



FACTSHEET

Division Higher Education & Legal Affairs, 18.02.2021

Required language skills

Persons applying for recognition of a teaching qualification or a qualification in special education, speech therapy or psychomotor therapy must demonstrate very high-level – almost mother-tongue - skills in one of Switzerland's national languages (German, French or Italian); since the language is essential to the practice of these professions it must be mastered, with richness and nuance, by applicants to enable them to deal with a wide range of situations.

As part of the recognition process, applicants are therefore required to provide proof of sufficient language skills in one of the Swiss national languages. An internationally recognised language diploma at level C2 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) is required as proof of sufficient language skills in German, French or Italian. This diploma may also have been obtained abroad.

Applicants whose mother tongue is a Swiss national language and/or who have completed their entire education (scientific education or educational training in the case of teaching qualifications) in a French, German or Italian speaking country or region, are generally not required to hold an official language diploma. The EDK reserves the right to require an official language diploma in justified individual cases.

A language diploma at level B2 of the European Reference Framework in French German or Italian is sufficient for teachers who exclusively teach a non-national language (e.g. English or Spanish) as a foreign language at secondary I level or in Baccalaureate schools, as they do not necessarily have to teach in one of the national languages.

Language diploma presentation deadline

In the following cases the language diploma can be provided during the process, i.e. within two years of the application being submitted (no extension of time!):

- The diploma is issued by an EU or EFTA State.
- Swiss citizenship or citizenship of another EFTA State or of the EU.
- The diploma is issued by a third State and the applicant already has a job in the relevant profession in Switzerland for which he or she needs recognition to be established by the EDK.

The language diploma must be attached when submitting the application in the following case:

- The diploma is issued by a third State and the applicant does not already have a job in the relevant profession in Switzerland for which he or she needs recognition to be established by the EDK.

The application process will be closed if the diploma is not received before the two-year deadline. An extension of this deadline is not possible.

Language tests for teaching professions

The Centre for Continuing Education at the Institute of Translation and Interpreting of the Zürcher Hochschule für Angewandte Wissenschaften (ZHAW) offers language tests in French, German or Italian which are specifically designed to check that teachers have the language skills required by the EDK. Further information can be obtained from the Continuing Training Centre, weiterbildung.linguistik@zhaw.ch, Tel: 058 934 61 61.