Validation of non-formal and informal learning – The German approach

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The German approach to validation - Premise

- The validation of non-formal and informal learning refers to the formal education system and to formal qualifications.
- Objective: Assess equivalence between the outcome of non-formal/informal learning and formal qualifications.
- We are not building a separate validation system beside the formal education system.
- The validation of non-formal and informal learning is an integral part of the German education system.
1. Vocational Training Act, Trades and Crafts Code  
   -> External students' examination (*Externenprüfung*)

2. Recognition Act (*Anerkennungsgesetz*)  
   -> Qualifications analysis

3. ValiKom project (qualifications-based validation of non-formal and informal learning)
1. **Vocational Training Act, Trades and Crafts Code**
   -> External students' examination *(Externenprüfung)*

2. **Recognition Act (Anerkennungsgesetz)**
   -> Qualifications analysis

3. **ValiKom project** (qualifications-based validation of non-formal and informal learning)
Vocational Training Act, Trades and Crafts Code: External students' examination (*Externenprüfung*)

- External students' examination: final examination without previous training
- Requirement for admission to external students' examination: Work in the occupation for at least 1.5 times the period of training
- The external students' examination (Section 45 BBiG, Section 37 HWO) is a statutory instrument for assessing and validating non-formally and informally acquired vocational skills.
External students' examination (*Externenprüfung*) - Procedure

- **Advice** for candidate provided by competent bodies (chamber)
- **Identification and documentation**: Candidate gathers evidence (e.g. employers' references, further training certificates)
- **Evaluation** of evidence by the chamber and decision on admission to the examination
- **Certification** through sitting the final examination
External students' examination (*Externenprüfung*) - Figures

- 33,000 candidates sitting the external students' examination in 2012
- 80% passed the examination
- = 6.2% of total number of examinees
1. Vocational Training Act, Trades and Crafts Code
   -> External students' examination (Externenprüfung)

2. Recognition Act (Anerkennungsgesetz)
   -> Qualifications analysis

3. ValiKom project (qualifications-based validation of non-formal and informal learning)
Recognition Act (Anerkennungsgesetz)

• Legal claim to the assessment of **equivalence** of foreign professional qualifications
• Prerequisite: **foreign training certificate**
• Criteria for assessing equivalence with German "reference occupation": Content and duration of training
• When comparison with the German "reference occupation" reveals deficits, evidence of informal or non-formal learning can be considered:
  • Work experience
  • Further training
Recognition Act (Anerkennungsgesetz) Procedure

• **Information** online at [www.anerkennung-in-deutschland.de](http://www.anerkennung-in-deutschland.de), contact offices of the IQ network and BAMF hotline

• **Advice** provided by chambers. Counselling by German chambers abroad (AHK) is being improved.

• **Documentation**: Applicant gathers learning and training evidence

• **Assessment of equivalence** by chamber
  Criteria: content and duration of training

• **Notification** of the result of the assessment (certification)

• Compensation measures if required
Recognition Act (Anerkennungsgesetz) – Qualifications analysis

- **Qualifications analysis** to assess professional skills, knowledge and competences (where relevant documents cannot be submitted).
- **Methods** of qualifications analysis:
  - Work samples
  - Interviews
  - Role play, simulated conversation
  - Presentation of work results, trial employment in company
  - Qualifications analysis conducted by chambers (competent agencies)
Recognition Act (*Anerkennungsgesetz*) – Figures

- 44,000 applications between 1 April 2012 and 31 December 2014
- 96 % resulted in certification of full or partial equivalance
1. Vocational Training Act, Trades and Crafts Code
   -> External students' examination (*Externenprüfung*)

2. Recognition Act (*Anerkennungsgesetz*)
   -> Qualifications analysis

3. ValiKom project (qualifications-based validation of non-formal and informal learning)
ValiKom project (qualifications-based validation of non-formal and informal learning)

• Objective: Development of a procedure based on standards for assessing the equivalence of non-formally/informally acquired skills and formal qualifications

• "Reference occupation" = recognized training or further training qualifications

• Target group: People with work experience

• Key role of chambers (competent bodies) in the overall process from information to advice to certification
Contact details:

Dr. Jutta Illichmann
Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF)
Division 321: Policy Issues; Lifelong Learning

jutta.illichmann@bmbf.bund.de
www.bmbf.de