

# Psychotherapy studies - recognition of professional qualifications acquired abroad

German French Spanish

## General information:

If you have completed your training in a state of the European Union or outside the European Union and wish to work in your psychotherapeutic profession in the Federal Republic of Germany on an unrestricted and permanent basis, you need an Approbation. The licence to practise is granted irrespective of your nationality.

The legal basis for practising the psychotherapeutic profession is the Psychotherapists Act (new version) of 15.11.2019 (PsychThG-new version). Anyone wishing to obtain a licence to practise must have completed a domestic or equivalent foreign psychotherapeutic training and have the personal requirements for this profession.

An application with training from a non-EU state (third country) is examined in accordance with § 11 PsychThG.

An application with training from the EU, EEA or Switzerland will be examined in accordance with § 12 PsychThG.

An application for a licence to practise medicine with foreign training can only be processed if the Stuttgart Regional Council has local jurisdiction. For this purpose, please send suitable proof, for example the statement of a potential employer in Baden-Württemberg (e.g. clinic or practice) that there is an interest in employing you in case the licence to practise medicine is granted. If personal circumstances are asserted (e.g. close relatives in Baden-Württemberg), suitable documents must also be submitted which clearly show this.

The Psychotherapists Act was changed on 01.09.2020. A (polyvalent) Bachelor's degree in psychology and a Master's degree in clinical psychology and psychotherapy with certain learning contents, which are regulated in the Approbationsordnung (PsychThApprO) issued for the PsychThG, must now be completed in order to receive the licence to practise as a psychotherapist. After the licence has been granted, one can complete further training to become a specialist psychotherapist. This further training must also be completed if you wish to set up your own practice and be registered with a health insurance fund. The Baden-Württemberg Chamber of Psychotherapists is responsible for the further training.

The equivalence assessment of the foreign training with the German psychotherapeutic training is carried out in two steps:

1. The foreign professional qualification must be required in the state in which it was acquired for direct access to a profession corresponding to the profession of psychotherapist in Germany with its authorisation to practise medicine (Heilkunde) (reference qualification).
2. If this is the case, the equivalence of the content of the acquired professional qualification with the professional qualification of a psychotherapist in Germany is examined by comparing the content of the foreign training with the content of the Bachelor's and Master's degree programme according to the PsychThApprO. The learning content for the Bachelor's degree is set out in Annex 1 to Section 8 No. 1 PsychThApprO and the learning content for the Master's degree in Annex 2 to Section 8 No. 2 PsychThApprO.

The equivalence assessment takes into account the university degree and, if available, postgraduate education or training.

In the case of identified substantial differences in training from a third country which cannot be compensated for with suitable psychotherapeutic professional experience, a knowledge examination may be taken to compensate for the differences.

In the case of identified significant differences in training from the EU, EEA or Switzerland that cannot be compensated for

with suitable psychotherapeutic professional experience, a choice can be made between taking an aptitude test or practical adaptation measures to compensate for the differences.

Once you have obtained your licence to practise and have completed your initial or further training in psychotherapy abroad, you can apply to the Baden-Württemberg Chamber of Psychotherapists for equivalence of your initial or further training in psychotherapy abroad with your further training in psychotherapy as a specialist psychotherapist in Germany.

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#### Application:

The application for licensure as a psychotherapist is sent by post to the Regional Council Stuttgart with an informal, personally signed covering letter stating the applicant's details (name, address, date of birth, place of birth) and a declaration that the application has not been submitted in any other federal state, together with the following documents in single copies:

Regierungspräsidium Stuttgart  
Anerkennungsstelle für Gesundheitsberufe  
Frau Metz-Jülg  
Department 95.2  
Ruppmannstr. 21  
70565 Stuttgart

- Proof of identity (identity card)
- Tabular list of completed educational courses in German (curriculum vitae/educational career)
- Evidence of education acquired abroad with German translation (degree certificate with overview of subjects/grades, overview of subjects/hours, overview of subjects/hours/grades)
- Detailed breakdown of the subject content of the training (curriculum / syllabus) from the study or training period (if not available, please consult us)
- Certificate of entitlement to exercise the profession in the country of origin with German translation
- Other qualifications, if these are required for the determination of equivalence

All documents relating to the content of training must be submitted in full. Documents submitted after the assessment has been completed may only have limited probative value. English-language documents can be submitted without translation, i.e. in English.

These and the other documents required for the granting of the licence to practise medicine are to be sent by post in officially certified copies after the equivalence test has been carried out only before the licence to practise medicine is granted. You will be informed of this in due course.

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#### Language skills:

In order to be granted the licence to practise, you must have the knowledge of the German language required for practising the profession. Language skills are required at level C 1 with specialist language skills at level C 2. The specialist language skills are proven by passing a specialist language examination, which is taken at the Baden-Württemberg Chamber of Psychotherapists in Stuttgart. You will be registered for this in due course by the Regional Council when you have applied for your licence to practise. If you have completed several years of schooling or training in German, you do not have to take the specialist language examination.

Once the equivalence of the training has been determined, the specialist language examination (if required) has been passed, a current medical certificate of health suitability for the psycho-therapeutic profession, a declaration of exemption from criminal prosecution and a certificate of good conduct of document type 0 have been submitted, the licence to practise can be issued. No academic degrees (e.g. doctorate, bachelor's, master's, diploma) are entered on the licence to practise as academic degrees are not part of the name.

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Permission to exercise the profession temporarily:

For the period of time until a specialist language or knowledge examination is taken, those with training from a third country can apply for a permit to temporarily practise as a psychotherapist in accordance with § 3 PsychThG with proof of a B 2 language certificate and a job promise in Baden-Württemberg, with which one can work in a psychotherapeutic capacity for up to two years in a dependent position in an institution in Baden-Württemberg.

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Further information:

If the examination shows that the licence to practise cannot be granted due to the lack of a reference qualification, it is possible in accordance with § 27 PsychThG (transitional regulation) to complete the training as a psychological psychotherapist in accordance with the old version of the PsychThG with an equivalent foreign Master's degree in psychology that includes the subject of clinical psychology until 01.09.2032 at the latest (as long as the Bachelor's degree programme was started before 01.09.2020). If your Master's degree in psychology was completed with the subject Clinical Psychology, this can fulfil the access requirement for psychotherapist training according to § 5 PsychThG-old version as equivalent to the German Master's degree in psychology in conjunction with the transitional regulation according to § 27 PsychThG-new version. You can apply directly to a state-recognised training centre for psychotherapy with your documents. The training centre that wishes to accept you as an applicant for psychotherapy training will apply to the Stuttgart Regional Council for legal information on the existence of the admission requirement.

List of training centres (in german)

Another possibility for practising psychotherapy in the sense of medicine (Heilkunde) is the naturopath (Heilpraktiker) licence for psychotherapy according to the Heilpraktikergesetz (HPG), with which one is authorised to carry out psychotherapeutic treatments to a limited extent. The application for this can be submitted to the health office responsible for your place of residence.

There is no official recognition from the authorities in Germany for practising as a psychologist. You can apply directly with your foreign degree certificates as a psychologist and possible employers decide for themselves whether they consider your

degrees suitable for the job.

[Click here for information on the recognition of a university degree in psychology from abroad for practising as a psychologist in Germany. \(in german\)](#)

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## Nationwide responsibility

Regierungspräsidium Stuttgart  
Department 95.2  
Landesankennungsstelle für Gesundheitsberufe (LAFG BW)

### Adress

Postfach 80 07 09  
70507 Stuttgart

## Telephone consultation hours

Currently heavily restricted! Please use e-mail as a priority!

Di. 09.00 Uhr - 11.30 Uhr  
Do. 09.00 Uhr - 11.30 Uhr und 14.00 Uhr - 15.30 Uhr

Contact person:  
Karin Metz-Jülg  
Department 95.2  
0711 904-39219  
[karin.metz-juelg@rps.bwl.de](mailto:karin.metz-juelg@rps.bwl.de)