



EQF

A Possible Route to Pan-European Recognition

Steps Taken and Potential Paths for Development

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Overview of Topics

- EU Context
- Free Movement of Persons / Workers
- EQF: European Qualifications Framework
- 8 Levels of EQF
- Special Conditions in Austria
- ÖDS Application for Level 6
- Significance and Possible Development

EU Context

The European Union's 4 fundamental freedoms

- Free movement of goods
- Free movement of persons
- Free movement of capital
- Freedom to establish and provide services.

Free Movement of Persons

Sub-Policy Areas

- Free Movement of Workers
- Right of Establishment

Free Movement of Workers

- Seek employment in another EU country
- Work there without need for a work permit
- Reside there for that purpose
- Stay there even after employment has finished
- Enjoy equal treatment with nationals with access to employment, working conditions and all other social and tax advantages.

Recognition of Professional Qualifications

To aid

- free movement of persons
- freedom of establishment
- freedom to provide services

The European Qualifications Framework (EQF)

- A translation device to render national qualifications more readable across Europe.

European Qualifications Framework

Objectives

- Europe-wide transparency in the educational landscape
- Comparability and transferability of qualifications
- Increase in employability
- Promotion of the mobility of 'workers' and 'learners'.

European Qualifications Framework

- Initiated 2008, revised 2017
- To make professional qualifications and skills comparable
- Assessment of knowledge, skills and competences categorised into eight levels
- Implementation via national qualification frameworks (NQF), which refer to the EQF.

8 Levels of EQF

- EQF assesses competence acquired in training
- Each level assesses the ability to handle tasks of varying complexity and unpredictability, reflecting greater responsibility
- The level denotes positions in hierarchical systems (e.g. authorities, health systems) and payment
- The level also denotes the reputation of the profession in the public domain
- Level 6 corresponds to a bachelor's degree,
- Level 7 corresponds to a master's degree
- Level 8 corresponds to a doctorate or PhD.

EQF Level 4

- **Knowledge:** Factual and theoretical knowledge in broad contexts within a field of work or study
- **Skills:** A range of cognitive and practical skills required to generate solutions to specific problems in a field of work or study
- **Responsibility and autonomy:** Exercise self-management within the guidelines of work or study contexts that are usually predictable, but are subject to change; supervise the routine work of others, taking some responsibility for the evaluation and improvement of work or study activities
- **Examples:** A-level (UK), Abitur (BRD), Matura (A), Baccalauréat (France), Bachillerato (Spain).

EQF Level 5

- **Knowledge:** Comprehensive, specialised, factual and theoretical knowledge within a field of work or study and an awareness of the boundaries of that knowledge
- **Skills:** A comprehensive range of cognitive and practical skills required to develop creative solutions to abstract problems
- **Responsibility and autonomy:** Exercise management and supervision in contexts of work or study activities where there is unpredictable change; review and develop performance of self and others
- **Examples:** HNC, HND (UK), Fachmatura/HTL (A), BUT, Classe préparatoire aux grandes écoles (France).

EQF Level 6

- **Knowledge:** Advanced knowledge of a field of work or study, involving a critical understanding of theories and principles
- **Skills:** Advanced skills, demonstrating mastery and innovation, required to solve complex and unpredictable problems in a specialised field of work or study
- **Responsibility and autonomy:** manage complex technical or professional activities or projects, taking responsibility for decision-making in unpredictable work or study contexts; take responsibility for managing professional development of individuals and groups
- **Examples:** Bachelor, Meister (A), Fachkaufmann (BRD). Laurea triennale (Italy), Licence (France), Diplomado, Grado (Spain).

Special Conditions in Austria

- The Austrian government is working to counteract the low status of skilled crafts and trades in the education system (compared to academic training)
- Promotion of apprenticeships and vocational colleges, e.g. HTL (High Technical School with a focus on technical subjects, such as construction engineering, electronics) assigned to EQF level 5
- NQF classification also possible for non-formal training.

Milestones of NQF in Austria

- 2019: Allocation of master craftsperson examinations (“Meisterprüfungen”) to level 6, e.g. master mechanic, master plumber
- 2020: Opening of the NQF allocation for non-formal training
- 2023: Allocation of qualifying examinations (*Befähigungsprüfungen*) to level 6, e.g. pedicurist, masseur, beautician.

Shiatsu Training in Austria

- Legal regulation in the Massage-Ordinance (not competence-oriented)
- Non-formal training: no legally (state) regulated final examination
- No NQF assignment on the part of the legislator (in contrast to commercial massage)
- Legal curriculum does not meet the NQF 6 requirements, but the ÖDS curriculum does
- Ministry supports ÖDS curriculum and final examination and sees it at the same level as the qualifying examinations.

Reasons for ÖDS Level 6 Application

- Inequality in relation to commercial massage in public (massage evaluated at NQF level 6)
- Securing the profession in the event of (possible) changes to legal regulation
- Binding the standard of ÖDS training quality
- Possibility of pan-European anchoring of Shiatsu.

Conditions for Level 6 NQF Application

- Implementation of the existing ÖDS curriculum (with minimum additional requirements)

In particular:

- A competence-oriented curriculum
- An approximate number of (1000) training hours including specialized work & supervised practice
- The elaboration of learning outcomes that can be demonstrated via examination
- An examination system that verifies the achievement of the required competences as objectively as possible.

Milestones of the ÖDS Application

Approximately 6 years of work

- June 2019: Resolution of the AGM to apply for NQF level 6
- October 2020: 1st submission
- March 2021: Rejection of 1st application
- June 2021: Revised submission
- November 2021: Rejection of 2nd application
- February 2024: Revised submission
- April 2024: Assignment of NQF level 6.

Significance and Possible Development

- NQF 6 in Austria demonstrates the quality of Shiatsu to authorities and consumers even in other countries
- Provides a starting point for NQF applications in other EU countries - groundwork laid in Austria needs to be adapted
- Reference to Austrian level 6 will enable the same level to be achieved in other countries, which currently rate academic training higher than, for example, skilled trades
- The aim at EQF level is to establish a European standard
- With the help of a European training standard, a European profession can be established.

What can national associations do?

If an association wants to achieve an allocation for Shiatsu at NQF level 6 in its country, two requirements must be met:

- The inclusion of non-formal training in the NQF is possible in principle, the legal requirements are in place and service centres have been set up
- The training criteria for Shiatsu basically meet the requirements for NQF level 6 (i.e. they are equivalent to the Austrian criteria), and an appropriate examination system has been set up. The ESF will support you in adapting to the NQF requirements.



EUROPEAN SHIATSU FEDERATION

The European Shiatsu Federation wishes to thank all participants and especially its members for their years of continued support of the European idea!

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