



**Validation procedures for recognition  
- formal and informally acquired competencies  
in Germany**



A manual for consultants

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- Target group
- Teacher / trainer
  - Counsellor
  - Social worker
  - Youth worker
  - future employer
  - other:

- Type of best practice
- initiative
  - campaign
  - project
  - website only
  - programme
  - model
  - training
  - learning material
  - other:

- Experiences
- available for more than 5 years
  - available for less than 5 years
  - pilot phase / testing
  - in development
  - other: n.a.

**Summary:**

The manual is a guide for consultants who are trained in the application of a certain validation procedure and who help aspirants to acquire non - formal and informal knowledge by means of the validation tool in order to gain the recognition of continuing vocational training. At the same time, it is also suitable as an accompanying material in the training of consultants in the validation process. It complements and supports the curriculum of counseling and is part of the training concept.

The manual is a work result of an innovation transfer project, which has adapted and tested a validation system for recognizing non-formal and informally acquired competencies. A system developed by the Swiss Association for Continuing Education (SVEB) has been successfully applied to the validation of non-formal and informally acquired occupational competences on the conditions and requirements of the German education system.

The manual is an outcome of the project "ConCert ("Development and preparatory measures for the implementation of a Validation system for advice and recognition of formal and informally acquired competences").



**Description:****Non - formal and informal competence acquisition**

The acquisition of vocational and trade-related education takes place both as a formal competence acquisition at institutions of vocational qualification (institutions of vocational training and further education, technical colleges and universities) as well as in a non-formal and informal way through experience knowledge. Through a steadily growing and differentiated task spectrum in the work process as well as through voluntary commitment outside the work process, people acquire experiences and abilities that go far beyond the competences in formal qualifications.

While formal learning is an intended, goal-oriented, organized and structured process, which success is documented by a certificate, the results of non-formal and informal learning processes cannot be demonstrated in this way. Non-formal learning is, from the learner's point of view (and of the teacher's), is an intended learning process, which, however, is embedded as a learning element in mostly practical activities.

The intended learning is subject to less stringent regulations regarding temporal structure and organization. An explicit follow-up test, which is shown in a certificate or certificate with a qualitative assessment, is generally not carried out. Informal learning takes place both in the workplace, in everyday life and in leisure time. It is not intended as learning, the learning effects arise, without this planned and purposeful strive.

However, in Germany, above all, the formally acquired knowledge is professionally usable and acknowledged, as these are demonstrable by certificates. At the same time, both the developments on the national labor market and the European free movement of persons require that all existing compulsory employment competences be made visible and comparable. Whatever the nature of the competency acquisition, existing knowledge and abilities are, they are to be documented, recognized and formally acquired. With the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and the respective national implementation (the German Qualifications Framework DQR for Germany), the prerequisites for the European-wide comparability of qualifications were created. EQF and DQR are expressly designed to classify existing qualifications; regardless of the type of education, they have been acquired. This includes non-formal acquired education as well as informal education.

In order to adequately represent non-formal and informally acquired competences, valid procedures for the competency assessment are required at the operational level. Formal educational approaches (test, examination, etc.) are not always optimal for this purpose. Above all, in continuing vocational training, it is often necessary to complete advanced training courses in order to obtain formal proof of existing knowledge.

This is the background of this guide, which provides practical help with validation.