NARODOWA AGENCJA WYMIANY AKADEMICKIEJ

Nostrification of academic degrees

1. What is nostrification?

Nostrification is an official procedure which is conducted to determine the Polish equivalent of a foreign diploma.

Nostrification may be carried out for academic degrees and degrees related to art study issued by an authorised higher education institution operating outside the EU, OECD or EFTA countries, if such a degree may not be recognised as equivalent under any international agreement on equivalence (Legal basis: art. 328.3 of the Act of 20 July 2018 – Law on Higher Education and Science (Journal of Laws of 2024, item 1571 with further amendments).

The rules for conducting nostrification procedure are established in the Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of 28th September 2018 on the nostrification of academic degrees and degrees related to art study conferred abroad (Journal of Laws, item 1877) http://isap.sejm.gov.pl/isap.nsf/download.xsp/WDU20180001877/O/D20181877.pdf

A nostrification procedure completed with positive outcome results in issue of a certificate stating that a diploma conferring an academic degree obtained abroad is equivalent to a particular Polish diploma conferring a particular Polish academic degree or degree related to art study (*doktor, doktor habilitowany, doktor sztuki lub doktor habilitowany sztuki*). The most common reason for applying for initiation of a nostrification procedure is willingness to take up work at a Polish higher education institution or in a profession in which possession of a particular Polish academic degree is required.

2. Which institutions conduct nostrification?

Nostrification procedure is conducted by a body rated as scientific category A+ or A in the discipline relevant to the application in question (the list of the bodies and their rating categories can be found in the RAD-on database).

Legal basis: art. 328.4 ustawy z dnia 20 lipca 2018 r. of the Act of 20 July 2018 – Law on Higher Education and Science (Journal of Laws of 2024, item 1571 with further amendments).

3. Documents required

The person who applies for nostrification submits their application for recognition of their academic degree as equivalent to a particular Polish academic degree to a chosen nostrifying body. The following documents shall be enclosed to the application:

1) in the event of seeking recognition of an academic degree as equivalent:
   a) to the Polish academic degree of **doktor** or **doktor w zakresie sztuki:**
      - diploma which confirms conferring of the degree,
      - documents which provide the basis for conferring the degree,

- diploma of completion of higher education studies which gives its holder the right to apply for conferring the academic degree, the recognition of which the applicant seeks;

b) to the Polish academic degree of **doktor habilitowany** or **doktor habilitowany w zakresie sztuki:**
   - diploma which confirms conferring of the degree,
   - documents confirming academic attainments of the applicant which were the basis for conferring their academic degree,
   - a diploma which confirms conferring the preceding academic degree which was required to initiate the procedure of obtaining the academic degree, the recognition of which the applicant seeks;

2) applicant's declaration which contains:
   a) information whether the academic degree, the recognition of which the applicant seeks, has been subject to any nostrification procedure in the Republic of Poland,
   b) their place and date of birth.

Documents listed under point 1 above may be submitted in the form of copies certified as authentic by the nostrifying body.

Legal basis: § 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3 of the Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of 28th September 2018 on the nostrification of academic degrees and degrees related to art study conferred abroad (Journal of Laws, item 1877).

After the formal evaluation of the application, the nostrifying body may require that the applicant provided ordinary translations into Polish of the documents listed under point 1 above.

In particularly justified cases the nostrifying body may require that the applicant provided translations into Polish made and certified by a Sworn Translator or made by a foreign translator and certified by the competent Consul of the Republic of Poland of the documents which provide the basis for conferring the lower academic degree or documents confirming academic attainments which were the basis for conferring the higher academic degree.

Legal basis: § 5.1 and 5.2 of the Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of 28th September 2018 on the nostrification of academic degrees and degrees related to art study conferred abroad (Journal of Laws, item 1877).

The nostrifying body may not request that the applicant submitted other documents than listed above.

4. How the nostrification procedure is conducted?

The nostrifying body evaluates the application from the formal point of view. If the application is found incomplete, the nostrifying body establishes a time limit, not shorter than 14 days, for the applicant to complete the application, under the pain of disregarding it.

In particular cases, where justified doubts arise as to the applicant's academic attainments which were the basis for conferring their academic degree, the nostrifying body may refer for review the documents which provided the basis for conferring the lower academic degree or documents confirming academic attainments which were the basis for conferring the higher academic degree.

The nostrifying body appoints up to 3 reviewers among its own employees holding at least the degree of *doktor habilitowany* in the discipline relevant to the application, determines the scope of the review and the deadline for its delivery.

Legal basis: § 4.1, 6.1 and 6.2 of the Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of 28th September 2018 on the nostrification of academic degrees and degrees related to art study conferred abroad (Journal of Laws, item 1877).

5. Time limits

The procedure officially initiates on the date of submitting the application to the nostrifying body.

Legal basis: § 4.1 of the Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of 28th September 2018 on the nostrification of academic degrees and degrees related to art study conferred abroad (Journal of Laws, item 1877).

Not later than 90 days from the date of submitting an application that meets all formal requirements the nostrifying body recognises or refuses to recognise the academic degree as equivalent to a particular Polish academic degree. The time periods set for submitting translations of documents and delivering review are not counted into the 90-day time limit.

Legal basis: § 7.1 and 7.2 of the Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of 28th September 2018 on the nostrification of academic degrees and degrees related to art study conferred abroad (Journal of Laws, item 1877).

6. Fees

Payment of a fee is required to conduct the procedure. The maximum level of the fee amounts to 50% of the remuneration of a university professor. In justified cases the applicant may be exempted from the fee. Each nostrifying body specifies the mode of exemption from the fee.

If the body which received the application is found not competent for conducting the nostrification procedure, the fee does not apply.

Legal basis: art. 328.6 and 328.7 of the Act of 20 July 2018 – Law on Higher Education and Science (Journal of Laws of 2024, item 1571 with further amendments).

The nostrification procedure fee is paid into the account or at the cash-desk of the nostrifying body; the deadline for payment is specified by this body and cannot be shorter than 14 days.

Legal basis: § 8.1 and 8.2 of the Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of 28th September 2018 on the nostrification of academic degrees and degrees related to art study conferred abroad (Journal of Laws, item 1877).

7. Refusal to start the nostrification procedure

In the case of lack of competence for conducting the nostrification procedure the body which received the application issues a resolution (postanowienie) on refusal to conduct the procedure, which is subject to a complaint.

Legal basis: art. 328.7 of the Act of 20 July 2018 – Law on Higher Education and Science (Journal of Laws of 2024, item 1571 with further amendments).

The body which refuses to initiate the nostrification procedure issues a resolution (postanowienie) which shall contain:

- identification of the unit of the higher education institution or other scientific institution which issues the resolution;
- date of issue;
- identification of the person who applied for conducting the nostrification procedure;
- legal basis;
- decision on refusal to initiate the procedure and its justification;
- signature of the person competent to issue the resolution, including the specification of their position in the institution;
- instruction on the right to file a complaint to the rector of the higher education institution.

Legal basis: Code of Administrative Procedure (Journal of Laws of 2018, item 2096).

8. Final resolutions and issue of the certificate

On completion of the nostrification procedure a certificate shall be issued, according to the model specified in the annex to the regulation.

Legal basis:

- art. 328.5 and 328.8 of the Act of 20 July 2018 – Law on Higher Education and Science (Journal of Laws of 2024, item 1571 with further amendments),
- § 9 of the Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of 28th September 2018 on the nostrification of academic degrees and degrees related to art study conferred abroad (Journal of Laws, item 1877).

On the date of issue of the certificate its holder acquires the right to use the Polish academic degree and all other rights resulting from that fact. The applicant has legal right to appeal against the resolutions of the nostrifying body, based on art. 127 of the Code of Administrative Procedure and the Revised Recommendation on Criteria and Procedures for the Assessment of Foreign Qualifications, adopted in 2001 and revised in 2010.