



University Recognition Guidance Service

(Servei d'Acompanyament al Reconeixement Universitari-SARU)

The University Recognition Guidance Service (Servei d'Acompanyament al Reconeixement Universitari, SARU) delivers personalised information and support to service users in gaining recognition of foreign university qualifications to ensure they are valid in Spain. It also advises people who go abroad on the procedures required to accredit or authenticate qualifications awarded in our country.

The competent authority in Spain for deciding on applications for accreditation of foreign qualifications as the same as Spanish qualifications giving access to a regulated profession or statements of equivalence is the Sub-directorate General for Qualifications and Coordination of the European Directive on the Recognition of Qualifications and the Organisation of University Education and Teaching Staff in the Ministry of Universities of the Spanish Government (Subdirección General de Títulos y Coordinación de la Directiva Europea de Reconocimiento de Cualificaciones y de Ordenación de Enseñanzas Universitarias y Profesorado, adscrita al Ministerio de Universidades del Gobierno de España).

What does it provide?

The University Recognition Guidance Service (Servei d'Acompanyament al Reconeixement Universitari, SARU) provides:

- Advice on how to process recognition of foreign university qualifications and support during the process of accrediting equivalence of studies.
- Guidance on the recommended academic pathways to complete studies to gain university recognition and improve an academic record.
- Information and referral to organisations competent in accreditation and authentication procedures for university degrees to ensure they are valid abroad.

Who can use it?

- People living in Catalonia who have a university qualification from a foreign university.
- People living in Catalonia who have a university qualification and would like to study or work abroad.

If you work for the government or a social organisation and you need:

- A briefing for your technicians; please email saru@gencat.cat.
- More specific information or advice and need to make an appointment; please go [here](#).

Information about recognition of European university qualifications

Recognition of qualifications makes it possible to gain **authorisation to pursue a profession in the host country**. The **effects of this recognition are exclusively professional**. It applies to university graduates with qualifications awarded:

- In European Union Member States.
- In European Economic Area signatory states.
- In Switzerland under a bilateral agreement with the EU.

The competent authorities vary from one profession to another. The Ministry of Universities (Ministerio de Universidades) through the Sub-directorate General for Qualifications and Coordination of the European Directive on the Recognition of Qualifications and the Organisation of University Education and Teaching Staff (Subdirección General de Títulos y Coordinación de la Directiva Europea de Reconocimiento de Cualificaciones y de Ordenación de Enseñanzas Universitarias y Profesorado, adscrita al Ministerio de Universidades del Gobierno de España) coordinates in Spain the application of Directive 2005/36/EC on the recognition of professional qualifications.

For more information and to get the official application forms, please visit the [Ministry of Universities website](#).

Information about recognition of Spanish qualifications abroad

SARU provides information and advice on the procedures for accreditation and authentication of university qualifications which have been gained or recognised in Spain to ensure they are valid abroad.

Accreditation of Spanish qualifications for the professions regulated by Directive 2005/36/EC is essential to obtain professional recognition in another European Union or European Economic Area country for the purposes of pursuing the profession in these countries.

Authentication of official university academic documents to ensure they are valid abroad is an agreed international process which first requires recognition of signatures by the corresponding Spanish authorities. This is the procedure prior to the authentication process which is conducted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation (Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores, Unión Europea y Cooperación) and where needed the Ministry of Justice (Ministerio de Justicia).

FAQs

I have university qualifications from another country and now live in Catalonia. I'm looking for a job and businesses are telling me that one condition for hiring me is that I have to have my qualifications recognised

The first thing to do is to check the Annex to [Royal Decree 889/2022](#) to find out whether your qualifications give you access to a regulated profession in Spain.

- If your profession is regulated, you can apply for accreditation once you've confirmed you can prove you meet the requirements set out in the order regulating the profession concerned (such as competences and minimum curriculum content).
- If it isn't regulated, you'll have to apply for equivalence.
- If it is regulated and you've studied or pursued it in a European Union country, you can apply for professional recognition if you've been admitted to the profession and have experience in the sector.

What's the difference between accreditation, equivalence and professional recognition?

- Accreditation is only required to pursue regulated professions (see the Annex to [Royal Decree 889/2022](#)). A favourable decision recognises the academic level of the undergraduate or master's degree in Spain and also enables its holder to pursue the profession.
- Equivalence is applied for only when the academic level of an undergraduate or master's degree has to be gained or when the studies completed do not give access to a regulated profession.
- Professional recognition is authorisation to work in a regulated profession in the host country and also in the country where the qualifications were earned. Professionals who would like to work and do not need the academic level to continue studying here apply for it. It is essential to have previous work experience in the sector.

Which organisations should I contact to do the procedures?

- If your qualification is from a university and the official length of the study programme is three years or more, you can apply to the [Ministry of Universities \(Ministerio de Universidades\)](#) for recognition or equivalence.
- If the study programme for the qualification you'd like to have recognised has an official length of less than three years or it is not a university programme, you should apply to the Catalan Government's Ministry of Education (Departament d'Educació) to have it recognised.

I'm looking for a job. I've gone to the Public Employment Service of Catalonia (Servei Públic d'Ocupació de Catalunya, SOC) and they've told me I have to apply for recognition of my qualifications since otherwise my academic level will not be registered in their database

That's right; your academic level will not appear in official records until you get academic recognition of equivalence of your studies in the host country.

I'd like to get recognition of equivalence of my university qualifications to continue studying in Catalonia as I'd like to take a master's degree. What do I have to do?

You need to get recognition of the equivalence of your study programme before enrolling in the master's degree when this is a prerequisite.

I've studied in the European Union. My qualification gives me access to a regulated profession but I don't know whether I need to apply for accreditation or whether professional recognition is enough

It depends on whether you only need professional authorisation or whether you also need to have your academic level recognised as equivalent. Recognition means you can pursue the profession but does not give you the academic level of an undergraduate or master's degree in Spain.

I have qualifications which don't give me access to a regulated profession. Can I apply for equivalence with an undergraduate or master's degree if I have both levels?

You can apply for equivalence with an undergraduate or master's degree but not directly for a master's degree if you have not previously applied for the undergraduate degree. You can also apply for both at the same time if you already have all the documents.

What do I have to do to authenticate the documents?

It depends on the country where you earned the qualification:

- If it was in the European Union or the European Economic Area, you don't have to get them authenticated.
- If it was not in the European Union or the European Economic Area and the country is a signatory to the Hague Convention, you will need to get an apostille for them.
- If the country is not a signatory to the Hague Convention, you will need to get them authenticated through diplomatic channels.

How do I get a Hague apostille?

In the case of countries which are Hague Convention signatories, you need to find out which body is competent in your country to apostille the documents.

What is the procedure for authentication through diplomatic channels?

If you've studied in a country which is not a signatory to the Hague Convention, you have to submit the original documents successively to the ministry of universities and the ministry of foreign affairs of the country where they were issued and then to the Spanish embassy or consulate in the country where they were issued.

Where can I find an official translator?

At the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation.

I'm in a regulated profession in Spain and I'd like to go and work elsewhere in the European Union (EU). How do I draw up my academic documents to ensure they are valid in an EU country?

You have to ask for accreditation of your undergraduate or master's degree in Spain to confirm its validity and to apply for recognition in another EU country.

I began the procedure in another Spanish region or country and now I don't know what I should do

It's essential to have your updated address on file. You can do this at the electronic office.

You can update and ask about the status of your file in the Ministry of Universities' electronic office.

I applied for recognition a long time ago and was granted it on the condition that I completed a number of subjects. Due to various reasons, I was unable to pass them within the deadline set by the Ministry of Universities. What can I do?

Recognition conditional on taking subjects or exams is a final decision. They have to be completed within the deadline set by the Ministry of Universities (Ministerio de Universidades). If this recognition has expired, your only option is to apply to the university concerned for a continuation of your studies in order to earn a university degree in Spain.

My qualification was awarded by a UK university and I'd like to apply for recognition or equivalence; does Brexit affect me?

Yes, it does. As of 1 November 2021, a Hague Convention apostille will be required on documents for applications for recognition and statement of equivalence of degrees issued by UK universities.

If in doubt, we recommend you visit the Ministry of Universities' electronic office.

Does the authentication or apostille of documents expire?

No. Authentication via diplomatic channels and the apostille do not have an expiry date. However, if the document has an expiry date then its authentication will also have one.

Do I have to pay for the University Recognition Guidance Service (Servei d'Acompanyament al Reconeixement Universitari, SARU) information service?

The SARU advisory service is funded by the Government of Catalonia through the Directorate General for Migration, Refugees and Anti-racism in the Ministry of Equality and Feminisms.

It is provided free of charge.

Do I have to pay to apply for recognition or equivalence?

Yes. To begin and complete an application for recognition or equivalence of foreign higher education qualifications you have to pay a fee to the Ministry of Universities (Ministerio de Universidades). This fee is shown when you start the procedure in the electronic office. Proof of payment of the fee is required to process your application.

Where can I find out about scholarships and grants available for university education in Catalonia?

At the Agency for Management of University and Research Grants (AGAUR) by emailing informacio@agaur.gencat.cat.

How can I start the recognition or equivalence process and submit the documents?

You can see the instructions, requirements and how to submit the documents on the Ministry of Universities (Ministerio de Universidades) website:

- [Applying for recognition](#)
- [Applying for equivalence](#)

How can I ask the Ministry of Universities (Ministerio de Universidades) for information?

You can make an enquiry directly to the Ministry of Universities (Ministerio de Universidades) using the communication channels available at the Ministry of Universities' electronic office.

I've checked the Annex of Royal Decree 889/2022 to find out whether my qualification enables me to pursue a regulated profession but I'm still not sure. Who can tell me what my foreign qualification is equivalent to in Spain?

You can email NARIC (naric@minuniversidades.com), a centre reporting to the Sub-directorate General for Qualifications and Coordination of the European Directive on the Recognition of Qualifications and the Organisation of University Education and Teaching Staff in the Ministry of Universities of the Spanish Government (Subdirección General de Títulos y Coordinación de la Directiva Europea de Reconocimiento de Cualificaciones y de Ordenación de Enseñanzas Universitarias y Profesorado, adscrita al Ministerio de Universidades del Gobierno de España) and which aims to enhance academic recognition of qualifications and periods of study between different countries.

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