

Recognition of foreign qualifications in Germany

Do you hold a vocational qualification from another country and want to work in Germany?

Since 1 April 2012 you can have your foreign vocational qualification recognised, increasing your chances on the German labour market. If your qualification is in the fields of industry, commerce, hospitality or services, you will need to contact IHK FOSA (Foreign Skills Approval), the central certification authority of the German Chambers of Commerce and Industry (IHK), for this purpose.

How it works

IHK FOSA will compare your foreign vocational qualification to a corresponding German qualification. The most important criteria are the content and duration of the training courses; occupational experience and further training are also taken into consideration.

If a comparison finds no significant differences, you will receive an official, legally secure document from IHK FOSA confirming that your foreign vocational qualification is of equal value to the corresponding German qualification.

If significant differences are found, IHK FOSA can certify that your qualification is partially of equal value. In that case, the certificate will describe your existing qualifications and how they specifically differ from the corresponding German qualification. This certificate will allow you to either apply directly to employers or seek appropriate further training in order to acquire the missing qualifications.

Whom to contact for advice

On the application form you must state the German qualification with which you would like your foreign vocational qualification to be declared equivalent. In view of approximately 350 dual vocational qualifications and a wide range of further training qualifications this isn't always easy. You can generally contact your local Chamber of Commerce and Industry (IHK) for a free individual consultation. Most Chambers of Commerce and Industry will provide information on the application and the process and assist you in assessing the German reference qualification.

What you have to do

Fill in the application form (available from www.ihk-fosa.de). We also require the following documents:

- Copy of proof of identity (ID card or passport)
- Certificate of foreign vocational qualification
- Documentation indicating relevant occupational experience
- Other documents (e.g. further training certificates)
- Intention to pursue employment (not required for citizens of the EU/EEA/Switzerland or persons normally resident in the EU/EEA/Switzerland)

Please note: Qualification certificates must be submitted as certified copies; for all other documents, standard copies will generally suffice. Documents in languages other than German must additionally be translated by a publicly appointed and sworn translator.

Costs

A fee is payable for this process. Fees vary depending on the individual time and effort required, and range from €100 to €600. If you are unemployed or seeking work, we recommend that you enquire with your Job-center prior to submitting your application in order to determine whether the labour administration can cover the costs for you.

Please send your application together with the required documents to:

IHK FOSA (Foreign Skills Approval)
Ulmenstraße 52g
90443 Nürnberg

For more information:

Homepage: www.ihk-fosa.de | Telephone hotline: +49 (0)911/ 81 50 60 | E-Mail: info@ihk-fosa.de