

# **REGULATIONS ON THE HOMOLOGATION OF FOREIGN QUALIFICATIONS**

Agreement no. 48/2011 of the UPC Governing Council, which establishes the Regulations on the Homologation of Foreign Qualifications

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## Introduction

Royal Decree 285/2004 of 20 February, which establishes the conditions for the homologation and validation of foreign higher education qualifications and courses, subsequently amended by Royal Decree 309/2005 of 18 March, addresses the increase in student mobility over the past few years. Under the system designed by this Royal Decree, homologation is the mechanism for establishing equivalency between the education provided by a foreign course and that provided by its Spanish counterpart.

The Royal Decree grants university rectors the authority to homologate qualifications to postgraduate degrees and academic levels, with the exception of master's degrees that qualify graduates to practise a regulated profession, which can only be homologated by the Spanish Ministry of Education.

The current legislation envisages the possibility of homologating any qualification not to a specific university degree but rather to one of the academic levels established in Article 37 of Organic Law 6/2001 of 21 December, on Universities, in order to streamline the process for graduates of foreign education systems who wish to study in Spain.

Therefore, universities can homologate foreign higher education qualifications to any of the following:

- Official master's degrees
- Academic level of master
- Doctoral degrees

At the Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya (UPC), the Academic Management Service is responsible for homologating qualifications to the academic level of master.

This document describes the UPC's procedure for homologating foreign higher education qualifications to the academic level of master and establishes the requirements that homologation applicants must satisfy.

The interested party is responsible for completing the homologation application, and he/she is required to know and respect the conditions set out in these regulations.

As part of the annual approval process, the UPC Governing Council revises these regulations to reflect any changes in statewide regulations or internal criteria.

The remainder of this document is divided into the following sections:

1. Scope of the regulations
2. Application
3. Application processing and decision
4. Homologation certificate

## 1. SCOPE OF THE REGULATIONS

This regulation applies to all applications received by the UPC for the homologation of foreign higher education qualifications to the academic level of master.

## 2. APPLICATION

The procedure begins when the interested party formally submits a homologation application to the rector of the UPC. This application must be accompanied by the following documents:

- a) Document verifying the nationality of the person submitting the application (certified photocopy of national ID card or passport).
- b) Certified photocopy of the qualification to be homologated, or a document certifying that the qualification has been issued.
- c) Certified photocopy of the applicant's transcript for the postgraduate course, which must include the official length of the course (in academic years), the subjects taken, the study load of each subject, and the corresponding qualifications.
- d) Syllabus of each subject, reflecting the content and its scope.
- e) Receipt for the payment of the homologation fee.
- f) Signed statement certifying that the qualification has not previously been homologated in Spain, that the applicant is not concurrently pursuing the homologation of the same qualification at a different university, and that the applicant has not received validation of the coursework corresponding to the qualification in order to continue his/her studies in Spain.
- g) In the event that the applicant has, in fact, applied for and been denied homologation of the qualification at another university, a copy of the decision handed down by that university.

Additionally, the Technical Committee for Homologation, which is responsible for postgraduate courses, may require the applicant to submit any other documents it deems necessary, such as a CV or statement of purpose.

Applicants may not concurrently apply for homologation at more than one university. A foreign qualification that has already been homologated may not be re-submitted for homologation at a different university. Nevertheless, if the applicant is denied homologation at one Spanish university, he/she may begin the application process at a different one.

### 2.1. REQUIRED FEES

The required fees must be paid at the beginning of the application process; a decision will not be issued if they have not been paid. In order for the application procedure to begin, a receipt for fee payment must be submitted.

Each academic year, the Catalan Government sets the fees for academic services provided at Catalan public universities. For the homologation of foreign qualifications, the following two fees are required:

- a) Application processing fee  
Once this fee has been paid, the applicant is given a receipt, which must be attached to the homologation application. The UPC will not process any homologation application without this receipt.

- b) Certificate issuing fee  
If homologation is approved, the applicant must pay this fee in order to receive the homologation certificate. Once this fee has been paid, the applicant is given a receipt and the certificate issuing procedure begins.

## **2.2. REQUIRED DOCUMENTS**

Documents issued in other countries must meet the following requirements:

- a) They must be official, meaning that they were issued by the competent authority in accordance with the country's legislation.
- b) They must be legalised through diplomatic channels and, if appropriate, formalised with a Hague Convention apostille. This requirement does not apply to documents issued by authorities in any member state of the European Union or the European Economic Area.
- c) They must be accompanied by a sworn translation into Spanish or Catalan.

## **2.3. VALIDATION OF THE DOCUMENTS**

If there is any doubt as to the authenticity, validity or content of the submitted documents, the UPC may take the necessary steps to verify them, either by asking the applicant to provide complementary information or by contacting the issuing authority for verification.

## **3. APPLICATION PROCESSING AND DECISION**

### **3.1. CRITERIA FOR HOMOLOGATION TO THE ACADEMIC LEVEL OF MASTER**

In order for a foreign higher education qualification to be homologated to the academic level of master, the following academic criteria will be considered:

- a) Correspondence of the academic level required to be eligible for the course leading to the foreign qualification with that required to be eligible for the academic level of master in Spain.
- b) The course length and study load for the foreign qualification.
- c) Correspondence of the academic level of the course leading to the foreign qualification to the Spanish level of master.

### **3.2. GROUNDS FOR EXCLUSION**

The following will be denied homologation:

- a) Foreign qualifications that lack official academic validity in the country of origin.
- b) Qualifications corresponding to foreign courses taught, totally or partially, in Spain, without the school in question having obtained the necessary authorisation to do so, as well as qualifications for which the corresponding course was not, in fact, being

taught at the foreign university or higher education institution at the time the certificate was issued, in accordance with Article 86 of Organic Law 6/2001 of 21 December, on Universities. Nevertheless, when the aforementioned circumstances affect only one part of a course, the unaffected portion may be eligible for validation.

- c) Qualifications that have already been homologated in Spain, or qualifications for which the corresponding course has already been validated so that the applicant may continue his/her studies in Spain.
- d) Foreign qualifications or courses not directly related to the knowledge imparted in the UPC's courses.

### **3.3. REVIEW OF THE DOCUMENTATION**

The Academic Management Service reviews all of the documentation submitted. If it finds that the application does not satisfy the requirements and/or that any of the required documents is missing, the applicant will be given 10 days to submit the necessary documentation. If the applicant fails to submit the documents within that period, the UPC will deny the application for homologation.

Once the application has been fully submitted (i.e. with all necessary forms and documentation), it is sent to the Technical Committee for Homologation for consideration.

### **3.4. EXAMINATION AND REPORT OF THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE FOR HOMOLOGATION**

The UPC appoints a Technical Committee for Homologation, which examines homologation applications and issues the corresponding reports, taking into account the area of knowledge of the completed coursework. It meets two or three times per year, depending on the number of applications submitted.

The Technical Committee does not analyse applications for which fees or documents are outstanding until this circumstance has been corrected. It may also ask the applicant to provide any additional documents it deems necessary, as established in Section 2 of these regulations.

Once all of the documentation has been validated, the Technical Committee issues a reasoned report either accepting or denying the request for homologation. This report is then sent to the rector, who issues a decision on the homologation application.

### **3.5. CASES IN WHICH NO REPORT IS REQUIRED**

The rector may issue a decision on a homologation application without relying on a Technical Committee report in the following circumstances:

- a) Any of the grounds for exclusion set out in Section 3.2 apply.
- b) The UPC has already reached a homologation decision for a foreign higher education qualification of exactly the same characteristics.

### **3.6. DECISION**

On the basis of the reasoned report by the Technical Committee for Homologation, the rector of the UPC reaches a decision to either approve or deny the request for homologation.

The decision of the rector represents the final resolution of the administrative process. The applicant has one month from the date of notification to lodge an appeal with the rector.

### **4. HOMOLOGATION CERTIFICATE**

Homologation is accredited by means of a bilingual Catalan/Spanish certificate issued by the rector of the UPC using the form provided by the University Coordination Council, on which the name of the foreign qualification appears.

Prior to issuing the certificate, the UPC must notify the office of the Deputy Director General for Degrees, Validations and Homologations at the Spanish Ministry of Education, so that the homologation may be recorded in a specific section of the National Degree Registry.

In accordance with current regulations, homologation grants the foreign qualification the same status as a Spanish qualification or academic level. This status is recognised throughout Spain as of the date on the homologation certificate.

Homologation to the academic level of master does not under any circumstances imply the homologation or recognition of the applicant's foreign undergraduate degree (or equivalent).