

Validation (*Nostrifikation*) of foreign degrees and diplomas

What is validation?

Validation is the conversion of a foreign (bachelor's, master's, diploma or doctor's) university degree into a corresponding Austrian one by the dean of studies, or into a corresponding Fachhochschule degree by the Fachhochschule Council (at Fachhochschulen by the Fachhochschule Collegium), respectively.

This means the complete equivalence of the two degrees, the right to use the respective Austrian academic degree and all the rights connected with its use. This relates in particular to the entitlement to exercise a profession for which in Austria an academic degree is required.

If, for instance, a person wants to exercise the profession of a doctor he/she must furnish evidence, among other things, that he/she has successfully completed the studies of medicine in Austria or that his/her studies completed abroad have been validated in Austria as being equivalent to Austrian studies.

Within the European Economic Area (EEA) the access to a number of academic professions is regulated by special directives which make it possible for members of EEA states to take up a profession without any further requirements. In such cases validation is no longer required and not necessary.

Neither is a validation necessary for admission to doctoral or continuing studies. The completion of such studies, however, does not automatically mean the validation of the preceding diploma studies.

Who can apply for validation?

The applicants must offer proof that the validation is a necessary (See: "Which documents must be submitted?") prerequisite the professional activity which he/she intends to exercise. In all other cases it lies with the employer to validate the applicant's studies abroad.

Where do you apply for validation?

A person may apply for validation at any Austrian university which offers comparable studies, or at the Fachhochschule Council or the relevant Fachhochschule Collegium, respectively, which means several institutions in many cases. Where the person submits his/her application is his/her choice. The same application for validation, however, can be submitted only to one institution. Also, the withdrawal of an application and an ensuing new application to another institution is not allowed.

Which documents must be submitted?

The following documents are required:

- passport;
- proof of the status of the foreign university or other institution of post-secondary education;
- detailed documents on the foreign studies, such as curriculum, transcript, study guide, examination certificates, scientific research papers, leaving certificates, ...;
- a document evidencing that the studies have been completed and the academic degree has been awarded.
- proof that the validation is a necessary (regulated by law, or generally statuted by an employer) prerequisite to exercise a certain profession

All documents must be submitted either in the original or in attested copies; the diploma document always in the original. Documents in languages other than German must be accompanied by certified German translations. All foreign documents must be legalised. - We recommend that before submitting their application applicants contact the competent authority (see above) to make sure that the required documents are complete.

What does validation cost?

At present, the validation fee is € 150,- and has to be paid in advance. In addition there are some administrative fees and duties.

What does the validation procedure involve?

The criteria of the validation procedure are the content, scope and requirements of comparable Austrian studies. If individual requirements are not met, validation can be made dependent upon certain conditions: applicants may be required to attend as auditing students certain classes and take certain examinations prescribed by the respective Austrian curriculum. If the applicant meets all additional requirements or if no requirements have been prescribed, the competent authority (see above) declares the foreign degree/diploma validated on the basis of a written decision.

If a validation is not possible ...

... because the differences between the foreign and the Austrian studies are too big, the person can apply for admission to studies in Austria and, after being admitted, apply for the recognition of examinations taken abroad if they are equivalent to Austrian ones. Then, the person can continue and complete his/her studies in Austria.

Special procedures ...

... exist for certain degrees obtained in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Italy, Liechtenstein, Macedonia, Slovenia, and Yugoslavia, as well as at Pontifical universities. In these cases the validation procedures are simplified for certain studies under special agreements.

Contact points ...

... at the respective universities and Fachhochschule programmes see under <http://www.portal.ac.at/>

For Information ...

... on general questions of validation / nostrification please contact
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