of the responsible body.

(2) The responsible body and the department cooperate to organise briefings and trainings for all units of the responsible body on the implementation of the guide and the recognition of prior learning.

#### **Approval of the Guide by the Coordination Council**

**ARTICLE 15 -** (1) The guide is deemed as approved by the Council if there are no objections made to responsible body's application.

(2) If one fifth of the total number of Council members make objections, the guide is submitted to the Coordination Council for final decision.

(3) The responsible body gets notified by the department about the Coordination Council's final decision in 15 days from the date of decision. The decision is announced on the website.



## **SECTION FIVE**

### **Miscellaneous and Final Provisions**

#### **Updating the Recognition of Prior Learning Procedures**

**ARTICLE 16 - (1)** In case of an update to the procedures announced through the Council or the Coordination Council, the responsible body sends the updated guide to the department for it to be discussed at a Council meeting.

#### **Appeals and complaints**

**ARTICLE 17 - (1)** “Principles and procedures for appeals against decisions on the implementation of Turkish Qualifications Framework” shall be used for appeals and complaints against decisions and actions within the scope of these principles and procedures.

#### **Enforcement**

**ARTICLE 18 - (1)** This Regulation shall come into force with the approval of the Coordination Council.

#### **Execution**

**ARTICLE 19 - (1)** The President of the Authority shall enforce the provisions related to this Regulation upon approval by the Coordination Council.