



Registration requirements for foreign educational degrees or qualification certificates

The new Construction Chamber Act NRW (BauKaG NRW) has comprehensively amended the regulations for entry to the profession for persons with educational degrees and qualification certificates acquired in other EU countries or third countries, taking into account the EU's Professional Recognition Directive (BARL - Directive 2005/36/EC) and the Act on the Recognition of Professional Qualifications NRW (BQFG NRW).

To be eligible to register with the Chamber of Architects of North Rhine-Westphalia, distinctions must be drawn according to the field of specialisation as well as the origin of the respective degree:

Specialisation architecture

a) The registration requirements with regard to studies are deemed to have been fulfilled if a **higher education degree programme notified under BARL** has been successfully completed in another EU country, § 20 Para. 4 BauKaG NRW. If in doubt, please contact the respective higher education institution to find out whether your degree programme has been notified in accordance with the provisions of the directive. In any case, the degree programmes listed in Annex V.7 of the BARL are notified. However, the Annex is not always up to date.

b) If it is a **non-notified degree programme** from another EU country or the EEA, it replaces a degree programme at a German higher education institution if the degree is deemed to be equivalent, § 20 Para. 5 No. 1 BauKaG NRW. For this purpose, you must **first apply for a Statement of Comparability** from the Central Office for Foreign Education (ZAB) (more information and application form available at www.kmk.de/zab/zeugnisbewertung).

Pursuant to § 20 Para. 11 BauKaG NRW, the submission and assessment of documents, as well as cases of a loss of evidence and the obligations of the applicant to cooperate, are additionally governed by § 12 Para. 2 to 5, § 13 Para. 2 to 4 and 8, §18, § 19 of the BQFG NRW.

c) The same applies if the **higher education degree** in question was obtained in a **non-EU country**, § 20 Para. 3 BauKaG NRW. In this case also, you must **first** apply for a Statement of Comparability from at the ZAB to assess equivalency.



d) Persons who hold **proof of a professional qualification** issued in an EU member state or a state of the EEA are also eligible for registration, provided that the profession of architect is regulated by law in the country concerned, § 20 Para. 5 No. 2 item a BauKaG NRW (list of regulated professions available at www.ec.europa.eu/growth/tools-databases/regprof).

If the profession is not regulated in the country in question, it is also sufficient to have practised the profession full-time for at least one year during the previous ten years there – or a corresponding amount of part-time – in conjunction with proof of qualification or training issued by the competent authority there that proves that the holder has been prepared for practising the profession in question, § 20 Para. 5 No. 2 item b BauKaG NRW.

Proof of professional practice is not required if the proof of qualification or training attests to a regulated course of training as referred to in Article 3(1)(e) of Directive 2005/36/EC.

Compensatory Measures

In cases b) to d), if the content of the degree programme or professional practice deviates significantly from the requirements applicable here and cannot be demonstrably compensated for by professional experience or lifelong learning, compensatory measures may be ordered, which can generally take the form of an adaptation period or an aptitude test, § 20 Para. 6 BauKaG NRW.

In cases b) and c), an aptitude test will regularly have to be ordered according to the requirements of the BauKaG NRW, § 20 para. 6 p. 3 in conjunction with Art. 10 letter c BARL (applicants whose proof of EU training has not been notified). For applicants who have acquired a professional qualification in the field of architecture outside the scope of the BARL, § 20 Para. 7 orders the aptitude test as the only option. If an aptitude test is required, it must be taken within six months of its ordering. The examination covers selected subject areas, the knowledge of which is an essential prerequisite for holding the professional title.

The same applies to case d) – regular aptitude test. The situation is only different in the constellation of Art. 11 letter a of the BARL (person without a higher education degree and without education at the secondary level). In this case, the applicant must complete both an adaptation period and an aptitude test. However, the Chamber of Architects may also refuse registration without having ordered the aforementioned compensatory measures § 20 Para. 6 Sentence 2.



Specialisation: interior design, landscape architecture, urban planning

a) The registration requirement of the necessary higher education degree in the relevant subject area shall be deemed to be fulfilled if proof of an equivalent degree at a foreign higher education institution or at another foreign institution can be provided. For this purpose, you must **first apply for a Statement of Comparability** from the Central Office for Foreign Education (ZAB) (more information and application form available at www.kmk.org/zab/zeugnisbewertung).

Pursuant to § 20 Para. 11 BauKaG NRW, the submission and assessment of documents, as well as cases of a loss of evidence and the obligations of the applicant to cooperate, are additionally governed by § 12 Para. 2 to 5, § 13 Para. 2 to 4 and 8, §18, § 19 of the BQFG.

b) Furthermore, persons who hold **proof of a professional qualification** issued in an EU member state or a state of the European Economic Area are eligible for registration, provided that the profession in question (interior architect, landscape architect or urban planner) is regulated by law in the country concerned, § 20 Abs.5 Nr. 2 lit. a BauKaG NRW (list of regulated professions available at www.ec.europa.eu/growth/tools-databases/regprof).

If the profession is not regulated in the country in question, it is also sufficient to have practised the profession full-time for at least one year during the previous ten years there – or a corresponding amount of part-time – in conjunction with proof of qualification or training issued by the competent authority there that proves that the holder has been prepared for practising the profession in question, § 20 Para. 5 No. 2 item b BauKaG NRW.

Proof of professional practice is not required if the proof of qualification or training attests to a regulated course of training as referred to in Article 3(1)(e) of Directive 2005/36/EC.

Compensatory Measures

If the content of the degree programme or professional practice deviates significantly from the requirements applicable here and cannot be demonstrably compensated for by professional experience or lifelong learning, the deficit can only be compensated for in terms of an aptitude test § 20 Para. 7. This aptitude test must be taken within six months of its ordering, § 20 Para. 6. The test covers selected subject areas, knowledge of which is an essential requirement for holding the professional title.

Documents to be submitted

You will find a list of the specific documents to be submitted in the respective application for registration.

Please Note

Because cases can vary greatly, particularly when it comes to educational degrees and certificates from non-EU countries, we cannot provide comprehensive answers on every case in this brief information sheet. For this reason, we strongly recommend that you contact our registration department (eintragung@aknw.de) before submitting an application.

For more information, please feel free to contact the

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