

Assessing the Qualifications of Refugees

PRACTICAL WORKSHEET

Developing Organizational Policies
for Assessing the Qualifications of
Refugees



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INTRODUCTION

The practical worksheet is intended to support organizations that are thinking of developing new policies or refining existing policies to assess the qualifications of refugees and those without verifiable documentation. It is a companion to the 13 recommended best practices and guidelines outlined in *Assessing the Qualifications of Refugees – Best Practices and Guidelines – Final Report*.

Eleven considerations, and multiple associated questions, can assist in determining how an alternative procedure for assessing qualifications may be implemented within assessment services and recognition bodies.

Initial considerations consist of:

- I. eligibility for the process;
- II. alternative documents accepted.

Additional considerations that may also be examined consist of:

- III. organizational responsibilities;
- IV. communication to applicants;
- V. fees;
- VI. existing evidence/precedents;
- VII. partial studies;
- VIII. previous studies;
- IX. interviews;
- X. competency-based assessment (for organizations that do not have one for their regular assessment procedures);
- XI. status of the assessment/evaluation report/recognition decision.

This practical worksheet builds on the discussions and presentations that took place at CICIC's November 2016 workshop, *Assessing the Qualifications of Refugees*. It also builds on a pre-conference workshop organized by CICIC at the September 2016 Annual Conference of the Association for International Credential Evaluation Professionals (TAICEP).

CICIC also wishes to recognize the contribution of the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) to the development of this practical worksheet through the sharing of their organization's internal worksheet used for alternative documentation.

INITIAL CONSIDERATIONS



I – Eligibility for the process

- Will the alternative pathway be available:
 - o only to refugees?
 - o only to those from certain countries?
 - o only to those who begin and cannot complete the regular process?
 - o to those who request and document the reasons for which it is needed? or
 - o to anyone who requests and completes it?
- Is the process available to those who have:
 - o no documentary evidence (aside from sworn affidavits)?
 - o partial documentary evidence (e.g., student-issued transcript, professional membership card, statement of professional standing, student ID card, copy of degree certificate)?
 - o documentary evidence (originals or copies) that cannot be verified with the institution?

II – Alternative documents accepted

- Which of the following alternative forms of documentary evidence will be accepted? Which ones are required?
 - o background paper/CV from the applicant — will it have to include:
 - the chronology of studies and work?
 - more specific items listed below under “sworn affidavit by applicant”?
 - o sworn affidavit by applicant — will it have to include:
 - the name, location, and date of birth?
 - the reasons why the applicant cannot use the “regular” process?
 - a description of attempts made to obtain documents?
 - the name and dates of the institution/program attended?
 - the name of the academic credential granted and the date granted?
 - titles, grades, course hours (credits), or other information normally included on a transcript? For all courses, or only for specific ones?
 - other information required (e.g., statements of professional standing), particularly when a credential is required to enter the profession in the issuing country?
 - o sworn affidavit by another individual:
 - is this individual:
 - a non-family member?
 - an official at the institution attended?
 - a student at the institution attended?
 - a previous employer?
 - other?



INITIAL CONSIDERATIONS (cont'd)

- what information has to be included (see above for more specific items listed under “sworn affidavit by applicant”)?
- will affidavits from different individuals be treated differently (e.g., will an affidavit from an official be given more weight than an affidavit from a student)?

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS



III – Organizational responsibilities

- Who is responsible for:
 - developing the organization’s policies and practices?
 - approving these?
 - the process, once initiated?
 - signing off on alternative documents/approaches accepted in individual cases? On the overall assessment/report/outcome?
 - reviewing the policies from time to time (e.g., following up with applicants in a few years to determine whether the process worked as intended)?

IV – Communication to applicants

- Is the information on the alternative approach publicly accessible?
- Is it available in multiple languages?
- Can a potential applicant contact our organization to understand the process and ask questions?
- What tools will be used to communicate the steps in the process, the potential outcomes, the timelines, and other relevant information (e.g., Web site, social media, video, brochure, phone call, face-to-face orientation session)?

V – Fees

- Are the fees clearly communicated?
- Is it possible to:
 - waive (or reduce) the fees? or
 - charge them only to “successful” applicants who complete the process and receive partial or full recognition?

VI – Existing evidence/precedents

- Has our organization assessed academic credentials from this institution in the past?
- Can sample documents issued by this institution be obtained from other organizations that assess academic credentials for comparison purposes?



ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS (cont'd)

VII – Partial studies

- Will our organization accept partial studies?
- Will students with partial studies be given transfer credit?

VIII – Previous studies

- Will previous studies be assumed to be completed? For example, if the student completed:
 - o a master's program, is it assumed that he or she also holds a bachelor's degree? or
 - o year 3 of a program, is it assumed that he or she completed years 1 and 2 and followed the regular program?

IX – Interviews

- When in the process will interviews/face-to-face dialogue be used?
- Will these types of procedures be used to develop the background paper/chronology or to assess competencies?

X – Competency-based assessment (for organizations that do not have one for their regular assessment procedures)

- When (if at all) will a competency-based assessment be used?
- How will this complement an alternative documentation approach?
- Who will be involved in developing and administering the competency-based assessment?

XI – Status of the assessment/evaluation report/recognition decision

- Will the result of this assessment hold the same weight as that of a “regular” assessment?
- Will there be a notation about the types of evidence used in the assessment report?





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