

Azerbaijan University

Regulations on Academic Mobility, Credit Transfer and Recognition (Equivalency)

1. General Provisions

This section defines the general framework of the Regulations and determines their scope of application.

1.1. These Regulations govern the organization of academic mobility of students enrolled at Azerbaijan University (hereinafter – the University) at the bachelor’s and master’s levels; the transfer of credits earned at higher education institutions (HEIs) within the country or abroad to the University; and the determination and recognition of course equivalency. The purpose is to facilitate students’ mobility experience and to ensure the integration of the knowledge and skills they have acquired into the University’s educational programs in accordance with the principles of the Bologna Process.

1.2. These Regulations are based on the “Rules for the Organization of Instruction under the Credit System at the Bachelor’s and Master’s Levels of Higher Education Institutions,” approved by Resolution No. 348 of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated 24 December 2013. The Regulations have been developed in compliance with the standards of the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) and apply to all higher education institutions. In addition, these Regulations are guided by the “State Standard and Program for Higher Education,” other relevant resolutions of the Cabinet of Ministers concerning the organization of bachelor’s and master’s education (as referenced in Resolution No. 348), the Lisbon Recognition Convention (an international agreement on the recognition of qualifications concerning higher education in the European region), and the recommendations on its implementation issued by ENIC-NARIC Networks (particularly the fundamental principle of recognition and the rule that refusal is permissible only in cases of a “substantial difference”), as well as the University’s Charter and internal acts.

Furthermore, these Regulations take into account the “Rules for the Transfer, Expulsion, Reinstatement, and Granting of Academic Leave to Students at the Bachelor’s and Master’s Levels of Higher Education Institutions,” approved by Decision No. KQ-02 of the Board of the Ministry of Science and Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated 21 February 2024 (which regulates transfer criteria—such as the requirement to complete at least half of the required credits—and transfers from foreign institutions based on international rankings and examination results).

1.3. These Regulations do not govern the nostrification of diplomas or qualifications (i.e., the official state-level recognition of foreign qualifications); they apply solely to the recognition and equivalency of courses and credits within the framework of the University’s own academic programs.

2. Terms and Definitions

This section explains the key terms used in these Regulations to ensure a common understanding among all parties.

2.1. Credit (ECTS) – A unit of measurement of a student’s workload required to successfully complete a course (including classes, assignments, examinations, etc.). A credit is awarded and may be transferred only upon obtaining a passing grade in the respective course. For example, a

5-credit course corresponds to approximately 125–150 hours of student workload. (Additional provision related to Decision No. KQ-02: In cases of transfer, the credits previously earned by the student shall be taken into account, and a student who has not accumulated at least half of the required credits shall not be eligible for transfer.)

2.2. Academic Mobility – The process whereby a student studies for a specified period (for example, one semester) at another higher education institution (within the country or abroad). Academic mobility enables students to gain international academic experience. (Additional provision related to Decision No. KQ-02: Academic mobility may be carried out in the form of transfer; however, at the master’s level, only a change of institution is permitted. A change of specialization is not allowed, and transfers may take place only during the summer vacation period.)

2.3. Academic Transcript – An official document reflecting the titles of courses taken by the student, the number of credits, grades received, and the relevant study period (semester or academic year). This document is issued by the University either in paper format with an official seal or electronically and serves as the principal evidence in the recognition process. (In the case of transfer, the transcript is essential for credit recognition, and the student’s accumulated score must exceed the minimum admission score required for the relevant field of study.)

2.5. Equivalency – The determination of the correspondence of a course taught at another higher education institution in terms of level (bachelor’s/master’s), credit volume, academic profile (field of specialization), and intended learning outcomes.

3. Authorized Structural Units

3.1. The overall administration of the academic mobility and recognition process at the University is carried out by the structural unit authorized by the Rectorate – the Academic Affairs Department. At the same time, the Academic Affairs Department ensures coordination among other participants (stakeholders) involved in the process, including the structural units referred to in Clause 3.2.

(In the case of student transfers, the Ministry of Science and Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan is also involved, and applications are submitted through the Ministry’s official portal.)

3.2. The functions of the University’s structural units are clearly defined. In particular, the Faculty Dean’s Office exercises overall supervision, while the academic departments jointly conduct expert evaluation of course syllabi and intended learning outcomes, ensuring the implementation of a coordinated process.

4. Establishment of a Special Commission

4.1. The recognition and equivalency of credits are carried out based on the opinion of a Special Commission established within the faculties and approved by the Rector’s order.

4.2. Composition of the Commission: Chairperson – overall supervision; Members – representative of the relevant academic department, academic advisor (tutor); Secretary – a faculty academic staff member responsible for recording minutes and maintaining documentation.

5. Procedure for Credit Recognition After Mobility

5.1. Upon completion of the academic mobility program, the student must submit the following documents to the host higher education institution (HEI) within 15 (fifteen) calendar days:

- An official copy issued by the host HEI;
- An explanation of the grading system and scale;
- Syllabi reflecting the learning outcomes for the relevant courses (if necessary, additional explanatory materials on course content).

5.2. Based on the submitted documents, the commission established at the HEI for credit recognition conducts a comparative analysis of the transcript and syllabi and makes one of the following decisions:

- **a) Full Recognition (80–100% equivalency)** – If the course content and learning outcomes are considered compatible, credits are fully recognized and included in the student’s academic record;
- **b) Partial Recognition (60–79% equivalency)** – Credits are recognized, but due to program differences, the student is required to complete a supplementary module, additional assignments, or a compensatory course;
- **c) Refusal of Recognition (0–59% equivalency)** – If the submitted course’s content, learning outcomes, credit volume, level, and profile correspond to less than 60% of the University’s relevant educational program, credit recognition is denied. In this case, the difference is considered a “substantial difference,” and the student must complete the respective course or its equivalent at the University.

5.3. During credit recognition, the HEI takes into account the principles of the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), the program’s intended learning outcomes, and the academic workload of the course.

5.4. The decision on credit recognition is made within 10 (ten) working days after the required documents have been fully submitted. If additional information or clarification is required, the decision is formalized within 5 (five) working days after submission of the relevant documents.

5.5. The decision is communicated to the student in writing, either in paper or electronic format, and is recorded in the student’s academic records.

6. Criteria for Equivalency

6.1. The determination of course and credit equivalency is carried out based on the following key assessment criteria:

- a) Level** – Correspondence of the course to the relevant educational level and qualification framework;
- b) Credit Volume** – The course’s credit value, academic workload, and alignment with ECTS;
- c) Quality Indicators** – Content of the educational program, applied academic standards, and assessment mechanisms;
- d) Profile Alignment** – Relevance of the course to the student’s field of study, specialization, and program profile;
- e) Learning Outcomes** – The extent to which the intended knowledge, skills, and competencies of the course are achieved.

7. Appeals Mechanism

7.1. A student who disagrees with the decision on full recognition, partial recognition, or refusal of credit recognition has the right to submit a written appeal to the University's Academic Affairs Department within 10 (ten) working days from the date the decision is officially communicated.

7.2. The Academic Affairs Department forwards the received appeal to the University's Appeals Commission within 3 (three) working days. The Appeals Commission reviews the appeal and issues a reasoned decision within 10 (ten) working days.

7.3. The decision of the Appeals Commission is communicated to the student in writing (either on paper or electronically) and includes the legal and academic justification for the decision.

7.4. A student who disagrees with the decision of the Appeals Commission has the right to submit a written appeal to the Rector of the University within 10 (ten) working days from the date the decision is communicated. The decision made by the Rector is considered final within the University.

8. Documentation and Record-Keeping

8.1. Within the framework of academic mobility, credit recognition, determination of equivalency, and transfer procedures, submitted transcripts, syllabi, meeting minutes, decisions, and other related documents are maintained in the student's personal file and in the University's electronic academic information system in accordance with established procedures.

8.2. To verify the authenticity and accuracy of the submitted documents, electronic transcripts, QR codes, electronic signatures, or verification links, if available, must be checked. If there is a justified doubt regarding the validity of a document, an official inquiry is sent to the issuing higher education institution, and necessary confirmation is obtained.

9. Final Provisions

9.1. The implementation of these Regulations is overseen by the head of the authorized structural unit appointed by the University Rector – the Director of the Academic Affairs Department.

9.2. The Regulations come into force on the date of their approval by the Rector's order.

9.3. In the event of changes in the legislation of the Republic of Azerbaijan or in the University's internal regulations, these Regulations shall be updated accordingly.