

# Applying for a license to practice as a dentist with a professional qualification from the EU/EEA/Switzerland

Would you like to work as a dentist in Germany? Then you need a state license, the Approbation. You can also obtain a license to practice with a foreign professional qualification. To do so, you must have your professional qualification recognized.

## Competent Department

- [Die Senatorin für Gesundheit, Frauen und Verbraucherschutz | Referat 20 - Berufe im Gesundheitswesen](#)

## Basic information

The profession of dentist is regulated in Germany. This means that in order to work as a dentist in Germany without restriction, you need a license to practice. Approbation is the state license to practice the profession. This means that you are not allowed to work independently as a dentist without a license to practice. You can also obtain a license to practice dentistry in Germany with a professional qualification from a country in the European Union (EU), the European Economic Area (EEA) or Switzerland.

In order to obtain a license to practice, you must have your foreign professional qualification recognized. In the recognition procedure, the competent authority compares your professional qualification with the German professional qualification and checks the equivalence. The equivalence of the professional qualification is an important prerequisite for obtaining a license to practice.

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

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

In addition to the equivalence of the professional qualification, you must also meet other requirements for the permit to be issued. Further requirements include, for example, sufficient German language skills and health suitability.

In principle, you can also apply for the procedure from abroad.

## Requirements

- You have a professional qualification as a dentist from the EU, the EEA or Switzerland.
- You want to work as a dentist in Germany.
- You can provide proof of competence in the federal state of Bremen.
- Personal suitability: You are reliable to work as a dentist and have no criminal record.
- Health suitability: You are mentally and physically fit to work as a dentist.
- You have German language skills at the required level. This is usually general language skills at level B2 according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) and technical language skills at level C1.

## Procedure

If you would like to work as a dentist, there are various recognition processes depending on your country of training's accession to the EU/EEA and your professional qualification.

- First, however, you apply for a license to practice at the competent authority: the application must be submitted electronically. The original documents must be presented at a personal appointment.
- The competent authority will then check whether your training corresponds to the German training and whether all other requirements have been met.

### Automatic recognition

- As a rule, the automatic recognition procedure applies. This applies if you began your vocational training after your country of training joined the EU/EEA.
- This means that if you also meet all other requirements, your professional qualification will be recognized without an individual equivalence assessment.

### Certificate of conformity

- Vocational training that you began before your country of training joined the EU/EEA (or that does not correspond to the legal designations) can also be recognized automatically.
- To do this, you must submit a certificate from the competent authority in your country of training. This must prove that your professional qualification meets the minimum EU standards ("certificate of conformity").
- If your professional qualification does not meet the minimum standards, you must provide proof of your professional experience. You must have worked as a dentist in your country of origin for an uninterrupted period of 3 years in the 5 years prior to submitting your application. This must be confirmed by the competent authority in your country of origin.

## Examination of equivalence

- If you cannot present a certificate of conformity or do not have enough professional experience, your training must be checked individually.
- The competent authority will compare your professional qualification from abroad with the German professional qualification.
- The competent body will check 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.

## Possible results of the examination

If your professional qualification is equivalent:

- Then your foreign professional qualification will be recognized.
- The authority can confirm the result in writing.
- You must still fulfill the other requirements and prove your language skills.
- You will then be granted a license to practice as a dentist.

If there are significant differences between your professional qualification and the German professional qualification:

- Then you may be able to compensate for the differences through your professional practice, other knowledge or skills (lifelong learning).
- You must provide evidence of your professional experience. Knowledge and skills must be certified by an authority in the country in which you acquired the knowledge or skills.

However, it may be that the essential differences cannot be compensated for by this knowledge.

- In this case, the competent authority will tell you the main differences and why you cannot compensate for the main differences with your professional experience. The decision of the competent authority will also state the level of your training and the level required in Germany.
- You will then not be allowed to work as a dentist in Germany.

## Aptitude test

- If your professional qualification is not equivalent and you cannot compensate for the differences, you can take an aptitude test.
- The aptitude test checks whether you also have the knowledge and skills required to practise the profession of dentist in the areas in which significant differences have previously been identified.
- The aptitude test may consist of a written, an oral and a practical section.
- The competent body decides which section(s) of the examination to take on the basis of the equivalence test.
- If you pass the aptitude test and meet all other requirements, you will be licensed as a dentist.

## Legal bases

- [§ 1 Absatz 1 und § 2 Gesetz über die Ausübung der Zahnheilkunde](#)
- [§ 83 bis 103 Approbationsordnung für Zahnärzte und Zahnärztinnen \(ZApprO\)](#)
- [§ 10 Bundesvertriebenengesetz \(BVFG\)](#)

## More information

The following information is available:

### Freedom to provide services

Do you only want to offer services in Germany occasionally and for a short time? Then you do not usually need a state permit. You must fulfill these requirements:

- You must be established in another EU, EEA or Swiss state.
- You must provide proof of your professional qualification.
- You must notify the competent authority of your activity in writing.

The competent authority will inform you.

### Notification of equivalence

The licensing procedure may also include an assessment of the equivalence of your training (recognition procedure). You can apply for a separate notification of the result of the examination.

### Procedure for ethnic German repatriates

As a late repatriate, you can go through the recognition procedure either in accordance with the laws mentioned here or in accordance with the Federal Expellee Act. You can decide for yourself. The responsible office will advise you which procedure is right for you.

### Legal remedy

- You can take legal action against the decision of the competent authority within a certain period of time (for example, by lodging an objection). The decision will then be reviewed. Details can be found in the information on legal remedies at the end of your decision.
- Recommendation: Talk to the responsible office first before taking legal action against the decision.

## What deadlines must be paid attention to?

There is no deadline.

Sometimes documents are still missing from the procedure. The responsible office will

then inform you by when you must submit the documents. This may prolong the procedure.

### **How long does it take to process**

Depending on the individual case.

### **What are the costs?**

The responsible office will inform you of the costs. The costs generally depend on the time and effort required for processing.

Additional costs may be incurred (e.g. for translations or notarizations). These costs vary from case to case.