

https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Belgium-Flemish-Community:National_Qualifications_Framework

Qualification structure

The decree of 30 April 2009 laid down a **Flemish qualification structure**. The qualification structure is a systematic classification of all qualifications recognised by the Flemish Government, on the basis of an all-round applicable framework. This classification aims to make qualifications and their mutual relations transparent so that education, course providers and other social players can communicate unambiguously about qualifications and the competences contained therein. The qualification structure can also be used as a frame of reference to:

- develop assessments for recognition of acquired competences and align procedures;
- provide direction and/or guidance in school careers and careers.

A distinction is drawn between vocational qualifications and educational qualifications.

- vocational qualifications are completed and ranked units of competences by means of which professions can be carried out;
- educational qualifications are completed and ranked units of competences that are necessary to function and take part in society, with which studies in secondary or higher education can be started or with which vocational activities can be carried out. They can only be acquired through education and only institutions recognised by the Flemish Government can issue proof of qualification in this respect.

Levels

The European **qualifications framework** distinguishes **8 levels**, which go from level 1 to level 8. Each level in the framework is described by means of a **level descriptor**. **The Flemish qualifications framework is also split into 8 levels**. The Flemish qualifications framework provides a generic description of the characteristics of the competences that pertain to the qualifications at that level and comprises five descriptor elements: knowledge, skills, context, autonomy and responsibility. They determine the level of the qualification. The level descriptors are used to describe and classify both educational and vocational qualifications. There are, indeed, two types of qualifications (at each of the 8 levels):

Educational qualifications

Educational qualifications are set up on the basis of final objectives, specific final objectives and/or vocational qualifications.

Composition of educational qualifications at the various levels:

- Level 1:
 - final objectives primary education
- Level 2:
 - final objectives Adult Basic Education
 - final objectives 2nd stageVSE
 - one or more recognised vocational qualifications
- Level 3:
 - final objectives 2nd grade 3rd stageVSE
 - one or more recognised vocational qualifications

- Level 4:
 - final objectives 3rd stage GSE and the specific final objectives for 3rd stage GSE that are linked to one or more areas of science
 - final objectives 3rd stage TSE and the specific final objectives for 3rd stage TSE that are linked to one or more areas of science
 - final objectives 3rd stage ASE and the specific final objectives for 3rd stage ASE that are linked to one or more areas of science
 - final objectives 3rd stage TSE or ASE and one or more recognised vocational qualifications
 - final objectives 3rd grade, 3rd stageVSE and one or more recognised vocational qualifications
 - final objectives for additional general education for Adult Education and one or more recognised vocational qualifications
 - final objectives of advanced secondary courses (Se-n-Se)
 - one or more recognised vocational level-4 qualifications
- Level 5:
 - final objectives of Higher Vocational Education courses (HBO5, ASSOCIATE DEGREE)
 - one or more recognised vocational level-5 qualifications
- Level 6:
 - final objectives of programmes leading to a bachelor qualification
- Level 7:
 - final objectives of programmes leading to a master qualification
- Level 8:
 - final objectives leading to qualification of doctor

The development of vocational qualifications

Vocational qualifications are based on vocational-qualification profiles developed by the Socio-Economic Council of Flanders (SERV) and by the sectoral social partners.

Procedural diagram on the definition of vocational and educational qualifications

<p>Phase 1 description</p>	<p>SERV (Socio-Economic Council of Flanders) decides together with the social partners what competences are necessary to carry out a particular occupation. The outcome is a vocational qualification file. Labour market actors validate this vocational qualification file.</p>	<p>- Levels 1 to 5</p> <p>AKOV devises a proposal for an educational qualification, whether based on a vocational qualification or not.</p> <p>- Levels 6 to 8</p> <p>The institutions for higher education describe domain specific learning outcomes.</p>
<p>Phase 2 classification</p>	<p>-A team of experts coordinated by AKOV assigns a level of the FQF to the profile.</p>	<p>- Levels 1 to 5</p> <p>The educational qualifications proposals take account of the targeted qualifications levels.</p> <p>- Levels 6 to 8</p> <p>The domain specific learning outcomes of the different degrees (Bachelor - Master - Doctor) are included as the qualifications for levels 6, 7 and 8 respectively.</p>

Phase 3 recognition	- The competent ministers present the proposal and the classification advice for recognition as a vocational qualification to the Flemish government.	<p>- Levels 1 to 5</p> <p>The competent minister presents the proposal to the Flemish government for recognition.</p> <p>- Levels 6 to 8</p> <p>The NVAO (Dutch Flemish Accreditation Organisation) validates the descriptions of the domain specific learning outcomes. The validated descriptions are automatically recognised as a qualification.</p>
Phase 4 registration	- AKOV registers all recognised qualifications in a database.	AKOV registers all recognised qualifications in a database.

Proof of qualification

Anyone who has acquired a qualification receives proof of the same. Proof of qualification is a document recognised by the Flemish Community such as a *diploma* (diploma), *getuigschrift* (certificate), or *certificaat* (certificate) which certifies that a person is qualified and possesses a relevant set of competences. The Flemish Government will need to determine which type of proof will be linked to which qualifications or combination of qualifications.

Qualification database and database of learning certifications and certifications of experiential evidence

In the qualification database which is developed by the Agency for Quality in Education and Training all recognised educational and vocational qualifications with their inherent competences are registered. In addition, there exists a database of learning certifications and certifications of experiential evidence in which all recognised or equivalent declared learning certifications and certifications of experiential evidence of each citizen are registered, together with the accompanying minimal identification data of the holder of the certifications in question.

A learning certification is a certificate that is issued when someone successfully completes a finished unit of education, training or course activities after it was checked, by means of a test, whether the pre-determined competences were acquired.

EVC and certificates of vocational competence or certifications of experiential evidence

The 'certificates of vocational competence', now also referred to as certifications of experiential evidence, were created in 2004.

- These are certificates which are issued by a competent body after it has been ascertained via a recognition, assessment and accreditation procedure that the person in question has acquired the preset competences to practice a particular vocation or sub-vocation.
- It also counts as proof that its holder has obtained a recognised vocational qualification.
- Each recognised proof of study which comprises the preset competences for a particular vocation or sub-vocation is accepted as a proof of experience.
- Diplomas which are issued by virtue of the fact that its holder has acquired the necessary vocational competences which were defined in a recognised vocational qualification, are at all

times deemed to at least comprise the preset competences required for a specific vocation or sub-vocation.

- Under the terms specified by the Flemish Government, these certifications of experiential evidence are also taken into consideration when people register for a course of study or training programme or as a job-seeker with VDAB.

In this case, the procedure to obtain a certification of experiential evidence will be launched at a person's own initiative.

The Flemish Government specifies the vocations for which a certification of experiential evidence is issued, with due regard for the advice from SERV. On the basis of vocational-competence profiles and competence profiles, SERV then develops standards which comprise a selection of competences which are deemed to be a prerequisite for a certain vocation.

The Flemish Subsidy Agency for Work and Social Economy acts as the accreditation body.

<http://www.ervaringsbewijs.be>

Relevant legislation

- Decree of 30 April 2004 concerning the acquisition of a certificate of vocational competence (B.S. 26/11/2004).
- Decision of the Flemish Government of 23 September 2005 implementing the Decree of 30 April 2004 concerning the acquisition of a certificate of vocational competence (B.S. 30/11/2005).
- Decision of the Flemish Government of 5 October 2007 amending the Decision of the Flemish Government of 27 August 2004 concerning the recognition of and subventions for career-service providers and amending the Decision of the Flemish Government of 23 September 2005 implementing the Decree of 30 April 2004 concerning the acquisition of a certificate of vocational competence.
- Decree of 30 April 2009 concerning the qualification structure
- Decree on flexibilisation of 30 April 2004 for higher education
- Decree of 15 June 2007 concerning adult education
- See also [ervaringsbewijs bij WeTwijs](#)

EVC, the recognition of acquired competences, allows people to have their knowledge, skills and attitudes recognised regardless of the context in which this knowledge, these skills and attitudes were acquired. People's competences are assessed on the basis of a standard. [EVC-procedures](#) are an alternative way in which people can obtain proof of recognition, outside of the traditional educational and training circuit. People who complete the EVC procedure successfully can obtain formal recognition, including proof of their competences, irrespective of the way in which these competences were acquired. The steps "assessment" and "recognition" are essential if these acquired competences are to be recognised and this recognition is to be formalised.

AKOV, the Agency for Quality Assurance in Education and Training (see 11.1.1.3) concentrates amongst other things on the quality and transparency of EVC pathways. Cooperation within the EVC field of action is very important here. In that light, AKOV activated an EVC Knowledge Network, led by an EVC Promoter Team. The EVC Promoter Team has been operational since June 2009. It seats 23 members, representative for the Knowledge Network. All those offering pathways towards the accreditation and/or the recognition of acquired competences are free to join the Knowledge Network. The idea is to develop and exchange expertise and sound practices regarding high-quality recognition/accreditation procedures, quality standards and reliable methodologies and tools. The Promoter Team and Knowledge Network also draft policy recommendations in this regard.

A special website was developed aimed at all the organisations who are professionally involved in EVC.

Within **socio-cultural educational work** a portfolio for non-formal and informal learning experiences in recognised and/or socio-cultural educational work and youth work, [Oscar](#), has been developed. (See 8.7).

European Qualifications Framework (EQF)

On 23 April 2008, the presidents of the European Parliament and the Council signed the European Recommendation for an [EQF](#) (European Qualifications Framework), which links together different countries' qualifications frameworks. It promotes transnational citizen mobility and lifelong learning.

For Flanders, AKOV, the Agency for Quality Assurance in Education and Training (see 11.1.1.3), has created the link between the Flemish qualifications structure and the EQF on the basis of the ten criteria established by the EQF Advisory Group. The development of the [referencing report](#) may be consulted online and downloaded. The report is available on the [EQF-Ref website](#).

A '**national coordination point**' is appointed for communication about the referencing of the national qualification levels to the levels of the EQF; for Flanders, AKOV is the NCP-EQF.