

Pharmacist:in with training from third countries, recognize professional qualification

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

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Basic information

The profession of pharmacist is regulated in Germany. This means that in order to work as a pharmacist in Germany without any restrictions, you need a license to practice.

Approbation is the state license for the profession. This means that you are not allowed to work independently as a pharmacist without a license.

You can also obtain a license to practice in Germany with a professional qualification from a so-called third country. Third countries are all countries that do not belong to the European Union (EU), the European Economic Area (EEA) or Switzerland.

In order to obtain a license to practice medicine, you must have your foreign professional qualification recognized.

In the recognition procedure, the competent authority 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 a license to practice.

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

If your professional qualification originates from the EU, the EEA or Switzerland, other regulations apply.

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

Requirements

- You have a professional qualification as a pharmacist from a third country
- You want to work as a pharmacist in Germany.
- You can provide proof of competence in the federal state of Bremen.
- Personal suitability: You are reliable to work as a pharmacist and have no criminal record.
- Health suitability: You are mentally and physically fit to work as a pharmacist.
- 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 medical language skills at level C1.

What documents do I need?

- The responsible office will inform you which documents you need to submit. Important documents are generally
 - Proof of identity (e.g. passport or identity card)
 - Marriage certificate (if your name has changed due to marriage)
 - Curriculum vitae
 - Proof of your professional qualifications (e.g. certificates, professional certificate)
 - Proof of the content and duration of your education (e.g. diploma supplement, transcript of records)

- Proof of your relevant professional experience as a pharmacist (e.g. job references)
- Information as to whether you have already submitted an application for a license to practice in Germany
- You must provide proof: You are allowed to work in the profession in your country of training.
- You do not yet live or work in the EU, the EEA or Switzerland? Then you must provide proof: You want to work in the profession in Germany. Proof can be: Job applications, proof of your application for an entry visa for gainful employment or personal declaration
- Proof of your personal suitability: Criminal record extract or certificate of good conduct from your country of origin. The proof must not be older than 3 months at the time of application.

Procedure

Application

You submit an application for a license to practice as a pharmacist to 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. The license can only be granted if your training from a third country is equivalent to the German training.

Examination of equivalence

The competent authority compares your professional qualification from abroad with the German professional qualification. The competent authority 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, your foreign professional qualification will be recognized. The authority can confirm the result in writing. You must still meet the other requirements and provide proof of your language skills. You will then be granted a license to practice as a pharmacist.

Are there any significant differences between your professional qualification and the German professional qualification? You may be able to compensate for the differences through your professional experience, 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 is possible that the essential differences cannot be compensated for by this knowledge. 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 pharmacist in Germany.

Knowledge test

If your professional qualification is not equivalent and you cannot compensate for the differences, you can take a knowledge test. The knowledge test is based on the final examination as a pharmacist in Germany. The knowledge test is an oral examination.

If you pass the knowledge test and meet all other requirements, you will be licensed as a pharmacist.

Legal bases

- [§§ 2 ff. Bundes-Apothekerordnung](#)
- [§§ 20 ff. Approbationsordnung für Apotheker](#)

More information

Professional permit

With the so-called professional permit you can work for a limited period of time without a license to practice medicine. With the professional permit you are allowed to work under the supervision of a person with a license. You may then only be allowed to perform activities in a specific area of work. You must meet the following requirements for the professional permit:

- Proof of your professional qualification
- Health suitability
- Personal suitability
- German language skills: You must provide proof of language skills at the B2 level and pass a professional language test at the C1 level.

You can apply for the professional license at the competent office.

Letter of equivalence

In the approval procedure, the equivalence of your training is examined (recognition procedure). You can apply for a separate notification for the result of the examination.

Procedure for late repatriates

As a late repatriate, you can choose to go through the recognition procedure according to the laws mentioned here or according to the Federal Expellees Act. You can decide this yourself. The competent office will advise you which procedure suits you.

What deadlines must be paid attention to?

None.

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.