**Order**

**on the establishment of Accreditation and Nostrification Department**

Given the article 16.4 of the “Law on Education” of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the instruction No.11/4-55 dated 18.11.2015 of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the letter of consent No.05/03-367-4613 dated 27.07.2015 of the Ministry of Finance and guided by the article 13.5 of the “Regulations of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan” and in order to effectively organize the work on accreditation of education institutions and recognition of education documents of foreign countries and determination of equivalence (nostrification) of specialties and to improve efficiency of this process, I hereby order as follows:

1. The Accreditation and Nostrification Office under the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan shall be established.
2. Staff of the Accreditation and Nostrification Office shall be set up comprised of 32 people by reducing the staff of the Professional Development Institute of Education Employees by 58.
3. The Legal expertise and licensing department (S.Kazimov) shall develop the regulations of the new department and a proposal on the amendments to the “List of units subordinated to, but not belonging to the structure of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan” approved by the decision No.118 dated 15 July 2011 of the Cabinet of Ministers.
4. The Economics department (R.Orujov) shall ensure that:
   1. the structure, staff schedule and budget of the Office are drafted as well as measures are taken to open treasury account journal in relevant treasury body in order to ensure financial-economic activity of the Office;
   2. relevant measures are taken to finance the Office through the funds envisaged for the Ministry of Education in “Education” segment of centralized expenditures of the state budget;
   3. the Department of Construction and Supply (A.Akhundov) and the Department of Informatization of the Education System shall work together to resolve office, necessary technical supply and information communication issues in order to ensure the activity of the Accreditation and Nostrification Office.
5. The Human resources department (F.Gadirov) shall submit relevant proposals on staff recruitment in accordance with the existing rules.
6. The Information department (E.Aliyev) shall ensure the delivery of the order to the relevant units.
7. I assume the control over the execution of the order.

**Basis**: submission by the head of Apparatus Matin Eynullayev

**Mikayil Jabbarov**

**THE REGULATIONS**

**of the Accreditation and Nostrification Office**

**I. General provisions**

 1. The Accreditation and Nostrification Office (hereinafter, - the Office) provides services on the accreditation of education institutions (including branches and representations of the universities of foreign countries operating in the Republic of Azerbaijan) of all educational levels operating in the Republic of Azerbaijan, as well as the recognition and determination of equivalence (nostrification) of specialities of the higher education institutions of foreign countries, irrespective of the subordination, property and organizational-legal form of an education institution.

2. The Office operates in conjunction with the Constitution of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the laws of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the decree and orders of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the decision and orders of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the international contracts the Republic of Azerbaijan is a signatory to, the Regulations of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the ordinance and orders of the Minister of Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan, and these Regulations.

3. The Office, in discharge of its duties and exercise of its rights in line with these Regulations, works in conjunction with the central and local executive powers, the state and local self-governing authorities and other state education supervision bodies, international and non-governmental organizations, as well as legal and physical persons.

4. The Office has independent balance sheet, state property, treasury and bank accounts, tax identification number, a seal with the national emblem of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the names of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Office, relevant stamps and letterhead in accordance with the legislation.

5. The operating costs of the Office are funded from the state budget of the Republic of Azerbaijan, income generated from provision of paid services, and other sources stipulated in the legislation.

6. The Office is headquartered in Baku.

**II. The areas of activity of the Office**

7. The areas of activity of the Office are as follows:

7.1. to execute the accreditation of education institutions;

7.2. to execute the accreditation of study programs;

7.3. to render methodical assistance to education institutions in executing the accreditation;

7.4. to execute the recognition of specialities of the higher education institutions of foreign countries and nostrification;

7.4 to execute recognition and determination of equivalence (nostrification) of documents awarded by education institutions of foreign countries, including international and foreign higher education institutions (their branches) legally operating in the Republic of Azerbaijan upon graduation of general secondary, complete secondary, initial vocational education, secondary vocational education, higher education (bachelor and master levels) and further education.

7.5. to operate in other areas defined by the legislation.

**III. The duties of the Office**

 8. The duties executed by the Office in accordance with the areas of activity defined in these Regulations are as follows:

8.1. to develop and to approve an annual work plan in agreement with the leadership of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan;

8.2. to submit proposals to the Ministry of Education for the approval of the composition of the Accreditation Council;

8.3. to submit an annual list of education institutions to be accredited in the next academic year to the Ministry of Education for approval;

8.4. to update education institutions on the date of accreditation;

8.5. to establish an Accreditation Commission for each education institution under accreditation;

8.6. to establish a pool of experts consisting of individuals experienced in management of logistical base of education institutions as well as education management for the purpose of determining the composition of the Accreditation Commission;

8.7. to receive self-evaluation reports from the education institutions;

8.8. to lay the groundwork for the attestation of knowledge of those studying in the graduating groups (classes) of education institutions;

8.9. to hold discussions on the final report of the Accreditation Commission in the meeting of the Accreditation Council;

8.10. to submit proposals to the Minister of Education on defining the status of education institution in accordance with the accreditation outcomes;

8.11. to submit proposals to the Minister of Education on the admission quota of the education institution in accordance with the accreditation outcomes;­­­

8.12. to award a certificate to the education institution which passed the accreditation;

8.13. to raise an issue with the Minister of Education on the termination of the activity of the education institution which failed reaccreditation;

8.14. to look into the applications on the recognition of education documents in line with the legislation;

8.15. to take a decision on recognition, when there is no ground for repudiation, and to apply to the Minister of Education for awarding a recognition certificate;

8.16. to submit a substantiated written response to citizens on the reasons of repudiation of recognition of education document;

8.17. to submit proposals to the Ministry of Education on the establishment of expert groups on the nostrification of education documents and ensure their activity;

8.18. to take a decision on nostrification of the document if there is a positive evaluation feedback, and holder of the education document successfully passes the test organized by the State Commission for Student Admission, and to apply to the Ministry of Education for awarding a certificate of equivalence;

8.19. to submit a substantiated written response to applicant on the reasons of repudiation, in case nostrification of education document is repudiated in accordance with the outcome of evaluation;

8.20. to organize the reception of citizens, take decisions on the basis of proper investigation of their oral and written inquiries and inform citizens of the decisions;

8.21. to take action within its competences to improve the activity of the Office and submit proposals to the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan on the implementation of the relevant statutory regulation;

8.22. to coordinate its activities with other structural units of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan;

8.23. to ensure the completion, storage and record-keeping of archival documents created in the course of the activity of the Office in accordance with the existing legislation;

8.24. to execute other duties stipulated in the legislation in line with its areas of activity.

**IV. The rights of the Office**

 9. The rights enjoyed by the Office, in discharge of its duties, are as follows:

9.1. to address the issues pursuant to its competences, request necessary accreditation-related documents, certificates and other information from education institutions;

9.2. to request the heads of education institutions to create favourable conditions for the Accreditation Commission to function;

9.3. to raise awareness of population;

9.4. to engage foreign and local specialists, experts and consultants in its activities in accordance with the legislation;

9.5. to hold seminars, trainings and consultations through engaging foreign specialists on the issues pursuant to its competences;

9.6. to ensure that recognition and nostrification related requests are received, enquired and reviewed within the period of time stipulated in the legislation;

9.7. to submit the education documents to the expert commissions for determination of their equivalence;

9.8. to ensure the timely execution of recognition and nostrification related inquiries;

9.9. to execute other rights stipulated in the legislation in accordance with its areas of activity.

**V. The organization of the activity of the Office**

 10. The Office is led by a head appointed and dismissed by the Minister of Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

11. The head is personally responsible for the execution of the duties assigned to the Office.

12. The deputy head and heads of departments of the Office are appointed and dismissed by the Minister of Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan on the submission of the head of the Office.

13. The head of the Office:

13.1. organizes and leads the activity of the Office;

13.2. submits the structure of the salary payment fund for the allocated work and the Office within the limit of the number of the employees, staff schedule and cost estimate to the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan for approval;

13.3. appoints and dismisses the employees of the Office, save for the deputy head and heads of departments of the Office, and takes stimulatory or administrative reprimand measures regarding them;

13.4. The deputy head of the Office takes over the responsibilities of the head of the Office when the latter is on holiday, mission and is not available for other reasons.

13.5. issues orders on the use of the funds allocated to the Office in accordance with its cost estimate;

13.6. supervises the control measures implemented by the employees of the Office;

13.7. takes relevant action to ensure the professional readiness, as well as further education of the employees;

13.8. issues orders and instructions of compulsory nature to the subordinate employees within his competence;

13.9. represents the Office in the relations with all state bodies, local self-governing authorities, as well as legal and physical persons without power of attorney;

13.10. reports regularly on the activity of the Office to the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan;

13.10. executes other competences pursuant to the legislation of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

**On making supplements to the Regulations of**

**Accreditation and Nostrification Office**

Having regard to the Convention on the “Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region” ratified by the Law N 367-IQ of the Republic of Azerbaijan of 30 September 1997, the “Rules on recognition and determination of equivalence (nostrification) of higher education qualifications of foreign countries” approved by the decision N 64 of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan of 13 May 2003, and the articles 13.5 and 13.6 of the “Regulations of the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan” and in order to recognize the education documents awarded in foreign countries in the country, to efficiently respond to enquiries incoming from relevant organizations of foreign countries, to facilitate procedures and to ensure swift actions in this respect, **I hereby order as follows:**

1. In accordance with the IX.2 article of the Convention on the “Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region” ratified by the Law N 367-IQ of the Republic of Azerbaijan of 30 September 1997, the functions of National Information Centre are assigned to the Accreditation and Nostrification Office.
2. The following new provisions shall be added to the Regulations of the Accreditation and Nostrification Office:
   * “7.5. to perform the functions of National Information Centre stipulated in the Convention on the “Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region”
   * 8.24. to draft and submit inquires to the relevant bodies of foreign countries for the purpose of recognition and determination of equivalence (nostrification), and to respond to incoming inquiries concerning education documents (of all education levels);
   * 8.25. to submit information to the relevant bodies of signatory countries of the Convention on the “Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region” on the legislation and education system of the Republic of Azerbaijan.
3. The Information department (E.Aliyev) shall ensure the publication of this order in “Azerbaijani teacher” journal and the official webpage of the Ministry of Education, as well as communicate the order to the relevant units.
4. Deputy Minister (M. Eynullayev) is assigned to supervise the execution of the order.

**Mikayil Jabbarov**