



Republic of Serbia  
QUALIFICATIONS AGENCY  
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## BASIC INFORMATION

### **What is the procedure for recognizing foreign secondary school diplomas?**

The recognition of foreign school diploma is a process through which a diploma obtained abroad is equated with the corresponding valid public document of the Republic of Serbia, granting the individual the right to continue education and/or employment.

### **Who has the right to submit a request for the recognition of foreign school diplomas?**

The right to recognition of a foreign school diploma is held by:

- A citizen of the Republic of Serbia;
- A foreign national and a stateless person, if they have a legal interest in doing so.

### **Which school diplomas are subject to the recognition procedure?**

The following diplomas are subject to the recognition procedure:

- school diplomas obtained abroad,
- school diplomas obtained in foreign institutions in the Republic of Serbia that have approval to operate from the ministry responsible for education, in accordance with Article 96 of the Law on the Fundamentals of the Education System ("Official Gazette of RS", No. 88/2017, 27/2018 - other laws, 10/2019, 6/2020, and 129/2021, 92/2023), which stipulates that a foreign institution is one that offers a program adopted and accredited abroad and may be established by a foreign or domestic legal or natural person. The Ministry of Education keeps a record of foreign institutions.

### **What is recognized in the procedure for recognizing foreign school diplomas?**

In the recognition procedure, the entire education or specific grades completed abroad or in a foreign secondary school in the Republic of Serbia are recognized. For shorter periods of schooling (such as a semester or shorter classification period), it is not possible to recognize a foreign school diploma through this procedure.

For the recognition of education obtained in the United States, if only the twelfth grade has been completed, it is necessary to submit a transcript of the twelfth grade and the diploma, along with a translation by a certified court interpreter (one copy). If the school

does not issue a diploma, a letter from the school principal must be obtained, stating the reason why the diploma was not issued and confirming that the student, with their achieved success, is eligible for enrollment at universities in the U.S.

It is recommended for all interested parties who do not receive their diplomas or certificates during the summer of the current year, but significantly later—such as the French BAC, International Baccalaureate (IB) diploma, or AS/A level exam certificates—to submit a request for the recognition of the foreign school diploma with the documentation they possess. This will allow them to obtain a certificate stating that the recognition process is ongoing, based on which they could sit for entrance exams at higher education institutions.

Diplomas (ATTESTS) obtained in the Russian Federation and former USSR republics, related to the completion of the secondary education cycle, are recognized as diplomas at the level of 4 NQF. Diplomas from colleges lasting 2 years and 10 months / 3 years and 10 months, obtained after the Certificate of General Secondary Education, are recognized at the level of 5 NQF for employment purposes. When submitting a request, it is necessary to provide the original certificate and a transcript of grades, along with a translation by a certified court interpreter (one copy) in the Republic of Serbia and a photocopy of the same.

### **How is the recognition of foreign school diplomas carried out?**

In the process of recognizing foreign school diplomas, the following factors are considered:

1. the education system of the foreign country,
2. the duration of education,
3. the curriculum,
4. the rights granted by the foreign school diploma and other circumstances relevant to the decision-making process.

If it is determined during the process that the foreign curriculum significantly differs from the domestic one with which it is compared, recognition may be conditional upon passing certain exams, completing specific assignments, or demonstrating knowledge.

### **Which regulations apply in the process of recognizing foreign school diplomas?**

The recognition of foreign school diplomas is carried out based on:

- The Law on the National Qualifications Framework of the Republic of Serbia ("Official Gazette of RS", No. 27/2018, 6/2020, and 129/2021—other laws, 76/2023));
- The Law on General Administrative Procedure ("Official Gazette of RS", No. 18/2016, 95/2018 – authentic interpretation, 2/2023—decision of the Constitutional Court);
- Recognized international agreements;
- The Law on the Fundamentals of the Education System ("Official Gazette of RS", No. 88/2017, 27/2018—other laws, 10/2019, 6/2020, 129/2021, 92/2023);

Article 34, paragraphs 1, 2, and 4 of the Law on the National Qualifications Framework of the Republic of Serbia ("Official Gazette of RS", No. 27/2018, 6/2020, and 129/2021—other laws, 76/2023) stipulates that a citizen of the Republic of Serbia who has completed

secondary school or a specific grade of school abroad, or who has completed a foreign secondary school or specific grades of school in the Republic of Serbia, has the right to request the recognition of the foreign secondary school diploma obtained.

Article 136, paragraph 1 of the Law on General Administrative Procedure ("Official Gazette of RS", No. 18/2016 and 95/2018 – authentic interpretation, 2/2023) stipulates that a decision is made regarding the right, obligation, or legal interest of the party.

### **Which school diplomas are not subject to the recognition procedure?**

The school diplomas that are not subject to the recognition procedure are:

- Diplomas and certificates obtained in Montenegro during the existence of the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro (up to the 2005/2006 school year);
- Diplomas and certificates obtained during the existence of the SFRY (up to April 27, 1992) in former republics;
- Certificates and diplomas obtained in the Republic of Srpska (a student who continues their education by transferring to a school in the territory of the Republic of Serbia continues their schooling in the appropriate grade according to the education system of the Republic of Serbia) based on the Agreement on Mutual Recognition of Educational Documents and the Regulation of Status Issues of Students and Pupils ("Official Gazette of RS", No. 79/2005).

### **What is an APOSTILLE?**

An **Apostille** is a certification that, according to the Hague Convention on the Abolition of the Requirement of Legalization for Foreign Public Documents (1961), confirms the authenticity of the signature, the capacity of the signatory of a public document, and the genuineness of the seal or stamp on the document, instead of the legalization of public documents in international legal traffic. A document certified with this stamp is exempt from any further certification and is suitable for use in all countries that are signatories to the Hague Convention. The Apostille certification is performed exclusively by the competent authorities in the country where the public document was issued.

The original foreign school certificate, diploma, or the last completed grade must be certified with an Apostille stamp in the country where the grade or level of education was completed, except for countries with which the Republic of Serbia has bilateral agreements on the mutual exemption from the legalization of public documents. These countries are: Austria, Belgium, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Greece, Cyprus, Hungary, North Macedonia, Mongolia, Poland, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Ukraine, France, Croatia, Montenegro, the Czech Republic, and Slovenia.

You can access the list of countries that are signatories to the Hague Convention via the following link:

<https://www.mpravde.gov.rs/tekst/861/legalizacija-isprava-.php>

For all other countries that are not listed in the list of signatory countries of the Hague Convention and the list of countries with which the Republic of Serbia has signed bilateral agreements on the mutual exemption from the legalization of public documents, full legalization of public documents is required.