

eduQua:2021

# Certification Procedure Regulations



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# 1 Introduction

The eduQua label is awarded to continuing education and training (CET) institutions that fulfil the principles and requirements of the eduQua:2021 quality standard.

With the certification, the continuing education and training institutions commit themselves to continuously evaluating the extent to which internal and external guidelines, agreements and promises are fulfilled at the level of the organisation, the continuing education and training programmes and the learning processes, as well as realising any potential for development that has been identified.

As part of the certification procedure, the continuing education and training institutions gain and receive impulses and feedback on their own quality management. In the self-evaluation, they take an in-depth look at their educational, leadership and communication processes as well as their educational programmes and the needs of their customers and recognise opportunities and possibilities for their internal development. In this context, self-evaluation is not meant to be a snapshot but rather a management tool.

The eduQua label gives a certified continuing education and training institution advantages on the market. Certification has a positive effect on the quality of the continuing education and training institution as a whole and increases its credibility among clients. Certification is also an advantage when dealing with authorities. In many cantons, continuing education and training institutions need a valid quality management system in order to receive public funding. The eduQua certificate is seen as a suitable and widespread proof of quality.

The certification bodies are the contact partners for the continuing education and training institution for all matters concerning the certification procedure. They check fulfilment of the eduQua principles, criteria and requirements, effective implementation and also continuous development by analysing documents and carrying out an on-site certification audit as well as annual interim audits. They carry out recertification every three years.

The following diagram shows the certification procedure at a glance:



Fig. 1:  
Certification procedure  
(simplified representation)

The following regulations describe the certification procedure in detail. The key terms are defined in the glossary included in the quality standard document.

## 2 Responsibilities

### 2.1 BODY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE STANDARD

The Swiss Federation for Adult Learning (SVEB) is responsible for eduQua. It manages the eduQua office and ensures the operation of the system. The SVEB Board acts as the steering committee. The support group supports and helps shape the development of eduQua.

As a steering committee, the SVEB Board carries out the following tasks:

- Definition and development of the policy pursued in the field of quality in continuing education and training
- Overall responsibility for the eduQua label as a standard setter
- Constitution of the support group
- Definition of the cooperation with the Swiss Accreditation Service (SAS) and the certification bodies
- Control of the eduQua office

As the managing body, the eduQua office carries out many operational tasks. It

- keeps a central register of certified continuing education and training institutions,
- maintains the information and content on the SVEB and eduQua websites,
- provides general information about eduQua,
- is the contact point for complaints,
- coordinates the eduQua support group,
- promotes exchange between certification bodies,
- regularly evaluates the impact of eduQua and continues to develop the eduQua standard,
- makes the public aware of the advantages of the eduQua label and certification,
- organises training courses for auditors as well as for continuing education and training institutions and interested parties,
- maintains exchange with interested organisations, authorities, the Swiss Accreditation Service and consumer organisations.

The eduQua support group is an advisory body to the SVEB Board and the eduQua office. The confederation and the cantons, as well as important players in the continuing education and training landscape, are represented equally in the support group. It has the following tasks:

- Support for the continuous development of eduQua
- Participation in defining the principles and requirements used as a basis for eduQua certification
- Recommendations on the price structure for eduQua certification
- Formulation of requirements for the auditors

## 2.2 SWISS ACCREDITATION SERVICE

The Swiss Accreditation Service (SAS) examines the eduQua standard and the certification procedure normatively on the basis of the accreditation standard (ISO/IEC 17021-1) and pronounces the suitability for accreditation.

SAS also examines the conformity and competence of the certification bodies and the auditors employed by them as well as the staff involved on the basis of ISO/IEC 17021-1. Accreditation formally recognises the competence of a certification body to carry out conformity assessments (e.g. eduQua certifications) according to specific requirements.

The certification bodies accredited for certification of the eduQua standard can be found on the [website of SAS](#) and on the [website of SVEB](#).

## 2.3 ACCREDITED CERTIFICATION BODIES

Accredited certification bodies are responsible for implementing the eduQua certification procedure and awarding certificates. They have the following tasks:

- They carry out eduQua certification, interim and recertification audits.
- They make the certification decision at the request of the auditor and release the audit reports.
- They award the eduQua certificate to those continuing education and training institutions that fulfil the requirements of the eduQua standard and the regulations for certification.
- They check the implementation of requirements and indications.
- They deal with appeals against the certification decision.
- They clarify participants' complaints about compliance with the minimum eduQua requirements with the certified continuing education and training institutions.

The certification bodies must comply with the requirements of impartiality and objectivity. According to ISO/IEC 17021-1, they are not allowed to offer advice to institutions or carry out internal audits and gap analyses (analysis of the gap between target and actual values).

## 2.4 AUDITORS OF THE CERTIFICATION BODIES

Auditors are employees or representatives of a certification body. They check fulfilment of the eduQua principles, criteria and requirements by means of certification and interim audits, draw up audit plans and reports and apply for certification or maintenance of certification from the certification body.

eduQua auditors must have minimum qualifications and relevant practical experience, which have to be checked and proven by the certification bodies.

The following cumulative requirements apply.

### **1. Adult education qualification**

Adult Instructor, Federal Diploma of Higher Education, Advanced Federal Diploma of Higher Education in Adult Education or University of Teacher Education degree (as a teacher or in educational sciences, at bachelor's level).

Comparable initial and continuing education and training programmes from related fields can be recognised as analogous.

### **2. Qualification in management and organisation**

Completed education or relevant continuing education in business administration, organisational consulting or quality management amounting to at least 10 ECTS credits (e.g. a CAS).

Comparable initial and continuing education and training programmes can be recognised as analogous.

Alternatively, a written proof of qualification issued by a third party for the management of organisations or for responsibility in the field of quality assurance and development can be presented.

### **3. Practical experience in continuing education and training**

A minimum of 500 hours of proven practical experience as trainers or learning facilitators in the field of continuing education and training and/or as leaders of schools, continuing education and training programmes or courses is required.

### **4. Current activity in the field of adult education**

Current activity in the field of adult or continuing education and training is required. This should not date back more than five years at the start of the activity. The current reference to continuing education and training should be maintained through appropriate measures.

### **5. Competences as an auditor**

The following subject-specific and interdisciplinary competences are key for the audits for eduQua certification:

- Understanding of the interrelationships between the quality-related aspects in a continuing education and training organisation
- Ability to critically evaluate continuing education and training programmes and concepts
- Knowledge of the relevant legal requirements and of relevant directives in the field of adult and continuing education and training
- Understanding of educational policy concerns in the field of quality development
- Basic knowledge or experience of how to deal with risks and opportunities and also of data protection and data security in Switzerland

- Gathering information using effective questioning, listening and observing skills and by evaluating documents, records and data
- Ability to draw conclusions and make decisions
- Linguistic skills when writing reports

When selecting auditors for the specific certification procedure, the certification bodies have to ensure they are a good fit for the character of the continuing education and training institution and the type of continuing education and training programme.

## **2.5 STAFF INVOLVED AT THE CERTIFICATION BODIES**

People at the certification bodies who make decisions on audit periods and contracts as well as on granting, refusing, maintaining, renewing or limiting the scope of certification must have and be able to demonstrate the following competences:

- Knowledge of ISO/IEC 17021-1 and the applicable IAF documents
- Knowledge of the certification and standard requirements of eduQua:2021
- Knowledge of the quality-related and risk-related aspects of the continuing education and training sector



## 3 Certification process

### 3.1 REQUIREMENTS

The requirements that an eduQua-certified continuing education and training institution must fulfil are set out in binding form in the eduQua standard document. These requirements place particular emphasis on the fact that the continuing education and training institution has, in institutional and cultural terms, established a quality management system (QMS) which reveals its own understanding of quality and education and its quality development processes. The quality management (QM) ensures that the continuing education and training processes as well as the forms of management and cooperation are regularly reviewed and that development measures are planned on the basis of the evaluation.

This approach allows the continuing education and training institution to meet the demand to continuously improve and develop quality. Development measures are determined on the basis of regular, data-based quality analysis.

### 3.2. PREREQUISITES

The minimum requirement for eduQua certification is for all continuing education and training organisations to already have practical experience as education providers.

**Basic principle:**

A certificate can only be awarded if it can be proven that at least one continuing education and training programme was carried out at the time of certification and evaluated according to the criteria.

The following prerequisites also apply for certification:

- If there is a request for certification, the senders must be clearly identifiable as persons and attributable to a continuing education and training organisation that is active on the market.
- continuing education and training providers must be headquartered in Switzerland and thus be a Swiss continuing education and training institution..
- Foreign continuing education and training providers can only apply for certification if they
  - a) provide a significant proportion of their educational services for Swiss customers,
  - or
  - b) are established in the Swiss education market.
- If the continuing education and training services of a continuing education and training provider are not provided in Switzerland, the institution must be inspected at the location where the services are provided.

- Education providers that offer academic titles on the Swiss market that are not formally recognised in Switzerland and are not accredited as an institution under the Higher Education Act (HEdA) can only ask for eduQua certification if their organising institution and legal form are clearly evident and the recognition of the titles and diplomas and their value on the Swiss labour market are transparently explained to clients.

### 3.3. CERTIFIABLE UNITS

The eduQua quality label is aimed at institutions that are active in the field of adult education or continuing education and training for adults. Certification based on the eduQua procedure is basically open to all institutions that offer continuing education and training and want to identify and improve their quality. In addition to state-subsidised continuing education and training institutions (public and private providers), market-oriented continuing education and training institutions and in-house continuing education and training departments at companies can also be certified.

#### **Basic principle:**

eduQua is a certificate for continuing education and training institutions, not for individual educational programmes or persons. Each continuing education and training institution is considered a certification unit.

In the case of large continuing education and training institutions, it may be advisable in specific cases to define individual departments or locations as separate certification units if

- independent management teams and different management cycles and quality control loops are used at different locations or departments,
- the institution as a whole is not certified,
- the organisational forms are different, e.g.
- as a result of decentralised management and decision-making structures,
- an own quality management system is used
- that differs from the management system of the institution as a whole, e.g. as a result of decentralised evaluation systems,
- own educational programmes are developed, implemented and evaluated at the different locations or departments.

In continuing education and training organisations with centralised management and evaluation structures and decentralised, semi-autonomous education and training locations, e.g. franchising organisations, the certification body can clarify whether a simplified certification procedure can be carried out instead of the individual certification of each location, i.e. a so-called multi-site certification according to the Mandatory Document MD 1 of the International Accreditation Forum IAF.

In contrast, continuing education and training organisations with a

centralised quality management system and several physical or virtual training locations without their own autonomy are generally not considered multi-site organisations, but rather organisations with a high degree of complexity (cf. Chap. 5.2.2).

The decision as to whether a continuing education and training institution can be certified as a whole or according to the multi-site procedure, or whether individual departments must be certified separately, is the responsibility of the certifying body. It is based on the applicable accreditation regulations. In complex cases, the eduQua office can be consulted in the decision-making process.

The following are recognised and certified as individual enterprises by eduQua:

- anyone offering educational services on the market,
- anyone paying into the Swiss old-age and survivor's insurance fund (OASI) who is recognised as self-employed by OASI.

An entry in the commercial register is not a prerequisite for eduQua certification; instead, proven self-employment and an educational programme are required. Pure counselling or support services without educational content are not considered to be continuing education and training activities. The decision as to whether an individual enterprise can be certified according to eduQua is the responsibility of the certification bodies, and the above-mentioned criteria need to be taken into account.

### 3.4 PHASES IN THE CERTIFICATION PROCESS

The following diagram shows the 3-year cycle of certification and maintenance in the different phases.

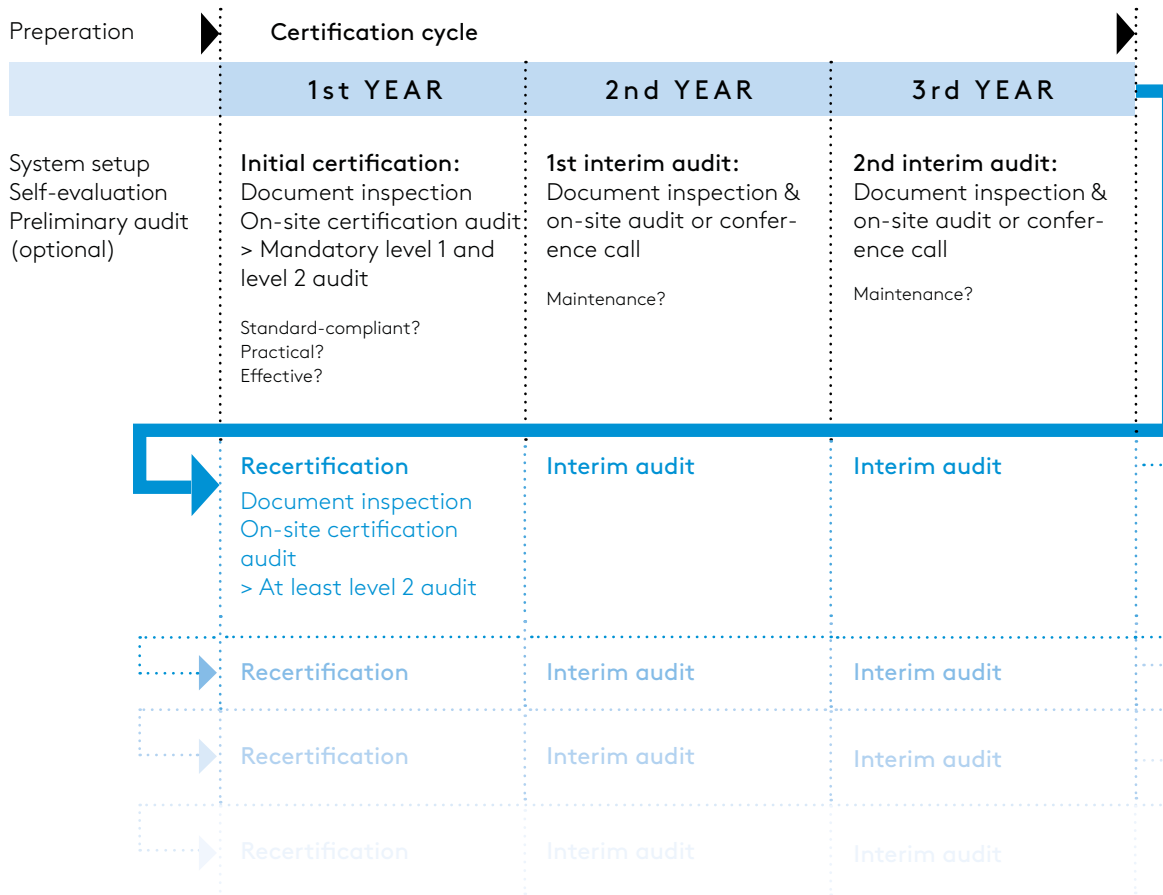


Fig. 2:  
3-year cycle: Certification procedure and maintenance

The audit types and elements of the certification procedure are explained in more detail below.

#### 3.4.1 Self-evaluation on the degree of fulfilment of the eduQua requirements

With the self-evaluation, the continuing education and training institution should prove, measure and evaluate the degree of fulfilment of the eduQua criteria and requirements as well as its own quality requirements and promises as part of the control and review of activities. The self-evaluation should be based on figures, data and facts as well as on systematised experiences and assessments.

In this sense, the self-evaluation is to be understood as a self-image and as a management tool and is one of the basic documents for the eduQua certification and interim audits. In the course of the audits, the auditors provide the continuing education and training institutions with an external view of the degree of fulfilment of the eduQua principles and requirements.

The self-evaluation tool is based on the principles, criteria and requirements of eduQua. Each principle has one or more eduQua criteria, each of which has to be supplemented with its own quality requirements and indicators.

The self-evaluation is structured as follows:

eduQua- CRITERION/ OWN QUALITY REQUIREMENTS / OBJECTIVES	INDICATORS / KEY FIGURES,IN- FORMATION, SOURCES,MEASUR- ING INSTRUMENTS	TARGET VALUE/ IDEAL VALUE, BASIS OF ASSESSMENT	ACTUAL VAL- UES,OWN EVALUA- TION AND ASSESS- MENT, BALANCE OF STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES	DEGREE OF FULFILMENT	DEVELOPMENT MEASURES
A1					
A2					
A3					
A4					
A5					
A6					
B1					
C1					
C2					
D1					
D2					
E1					
E2					
F1					
G1					
G2					
H1					
H2					
H3					

Table 1:  
Structure of the  
eduQua self-evaluation

Continuing education and training institutions are free to use the self-evaluation tool provided by eduQua or to use their own quality assessment and control tools. These must provide data-based information on how well the eduQua principles, criteria and requirements are fulfilled and which development measures are planned for the following period based on the quality analysis.

### **3.4.2 Optional preliminary audit**

Before the actual certification audit, there is the possibility of carrying out a preceding, optional preliminary audit. This takes place on-site or as a document inspection and is carried out and charged by the certification body or an external specialist body. A preliminary audit checks how well the continuing education and training institution already meets the eduQua requirements and where there are still gaps. This enables the continuing education and training provider to better assess suitability for certification and the necessary measures. The preliminary audit by certification bodies must not include any advisory activities.

### **3.4.3 Certification audit**

After appropriate preparations and a self-evaluation, a continuing education and training institution can register for initial certification with an accredited certification body. The certification bodies accredited for certification of the eduQua standard can be found on the SAS website and the SVEB website.

The certification audit consists of two parts:

- **Level 1 audit (document inspection)**  
Conformity check to evaluate the quality management system's compliance with the standard. In the case of complex organisations, the audit can also be carried out on-site.
- **Level 2 audit (on-site)**  
Assessment of suitability and effectiveness to evaluate the practical implementation and effectiveness of the quality management system.

Before the on-site certification audit (level 2 audit), the responsible auditor draws up a detailed audit plan with time and location details, audit criteria and contents as well as contact persons. Immediately after the audit, there is a final discussion to inform the continuing education and training institution about the audit result as well as risks and possible deviations (non-conformities) or necessary follow-up audits. The audit result is recorded in an audit report, released by the certification body and sent to the institution promptly (usually within 14 days).

When the certification procedure is successfully completed, the continuing education and training institution receives an eduQua certificate from the certification body. It remains valid for three years, provid-

ed that the two interim audits are successful. Then, analogous to the initial certification, recertification is required and the certificate is renewed. This marks the beginning of a new certification cycle.

As a rule, a level 1 audit is not necessary for recertification, provided that there are no significant changes to the continuing education and training institution's programme, quality management system or framework conditions.

#### **3.4.4 Interim audits**

In order to maintain the three-year certification, the certification body carries out two interim audits. In this process, indications for further development from the certification audit as well as the conditions for maintaining the certificate are examined. The 1st interim audit after the initial certification (date of the certification decision) takes place within 12 months of the certification audit, the 2nd interim audit within 9–15 months of the 1st interim audit. After recertification, an interim audit must be carried out each calendar year.

After each audit, the auditor draws up an audit report indicating any deviations from the eduQua principles, criteria and requirements, applying to the certification body for certification or for the maintenance or suspension of certification, and containing possible indications and recommendations.

The topics and steps of the audits are presented in detail below.

### 3.4.5 Procedure for initial certification or recertification

#### CET INSTITUTION

##### 1. Contact

- Contact the desired certification body
- Delivery of the following information:
  - Scope of certification
  - Training locations
  - Overview of the educational programmes
  - Legal obligations
  - Corporate form
  - Contact addresses
  - Number of employees
  - Participant lessons per year
  - Company brochures/website

##### 3. Order to certification body

- Review and sign the contract
- Return the signed contract

##### 5. Preparation

- Self-evaluation
- Compilation and submission of the required documentation (electronically or in printed form); according to the list of supporting documents to be submitted in the doc. Quality Standard eduQua:2021
- Review and confirm the audit plan
- Compile and deliver additional information

#### CERTIFICATION BODY

##### 2. Offer/contract

- Consultation with the continuing education and training institution to prepare an offer
- Agreement with the scope
- Clarification of the certifiable unit(s)
- Definition of the certification procedure:
  - A: fewer than 25,000 participant lessons per year
  - B: between 25,000 and 100,000 participant lessons per year
  - C: more than 100,000 participant lessons per year
- Clarification regarding the need for an optional preliminary audit
- Delivery of the offer or the contract

##### 4. Consultation with the continuing education and training institution

- Determination of the deadline for delivering documentation
- Date for the on-site audit
- Delivery of the audit plan (draft)

##### 6. Document inspection (level 1 audit)

- Check the received documentation and information with regard to
  - Completeness
  - Compliance with quality standard eduQua:2021 (conformity check)
  - Legal obligations
  - Certifiability

The audit can also be carried out on-site for complex organisations.

- Request feedback on the findings and, if necessary, additional information
- Determine aspects that will be addressed in more depth during the on-site audit
- Confirmation or correction of the audit plan

A level 1 audit is not mandatory for recertification (cf. Chap. 3.4.3).



**7. Implementation, aspects and methods of the on-site audit (level 2 audit)**

- These aspects are addressed and clarified during the opening meeting:
  - Confirmation of the scope of the certificate and the audit
  - Explanations of the timing and content of the audit plan and the audit process
  - Information on the classification of findings and feedback (strengths, recommendations, indications, minor deviations, major deviations)
  - Mention of confidentiality
  - Implementation of the audit according to the audit plan
- The audit is implemented based on the following audit methods:
  - Observing activities (e.g. lesson delivery)
  - Interviews with leaders, staff and participants in educational events
  - Inspection of supporting documents based on the eduQua:2021 requirements (e.g. curricula, proof of qualifications of staff, evaluation protocols, etc.)
  - Analysing data (e.g. quality control surveys, evaluation result)
  - Inspection of the learning infrastructure and learning environment
- By means of these audit methods, the auditor can
  - Collect information and supporting documents on the compliance assessment of the quality management system (QMS) based on the principles, criteria and requirements of the quality standard eduQua:2021,
  - Assess the cultural and institutional integration of the QMS,
  - Assess the effectiveness of evaluation and quality control at the level of the organisation, the continuing education and training programmes and the learning processes,
  - Assess the fulfilment of legal obligations,
  - Assess the practicality and effectiveness of the QMS as a whole.
- The following points will be discussed at the final meeting:
  - Announcement and justification of the audit result (strengths, potential for improvement, indications and deviations)
  - Announcement of the application to the certification body
  - Clarification of questions and discrepancies
  - Announcement of the deadlines for the elimination of any deviations (or non-conformities) and the method of inspection

**9. Follow-up**

- Review of the audit report (report corresponds to the points discussed)
- Possibility of appeal in the event of discrepancies
- Planning the implementation of the corresponding corrections and optimisations
- Send evidence of carried out corrections within the specified period to the certification body or the auditor

**8. Follow-up**

- Preparation of the audit report with application to the certification body
- Approval of the audit report incl. certification decision
- Release and deliver certificate
- Notification of certification to the eduQua office

**10. Monitor and plan**

- Monitoring of defined corrections
- Planning the next audit

Table 2:  
Procedure for initial certification  
and recertification

### 3.4.6 Procedure for interim audits

#### CET INSTITUTION

##### 2. Preparation

- Compilation and submission of the required documentation (electronically or in printed form)
  - Data-based and updated self-evaluation incl. assessment of the degree of fulfilment of the eduQua criteria and requirements
  - Information on important changes within the continuing education and training institution
  - Information on changes in the institution's own continuing education and training programme
  - Information on the development of participant lessons
  - Proof of completion of any corrections
  - Information on dealing with indications from the certification or audit report
  - Information on the institution's own quality initiatives (projects, evaluations, corrections)
  - Evidence for the individual points
- Review and confirm the audit plan

#### CERTIFICATION BODY

##### 1st consultation with the continuing education and training institution

- Determination of the deadline for delivering documentation and the date for the on-site audit or conference call\* (according to certification procedure A, B or C)
- Delivery of the audit plan for the on-site audit or for the topics of the conference call\*

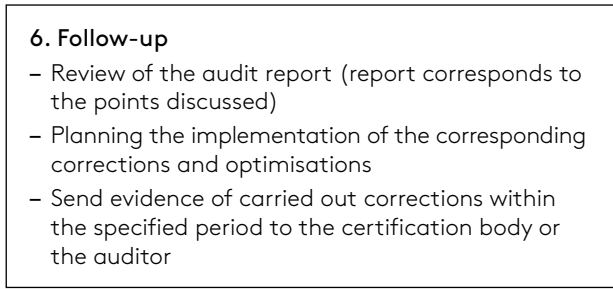
##### 3. Preparation

- Check the received documentation and information
- Determine aspects that will be addressed in more depth during the on-site audit or conference call\*

##### 4. Implementation of the on-site audit or conference call\*

- Questions on the quality control of the continuing education and training institution:
  - How do the controlling and quality control of the continuing education and training institution work? Are the quality control loops effective and is this transparent based on data on the basis of the self-evaluation?
  - Does the self-evaluation show how well the eduQua principles, criteria and requirements are fulfilled?
  - Are specific further development measures implemented on the basis of evaluation results?
- Questions on important changes within the continuing education and training institution:
  - Have there been any organisational changes within the continuing education and training institution that have an impact on the QMS or the scope of the certificate?
  - Have there been any changes in terms of competences and responsibilities?
- Questions on changes in the continuing education and training programmes:
  - On the basis of which internal findings and needs analyses have changes been made to the educational programmes?
  - Do the new or modified continuing education and training programmes fulfil the requirements of eduQua as well as the institution's own quality requirements and promises?
  - How have the participant lessons changed during the reporting period?
- Questions about the institution's own projects for quality development:
  - What quality projects has the continuing education and training institution itself launched and implemented?
  - What has been the effect?
- Question on the elimination of deviations and on corrections:
  - Have any deviations been dealt with demonstrably, effectively and with lasting impact?
- Question on how to deal with indications/recommendations:
  - In what way has the continuing education and training institution implemented or planned to implement the indications or recommendations of the certification body?

## CET INSTITUTION



## CERTIFICATION BODY

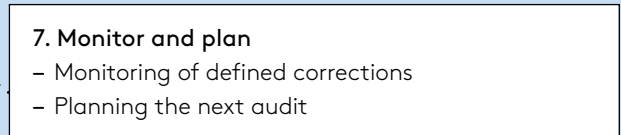
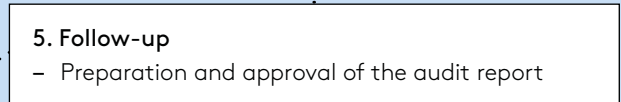


Table 3:  
Interim audit procedure

\* Comments on the conference calls

As information and communication technologies are becoming more technically sophisticated, according to the accreditation standard ISO/IEC 17021-1 and the supplementary document IAF MD 4 certification bodies are allowed to conduct “computer-assisted auditing techniques” to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the audit process and promote and maintain their integrity.

Such “computer-assisted auditing techniques” may include, for example:

- Conducting conference calls
- Interactive web-based communication
- Electronic remote access to management system documentation and/or management system processes
- Web-based attendance of online learning opportunities

### 3.5 AUDIT REPORTS AND CERTIFICATION DECISIONS

In the audit report, the auditor of the certification body comments on how well the continuing education and training institution fulfils the eduQua principles, the criteria and the requirements. In doing so, he/she is guided by the following assessment grid:

QUALITY LEVELS	DESCRIPTION	AUDIT REPORT	CERTIFICATION DECISION
<p><b>Well developed system</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The eduQua principles, criteria and requirements are fulfilled.</li> <li>- The QMS is culturally and institutionally integrated and is effective.</li> </ul>	<p>No deviations from the principles, criteria and requirements of the eduQua:2021 quality standard were identified.</p>	<p>The audit report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- makes statements on the strengths of the continuing education and training institution and on the degree of fulfilment of the eduQua criteria and requirements,</li> <li>- possibly contains information on risks and makes recommendations for further development.</li> </ul>	<p>The auditor can apply to the certification body for the eduQua certificate or maintenance of the certification.</p>
<p><b>Partially functioning system</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The 8 eduQua principles and the majority of the 19 eduQua criteria and requirements are fulfilled.</li> <li>- The QMS is established, but still has some gaps regarding its implementation and impact.</li> </ul>	<p>Only a few (minor) deviations were found, which can be corrected in a short time.*</p>	<p>The audit report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- makes statements on the strengths of the continuing education and training institution,</li> <li>- makes statements on the deviations,</li> <li>- contains information on risks,</li> <li>- possibly makes recommendations for further development.</li> </ul>	<p>The eduQua certificate is issued by the certification body after the auditor has approved the analysis and planning for dealing with the deviations. The correction of the deviations is usually checked during the next ordinary audit.*</p>
<p><b>Rather undeveloped system</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- One or more of the 8 eduQua principles and several of the 19 eduQua criteria and also requirements are not fulfilled.</li> <li>- The QMS is still in the development stage and still has significant gaps in terms of its practical implementation and impact.</li> </ul>	<p>There are many minor and/or major deviations, which show that the QMS is not very well developed and does not function yet or only functions partially.*</p>	<p>The audit report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- makes statements on the strengths of the continuing education and training institution,</li> <li>- makes statements on the minor deviations,</li> <li>- makes statements on the major deviations,</li> <li>- contains information on risks and makes recommendations for further development.</li> </ul>	<p>The eduQua certificate cannot be applied for or confirmed by the auditor. The audit must be repeated after the deviations have been rectified or the corrections have been handled, i.e. a follow-up audit takes place.**</p>

\* Basis ISO/IEC 17021-1 and procedures of the certification bodies

\*\* These additional expenses may be charged additionally by the certification body.

Comments on the consequences of recommendations, indications and deviations in the audit reports:

### **Recommendations**

Recommendations are intended to create added value/benefit for the continuing education and training institution and do not identify any deviation or deficiency in terms of fulfilment of the eduQua specifications. The continuing education and training institution has the power to decide on their implementation. If they are not implemented, this has no consequences for certification.

### **Indications**

Indications show development potential and risks. They need to be checked for relevance and are supposed to help continuous further development. The way the indications are handled by the continuing education and training institution will be checked at the next audit (interim audit or recertification).

### **Minor deviations or non-conformities**

In the case of the following minor deviations (or non-conformities), certification can be granted as soon as the planning for the analysis and effective handling by the continuing education and training institution is available and approved:

- there are a few individual gaps in the structure and integration of the quality management system.
- The evaluation and development control loops are integrated but are still not effective enough.

The effective handling of the minor deviations and the corresponding corrective actions is usually checked during the next audit.

### **Major deviations or non-conformities**

In the case of major deviations (or non-conformities), certification cannot be granted and a follow-up audit must be carried out after the deviations have been rectified.

- The structure, integration and practical design of the quality management system are in a deficient, unsatisfactory state.
- Evaluation and development control loops are either non-existent or ineffective.

### 3.6 RECERTIFICATION

For an uninterrupted extension of the certificate after three years, a recertification audit is necessary, which must be fully completed before the expiry of the certificate period (incl. certification decision).

The recertification process is basically the same as the initial certification. However, a level 1 audit is not mandatory. (cf. Chap. 3.4.3). Timely and successful recertification leads to renewal of the certificate.

If the recertification audit could not take place before the certificate expires, the validity of the certification cannot be extended. However, if the recertification audit can be completed within six months of the expiry of the certificate (incl. certification decision), the certification can be restored. Otherwise, at least a level 2 audit (on-site audit) is required. The certificate date is linked to the certification decision. The certificate duration, on the other hand, refers to the previous certification cycle and is shortened.

### 3.7 SUSPENSION OF CERTIFICATION

The certification can be suspended for a maximum of 3 months if

- the certified quality management system persistently or seriously fails to comply with the eduQua principles, criteria and requirements,
- the certified institution does not adhere to the specified deadlines for conducting the required audits,
- the certificate or the eduQua logo are misused,
- there is evidence that the continuing education and training institution no longer complies with legal or regulatory requirements in relation to the certified quality management system,
- the certified institution fails to comply with contractual agreements with the certification body,
- the continuing education and training institution temporarily discontinues its operations and/or voluntarily applies for temporary suspension.

The certification body notifies the continuing education and training institution of the duration of the suspension, the necessary corrections and the inspection. The eduQua certificate is not valid during the suspension period and the continuing education and training provider loses the right to use the eduQua logo.

The eduQua office will be informed of the suspension by the certification body.

### **Restoration of the certificate**

If the defined conditions are fulfilled in good time, the suspension will be lifted and the certificate restored.

## **3.8 WITHDRAWAL OF CERTIFICATION**

Certification may be permanently withdrawn if

- the reasons for the suspension have not been remedied in due time or the necessary corrections have not been implemented,
- persistent or serious deficiencies in the quality management system are identified and suspension is not considered to be the appropriate measure.

The eduQua office is notified of the withdrawal of certification by the certification body.

After the withdrawal of certification, recertification is usually possible. An audit analogous to the initial certification must be carried out.

## **3.9 APPEALS AND COMPLAINTS OF CONTINUING EDUCATION AND TRAINING INSTITUTIONS**

In the event of a negative certification decision, suspension and withdrawal of certification, the continuing education and training institution has the possibility to appeal. The appeal procedure is laid down in the regulations of the certification body.

The continuing education and training institution also has the option of submitting a complaint to the certification body about the course of the certification procedure. The procedure for complaints is set out in the regulations of the certification body.

## 4 Handling complaints from participants and interest groups

If participants or other interest groups of eduQua-certified continuing education and training institutions complain to the eduQua office, the following procedure is followed:

- when the participant's complaint is received by the eduQua office, it will clarify the extent to which the complaint is justified or relevant for eduQua. The reason for the complaint must be appropriately substantiated and must relate to specific eduQua principles, criteria or requirements. If the office believes there is not a justified and relevant complaint, the person or organisation making the complaint will be informed and no further steps will be taken.
- If there is a justified and relevant complaint with regard to eduQua along with a specific application, this and the response from the office will be forwarded to the certification body. The person or persons concerned must give agreement in writing for the complaint to be forwarded. The data of the person(s) making the complaint will not be forwarded to the continuing education and training institution.
- The certification body clarifies the situation in writing with the affected continuing education and training institution and examines the facts, the analysis and the effect of the taken corrections in detail again during the next on-site audit or the next interim audit. The costs for additional workload shall be borne by the certified institution. The certification body does not have any correspondence about its actions and the results of these with the persons making complaints. It informs the eduQua office when the procedure is concluded.



## 5 Work required and fees

### 5.1 DETERMINATION OF THE CERTIFICATION PROCEDURE AND AUDIT TYPES

Different certification procedures are used for continuing education and training institutions of different sizes. The influencing factor that determines the procedure is the number of participant lessons carried out each year. The following table shows which procedure and which audit types are used.

SCOPE OF SERVICES OF THE CET INSTITUTION	CERTIFICATION PROCEDURE	AUDIT TYPES AND DEADLINES
Fewer than 25,000 participants x lessons	Procedure A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Certification/recertification audit on-site</li> <li>- First interim audit based on documents incl. conference call within 12 months of the first certification audit or once per calendar year after the first recertification</li> <li>- Second interim audit based on documents incl. conference call within 9-15 months of the first interim audit or once per calendar year after the first recertification</li> </ul>
From 25,000 participants x lessons to 100,000 participants x lessons	Procedure B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Certification/recertification audit on-site</li> <li>- First interim audit on-site within 12 months of the first certification audit or once per calendar year after the first recertification</li> <li>- Second interim audit based on documents incl. conference call within 9-15 months of the first interim audit or once per calendar year after the first recertification</li> </ul>
More than 100,000 participants x lessons	Procedure C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Certification/recertification audit on-site</li> <li>- First interim audit on-site within 12 months of the certification audit or once per calendar year after the first recertification</li> <li>- Second interim audit on-site within 9-15 months of the first interim audit or once per calendar year after the first recertification</li> </ul>

Tabelle 5:  
Ablauf Zertifizierungsverfahren,  
Auditarten und Fristen

**Basic principle:**

When calculating the number of participant lessons:

The basis for the calculation is the average of the participant lessons in the last three years, if applicable. This includes contact learning time, physically present or online, with synchronous support by trainers and learning facilitators, as well as guided, assigned self-learning time. At least 50% of the individual self-learning time included in the educational programme must be credited. One lesson corresponds to one hour, i.e. 60 minutes including a 10-minute break.

Calculation examples are included in the document “Guide”.

## 5.2 ESTIMATED TIME REQUIRED FOR AUDITING A THREE-YEAR CERTIFICATION PERIOD

The audit time is understood as the time required for auditing a continuing education and training institution. The requirements are based on the international accreditation standard ISO/IEC 17021-1 and the supplementary documents IAF MD 1 (auditing of multiple sites), IAF MD 4 (remote audits), IAF MD 5 (determination of audit time) as well as IAF MD 11 (audits of integrated management systems).

The audit time for the certification and interim audits depends on the size of the institution, determined on the basis of the number of participant lessons per year, and on the complexity, especially with regard to the number and type of locations and the variety of continuing education and training programmes.

**Basic principle:**

Irrespective of the overriding requirements, the planned and effective audit times should be sufficient to carry out a complete and effective audit of the quality management system.

## 5.2.1 OVERVIEW OF AUDIT TIMES BY PROCEDURE

The following table gives an overview of the activities and the target audit times in days during a three-year certification period, graded according to the certification procedure.

	Initial certification			Recertification
	1st YEAR	2nd YEAR	3rd YEAR	
	<b>Certification audit</b> All eduQua requirements	<b>1st interim audit</b> Changes Deviations & indications Continuous improvement processes	<b>2nd interim audit</b> Changes Deviations & indications Continuous improvement processes	<b>Recertification audit</b> Analogous to initial certification
Verfahren <b>A</b> < 25 000 TN x Lektionen pro Jahr	Document inspection On-site audit ≈ 1.25 days incl. report	Document inspection Conference call ≈ 0.75 days incl. report	Document inspection Conference call ≈ 0.75 days incl. report	
Verfahren <b>B</b> > 25 000 bis < 100 000 TN x Lektionen pro Jahr	Document inspection On-site audit ≈ 1.50 days incl. report	Document inspection On-site audit ≈ 1.00 days incl. report	Document inspection Conference call ≈ 0.75 days incl. report	
Verfahren <b>C</b> > 100 000 TN x Lektionen pro Jahr	Document inspection On-site audit ≈ 1.75 days incl. report	Document inspection On-site audit ≈ 1.00 days incl. report	Document inspection On-site audit ≈ 1.00 days incl. report	

Fig. 3:  
 Certification procedures  
 and certification time

### 5.2.2 GUIDELINES FOR THE CALCULATION OF AUDIT TIMES

These regulations assume a varying degree of complexity for certification. For continuing education and training organisations with increased complexity, the time required for certification and interim audits will usually exceed the target audit times and the audit time can be adjusted upwards.

The following criteria serve as an aid for assessing increased complexity.

	INCREASED COMPLEXITY
Continuing education and training institution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Several training locations in different regions</li><li>- Activity in several CH language regions</li><li>- Many lecturers, different categories</li><li>- Own development of educational programmes</li><li>- Many legal and official requirements</li></ul>
Continuing education and training programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Many continuing education and training programmes</li><li>- Programmes in several educational sectors</li><li>- Qualifying, complex educational programmes</li><li>- International programmes</li></ul>

Table 6:  
Criteria for assessing  
increased complexity

The criteria are not exhaustive and do not need to be fully met to determine increased complexity.

The decision on whether it is necessary to increase audit times is the responsibility of the certification bodies. These make the estimated time required transparent to the clients and the accreditation body (cf. Chap. 3.3).

The requirements of IAF MD 5, which do not explicitly refer to the number of employees, are to be applied correspondingly when planning and carrying out certification and monitoring audits.

For the simultaneous auditing of two or more integrated management systems, the requirements of IAF MD 11 must be observed.

### 5.3 CERTIFICATION COSTS AND FEES

In principle, a cost ceiling of CHF 4,950.00, excluding VAT and expenses, applies to certification procedure A for continuing education and training institutions with up to 25,000 participant lessons. For procedures B and C for medium-sized and large providers, the certifying bodies submit an offer.

In terms of costs, the regulations and approaches of the certification bodies apply with regard to:

- Travel expenses,
- Travel time,
- Daily fee for auditors,
- Registration costs.

The certification bodies take the combination with other, existing or simultaneously targeted quality management systems appropriately into account when preparing their offer.

Extraordinary expenses that exceed the specified budget, for example in the case of further on-site inspection due to serious deviations, may be additionally invoiced to the continuing education and training institution by the certification bodies.

The costs include a fee of CHF 500.00 per certification or recertification, which is charged by the certification body, shown separately and passed on to the eduQua office. This amount is used to maintain and further develop eduQua as a quality label. For category A, the amount is included in the cost ceiling of CHF 4,950.00.

If site certificates are issued as part of a multi-site procedure, the fee in favour of the office is CHF 100.00 per site certificate (cf. Chap. 3.3).

## 6 eduQua quality label

In accordance with the following provisions, continuing education and training institutions that are eduQua certified are entitled to use the eduQua logo for business purposes during the certificate's period of validity.

### 6.1 USE

The eduQua logo must be used in such a way that there is transparent communication with no misunderstandings regarding the statement or the scope of validity of the eduQua certification.

eduQua is the Swiss quality label for continuing education and training institutions. It distinguishes continuing education and training providers that fulfil the eduQua principles and requirements. It does not constitute public accreditation, recognition or validation of the continuing education and training provider or the degrees/titles. The eduQua certificate is valid for the continuing education and training institution or the certified area. It must not be used to identify individual educational programmes. The use of the eduQua logo on diplomas, certificates, confirmations of participation or similar documents is also not permitted.

### 6.2 BASIS OF USE

- The eduQua logo is the property of the Swiss Federation for Adult Learning SVEB. It is protected by trademark law (registration no. 477636).
- The eduQua logo may not be used by third parties (partners) or successors, or only with the consent of the certification body.
- When using the certificate/certification mark, the regulations of the certification body must also be observed.
- The eduQua office checks compliance with the guidelines for use.

### 6.3 PRESENTATION

- The logo may not be used outside the context of certification and may not be associated with other logos outside it.
- The eduQua logo may not be altered in terms of content or graphics and may only be presented in the manner shown here.



Schweizerisches Qualitätszertifikat für Weiterbildungsinstitutionen  
Certificat suisse de qualité pour les institutions de formation continue  
Certificato svizzero di qualità per istituzioni di formazione continua



Schweizerisches Qualitätszertifikat für Weiterbildungsinstitutionen  
Certificat suisse de qualité pour les institutions de formation continue  
Certificato svizzero di qualità per istituzioni di formazione continua

- The logo can be presented in colour (blue/grey) or in greyscale and can be used with or without a footer.
- No additions may be made to the logo.
- The protected space around the logo must not be reduced and must remain respected.
- The logo may be scaled as long as it remains legible, but the proportions must not be changed.
- If there is a logo link in electronic media, the link must lead to [www.eduqua.ch](http://www.eduqua.ch).
- Only the original graphic files may be used.
- These are available from the eduQua office.

#### **6.4 LOSS OF THE RIGHT TO USE THE EDUQUA LOGO**

The right to use the logo expires when the validity of the eduQua certificate expires, in the event of suspension or withdrawal by the certification body or in the event of violation of the provisions listed here. Such an act constitutes an infringement of copyright.

If the eduQua certification is no longer valid, the indications and logo in electronic media must be removed immediately or within 30 days at the latest, in print media within three months. The media (e.g. brochures) in which the logo was used may no longer be used and circulated afterwards.

## 7 Entry into force and amendment

### 7.1 ENTRY INTO FORCE

These eduQua:2021 Certification Procedure Regulations were approved by the Board of the Swiss Federation for Adult Learning SVEB on 24 November 2021 and published at the same time as the eduQua:2021 quality standard on 15 December 2021.

### 7.2 AMENDMENT

The SVEB Board is responsible for the further development of the content and form of these regulations. It delegates this work to the eduQua office. Every five years or if the requirements of the Swiss Accreditation Service (SAS) change, the office reviews these regulations to see if they are still up to date and adapts them if necessary.

The SVEB Board submits the amendments to SAS for normative review before final approval.

The accredited certification bodies and the certified continuing education and training institutions will be informed about the amendment of the regulations.



#### **Legal notice**

This text is a translation based on an original document in German. The original German text is the binding reference.

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