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Apply for an approbation to practise as a psychotherapist (EU/EEA/Switzerland)

Psychotherapists diagnose and treat mental and psychosomatic disorders with disease value in people using scientifically recognised psychotherapeutic procedures.

In order to be able to work in Germany as a psychotherapist without restriction, you need to have a licence to practise. Approbation is the state licence to practice the profession. Approbation is necessary because the profession is regulated in Germany. This means that you are not allowed to work independently as a psychotherapist without an Approbation.

Even with a professional qualification from a country of the European Union (EU), the European Economic Area (EEA) or Switzerland, you can obtain Approbation in Germany. In order to obtain the licence to practise, you must have your foreign professional qualification recognised.

In the recognition procedure, the competent body compares your professional qualification from abroad with the German professional qualification and checks the equivalence. The equivalence of the professional qualification is an important prerequisite for the granting of the licence to practise medicine.

A professional qualification from the EU, the EEA or Switzerland is usually automatically recognised when you apply for a licence to practise medicine. However, there may be deviations from this rule. This depends on the state in which you completed your training and at what time. If you started your professional training after your country of training joined the EU/EEA, your professional qualification is automatically recognised.

If your professional qualification does not originate from the EU, the EEA or Switzerland, other regulations apply.

In addition to the equivalence of the professional qualification, you must also fulfil other requirements for the granting of the permit. Further requirements are, for example, sufficient German language skills and health suitability.

You can also apply for the procedure from abroad.

Procedure

1. Application

You submit an application for a licence to practise as a psychotherapist to the competent authority. The competent body then checks whether your training corresponds to German training and whether all other requirements have been met.

2. Automatic recognition

As a rule, the procedure of automatic recognition applies if you began your professional training after the EU/EEA accession of your country of training. This means that if you also meet all other requirements, your professional qualification

will be recognised without an individual equivalence test.

3. Certificate of conformity

Vocational training that you started before the EU/EEA accession of your training state (or that does not correspond to the legal designations) can also be recognised automatically. To do so, you must submit a certificate from the competent authority in your country of training stating that your professional qualification meets the minimum standards of the EU ("certificate of conformity"). If your professional qualification does not meet the minimum standards, you have to prove your professional practice. You must have worked as a psychotherapist in your country of origin for an uninterrupted period of 3 years in the 5 years preceding your application. This must be confirmed by the competent authority in your country of origin.

4. Equivalence check

If you cannot present a certificate of conformity or do not have enough professional experience, your training must be checked individually. In doing so, the competent body compares your professional qualification from abroad with the German professional qualification. The competent body checks whether your professional qualification is equivalent. The professional qualification is equivalent if there are no significant differences between your foreign professional qualification and the German professional qualification.

5. Possible results of the examination

If your professional qualification is equivalent, your foreign professional qualification will be recognised. The authorities can confirm the result to you in writing. You still have to fulfil the other requirements and prove your language skills. Then you will be granted a licence to practise as a psychotherapist.

- Are there any significant differences between your professional qualification and the German professional qualification? Perhaps you can compensate for the differences through your professional practice, other knowledge or skills (lifelong learning). You must provide evidence of professional practice. Knowledge and skills must be certified by an authority of the state in which you acquired the knowledge or skills.
- However, it may be that the essential differences cannot be compensated for by this knowledge. The competent authority will tell you the essential differences and why you cannot compensate for the essential differences through your professional practice.

The decision of the competent authority also states the level of your training and the level required in Germany. You are then not allowed to work as a psychotherapist in Germany.

6. Aptitude test

If your professional qualification is not equivalent and you cannot make up the difference, you can take an aptitude test. The aptitude test examines the main differences in your professional qualification. The aptitude test is an oral-practical examination. If you pass the aptitude test and meet all other requirements, you will be granted a licence to practise as a psychotherapist.

Prerequisites

- **Psychotherapeutic training completed in the EU/EEA/Switzerland that is equivalent to German training or an equivalent level of knowledge.**

In the event of substantial differences between the training courses which cannot be compensated for by relevant professional experience, an aptitude test must be taken or an adaptation course must be attended.

- **Health fitness**
- **Proof of reliability and worthiness for the practice of the psychotherapeutic profession**
- **Sufficient knowledge of German level B 2**
- **Technical language test**
- **Proof of competence**

Documents required

- **Application for the granting of the licence to practise medicine in the case of training in the European Union (EU)**
- **Proof of responsibility for the Land of Berlin**
(e.g. confirmation of employment, proof of habitual residence in the Land of Berlin/
main residence if applicable, applications for vacancies in the Land of Berlin, invitations to interviews).
- **Curriculum vitae in tabular form with signature and date**
- **Proof of identity (valid identity card or passport)**
- **Certificate of birth**
in the event of a change of name, e.g. due to marriage, also this document
- **Certificate of good conduct for submission to an authority**
(<https://service.berlin.de/dienstleistung/120926/>)
To verify personal reliability, information from the Federal Central Register (certificate of good conduct) is required for submission to an authority (document type O).
The information must not be older than three months.
- **Certificate of Good Conduct/Certificate of Clearance of Offences**
of the police or judicial authorities of the home country and, if applicable, of the country of study.
(not older than 3 months if presented)
- **Certificate of good conduct/clearance certificate (Certificate of good standing)**
of the competent authority of the country in which the profession was practised
(not older than 3 months if presented)
- **Medical certificate from a doctor licensed in Germany**
(not older than 3 months if presented)
- **Evidence of completed training (European Union)**
(see checklist for persons with EU education)
- **Certificate B 2 on knowledge of the German language**
(from telc, TestDaF or Goethe-Institut - not older than 3 years).
It is not necessary to submit the language certificates at the time of application.

- **Specialist language test (Berlin Chamber of Psychotherapists)**

It is not necessary to submit the language certificates at the time of application.

- **Doctoral certificate (if available)**

- **Official certification of copies**

If copies are submitted, they must be officially certified. In the case of copies without official certification, the simultaneous submission of the originals is required.

Forms

- **Application for the granting of the licence to practise medicine in the case of training in the European Union (EU)**

(https://www.berlin.de/lageso/_assets/gesundheit/berufe-im-gesundheitswesen/europaeische-union/1eu_approbation_antrag.pdf)

- **Medical certificate from a doctor licensed in Germany**

(https://www.berlin.de/lageso/_assets/gesundheit/berufe-im-gesundheitswesen/aerztliche-bescheinigung_eu_ds_akad.pdf)

- **Checklist: Evidence of completed training (European Union)**

(https://www.berlin.de/lageso/_assets/gesundheit/berufe-im-gesundheitswesen/akademisch/akad_checkliste_app_be_europaeische-union.pdf)

- **Specialist language test (Berlin Chamber of Psychotherapists)**

(<https://www.psychotherapeutenkammer-berlin.de/>)

Fees

EUR 210.00

Legal basis

- **Psychotherapists Act (PsychThG) § 1 et seqq.**

(https://www.gesetze-im-internet.de/psychthg_2020/_1.html)

- **Licensing regulations for psychotherapists (PsyThApprO) §§ 59 et seqq.**

(http://www.gesetze-im-internet.de/psychthappro/_59.html)

- **Ordinance on the Charging of Fees in the Health Care and Nursing Sector (GesPflGebO)**

(https://www.berlin.de/lageso/_assets/gesundheit/berufe-im-gesundheitswesen/neue-gebuehrenordnung_11_2021.pdf)

Average time to process request

approx. 3-4 months, if all documents are complete

More information

- **Explanation Approbation and contact persons Training in the European Union (EU)**

(<https://www.berlin.de/lageso/gesundheit/berufe-im-gesundheitswesen/ausbildung-in-der-europaeischen-union-eu/akademische-berufe/artikel.807022.php>)

- **Explanation Approbation and contact persons Training outside the**

European Union (third country)

(<https://www.berlin.de/lageso/gesundheitswesen/berufe-im-gesundheitswesen/ausbildung-ausserhalb-der-europaeischen-union-drittstaat/akademische-berufe/artikel.807216.php>)

- **Information on the recognition of foreign professional qualifications ("Recognition in Germany")**
(<https://www.anerkennung-in-deutschland.de/html/en/index.php>)
- **Financial assistance for the recognition procedure**
(<https://www.anerkennung-in-deutschland.de/html/en/financial-support.php>)
- **Publicly appointed translators in Germany**
(<https://www.justiz-dolmetscher.de/Recherche/>)

Hinweise zur Zuständigkeit

Approbation is only granted by the Berlin State Office for Health and Social Affairs.