

# Remain in France Together

## Bitesize Guide

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## Qualification recognition

This guide looks at recognition of existing qualifications for those intending to exercise their profession or undertake further study in France.

Qualification recognition is a complex area that often needs to be looked at on a case-by-case basis. This guide provides general information and all the links you need to understand your own situation.

### Professional qualifications

Each EU country has certain requirements about qualifications needed to carry out particular professions. This is potentially a barrier to the mobility of workers so the EU has defined a set of rules (Directive 2005/36/EC<sup>2,2,3</sup>) to facilitate professionals working in states other than the one where they received the qualification.

If you are a UK national, resident in France and wanting to exercise your profession in France you need to understand:

- the EU rules and the citizens' rights they confer,
- the French rules concerning your profession and
- how both of these may be impacted by Brexit and by the Withdrawal Agreement.

Each EU state has a national assistance centre to deal with issues of qualification recognition and in France this is handled by the ['Guichet Qualifications'](#)<sup>4</sup>.

### Exceptions to the rules

Usually in our guides we outline the general rules and then cover any exceptions. In this case it is easier to cover the exceptions first because in some cases the rules are more clear-cut.

### Remote working

The rules only apply if there is a physical cross border element to your work. If you are working remotely in France for a UK employer you should not need to have your qualifications recognised e.g. if you are a radiographer examining x-rays that are emailed to you from the UK, then your UK qualifications suffice. You will of course have to be roughly registered in other ways (see our guide to [Remote Working](#)).



# Remain in France Together



## Bitesize Guide

training you undertook and the date you did it.

### Switzerland

Slightly different rules apply between the EU and Switzerland. Freedom to provide services only applies for up to 90 days in a calendar year and there are certain other differences. Further information can be obtained from the Swiss national assistance centre: the Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation ([SERI](#)<sup>5</sup>).

### Sectoral professions

There is an agreed set of common minimum training requirements for certain professions across the EU. These are sometimes known as the 'sectoral professions' and are mainly health related but also include architecture.

The common training framework means that recognition of these qualifications is automatic and the host state should not be able to ask you for further details of your training. The professions covered are:

- Doctors with basic medical training
- General practitioners and doctors with medical specialisation
- Nurses responsible for general care
- Dental practitioners and dental specialists
- Veterinary surgeons
- Pharmacists
- Architects

To qualify for automatic recognition you must hold one of the qualifications listed in Annex V of Directive 2005/36/EC. In some professional areas, such as midwifery and architecture, the right to automatic recognition might depend on what type of

### Other specific professions

A number of professions are specifically dealt with by other EU directives. These include:

- [Insurance intermediaries](#)<sup>6</sup>
- [Lawyers](#)<sup>7</sup>
- There are also several specific directives in sectors such as: transport and maritime; audit and toxic products.

### European Professional Card (EPC)

The European Professional Card (EPC<sup>8</sup>) is not a physical card; it is an online recognition procedure to permit the recognition of qualifications and it is only available to certain professions:

- Nurses responsible for general care
- Pharmacists
- Physiotherapists
- Mountain guides
- Estate agents

You can apply online and download an EPC certificate. Recognition should be automatic if you meet the criteria. If your host country does refuse you an EPC they need to justify this.

The process can take up to 3 months. If your host country doesn't meet the legal deadline, your qualifications are accepted and you can download a certificate.

You can find more information including a detailed guide and login to the portal to make an application via the [EPC website](#).



# Remain in France Together



## Bitesize Guide

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the UK (this is deemed to be a matter of public safety e.g. to ensure the UK does not inadvertently recognise people who have been banned from practising in the EU).

### General rules

If you do not fall into any of the above categories, then you will be subject to a more general verification process to determine whether you can practice your profession. The competent authority in your host state will check details of your training and how this compares to its own national regime. It will also take into account how long you have practised the profession and any additional training you have undertaken. This means that people who have been self-employed for a number of years may be deemed to meet the requirement without any further training.

If there is a considerable difference between your background and the national requirements, you may be asked to take an aptitude test or to complete an 'adaptation period'.

This means if you are hoping to exercise your profession in France but are not yet recognised, you should make an application before the end of December 2020. It may make sense to do this now even if you are unsure about whether you do ultimately want to work in France. Similarly, if you are a French resident frontier worker and you have had your qualification recognised in your state of work but not in France, you might want to consider applying for recognition in France as well.

This guide only applies to UK nationals who are resident in France and working either in France or as frontier/cross-border workers in another EU state. It does not cover the provision of temporary services in another EU state.

### What is the impact of Brexit?

Under the terms of the Withdrawal Agreement (WA), if anyone has already had their professional qualification recognised by their host state or state of work, that recognition will remain valid in the state which recognised it.

Anyone who applies for qualification recognition before the end of the transition period will be treated as though they were still an EU national. To facilitate this working both ways, there will be a period of up to 9 months after the end of the transition period when the UK will have access to the EU internal market information system in order to process applications from EU nationals in

### What professions are regulated in France?

The EU [regulated professions database](#)<sup>9</sup> can help you find out whether a profession is regulated in a particular country. In some cases, it is self-evident what types of profession are regulated e.g. healthcare. The list of regulated professions in France does however include many professions not regulated in the UK e.g. hairdressing.

**\* Beware \***

You need to check whether job roles are directly comparable between countries as professions can be defined differently. For example, a profession may not be regulated



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# Remain in France Together



## Bitesize Guide

in France but some activities typically carried out by that profession in the UK may be reserved to practitioners of a different profession in France.

establishment or potential employer. There is a charge of €70 per attestation and the procedure takes about 4 months on average.

The process for obtaining an attestation is outlined in this info graphic:

### Academic qualifications

Directive 2005/36/EC only concerns people who are already fully qualified to exercise their profession. If you are wanting to undertake further study or training and want to know whether your existing academic qualifications are recognised, you should contact the [National Academic Recognition Information Centres](#) (NARIC<sup>10</sup>).

In France the relevant authority is [France Éducation internationale](#) (formerly known as CIEP - Centre international d'études pédagogiques).

Recognition of academic qualifications is governed by the [Lisbon Convention](#)<sup>11</sup> which is an international agreement signed by over 50 countries including the UK. There is thus no indication that there should be any change to the process as a result of Brexit.

In France there is no automatic recognition of qualifications deemed to be directly equivalent to their French counterparts. Each case is looked at on its own merits to judge comparability according to a set of criteria relating to: the establishment that awarded the qualification, length of study, pre-requisites, learning outcomes and quality assurance procedures. Translation is not required for documents in English (other languages exempt from translation requirement are Arab, French, German, Italian, Portuguese and Spanish).

You are recommended not to request an attestation unless you have been specifically requested to provide one by an educational



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# Remain in France Together

## Bitesize Guide



### FAIRE RECONNAÎTRE SON DIPLÔME ÉTRANGER

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#### en cinq étapes et en ligne

- 1. VÉRIFIER L'ÉLIGIBILITÉ**  
Nous ne pouvons pas traiter les formations de moins de six mois, ni les diplômes permettant d'exercer une profession réglementée : assurez-vous de ne pas être concerné.
- 2. PRÉPARER VOS DOCUMENTS**  
Votre dossier doit contenir une pièce d'identité, un diplôme final et/ou des relevés des notes et des traductions. Pour les documents en anglais, français, allemand, espagnol, arabe, italien et portugais, les traductions ne sont pas acceptées.
- 3. DÉPOSER VOTRE DOSSIER**  
Le dépôt de dossier s'effectue uniquement sur notre plateforme numérique. Les documents envoyés par courrier postal ne sont pas acceptés.
- 4. PAYER LES FRAIS**  
Le coût de traitement d'un dossier est de 70 euros. Les demandeurs d'asile, réfugiés et bénéficiaires de la protection subsidiaire ont droit à ce service gratuitement sur présentation d'un justificatif.
- 5. ATTENDRE LE RÉSULTAT**  
La durée de traitement maximale est de 4 mois. En cas de refus, les modalités de remboursement vous seront précisées par courriel.



# Remain in France Together

## Bitesize Guide



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### References

The following links all point to official information sources:

1. The legislation concerning the recognition of professional qualifications set out in Directive 2005/36/EC.  
<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:32005L0036&from=EN#d1e32-79-1>
2. The European commission website contains further information on Directive 2005/36/EC which sets out the EU rules (available in English).  
<https://ec.europa.eu/growth/single-market/services/free-movement-professionals>
3. The EU has produced a user guide to Directive 2005/36/EC on the recognition of professional qualifications.  
<https://ec.europa.eu/docsroom/documents/40185>
4. The national assistance centre for France is the 'Guichet Qualifications' which has information available in English. This is also the [Point of Single Contact](#) (PSC) in France for service providers operated as part of the EUGO network.  
<https://www.guichet-qualifications.fr/en/>
5. Swiss national assistance centre: the Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation (SERI)  
<https://www.sbf.admin.ch/sbf/en/home/bildung/recognition-of-foreign-qualifications.html>
6. EU law regulating insurance intermediaries.  
<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32016L0097&from=en>
7. EU law regulating the profession of lawyer.  
<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:31998L0005&from=EN>
8. Website for the European Professional Card (EPC).  
[https://europa.eu/youreurope/citizens/work/professional-qualifications/european-professional-card/index\\_en.htm](https://europa.eu/youreurope/citizens/work/professional-qualifications/european-professional-card/index_en.htm)
9. The EU regulated professions database can help you find out whether a profession is regulated in a particular country.  
<https://ec.europa.eu/growth/tools-databases/regprof/>
10. The EU National Academic Recognition Information Centres (NARIC).  
<https://www.enic-naric.net/>
11. France Éducation internationale deals with recognition of academic qualifications.  
<https://www.ciep.fr/enic-naric-page/reconnaissance-diplome-etranger-documents-delivres?fbclid=IwAR3-9xZX1PUJ2vy7US0OEEZedrUbVoPYS4StSPsSQqEfeAOTKehkjdRXb0Q>
12. Recognition of academic qualifications is governed by an international agreement known as the Lisbon Convention.  
<https://www.studyineurope.eu/the-lisbon-convention>



# Remain in France Together

## Bitesize Guide

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### Disclaimer

This is one of a series of guides and information sheets produced by Remain in France Together (RIFT). RIFT is a statutory association governed by French law and managed and run by volunteers. It exists to uphold the rights of British citizens living in, or moving to, France affected by the UK withdrawal from the EU.

The information is for general guidance and does not constitute legal advice. It is offered free for personal, non-commercial use.

The main source of information to keep up-to-date with developments in citizens' rights is our website <https://www.remaininfrance.fr/>

When using our printed guides, you should check the website to make sure that you have the latest version.

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