



EU approach and guidelines on validation of non-formal and informal learning

Aline Juerges and Ernesto Villalba



CEDEFOP

European Centre
for the Development
of Vocational Training



European
Commission

In cooperation with

Valuing all skills

The European guidelines for
validating non-formal and
informal learning – 3rd edition

3 October 2023
15.00-16.30 CET

Cedefop virtual get-together



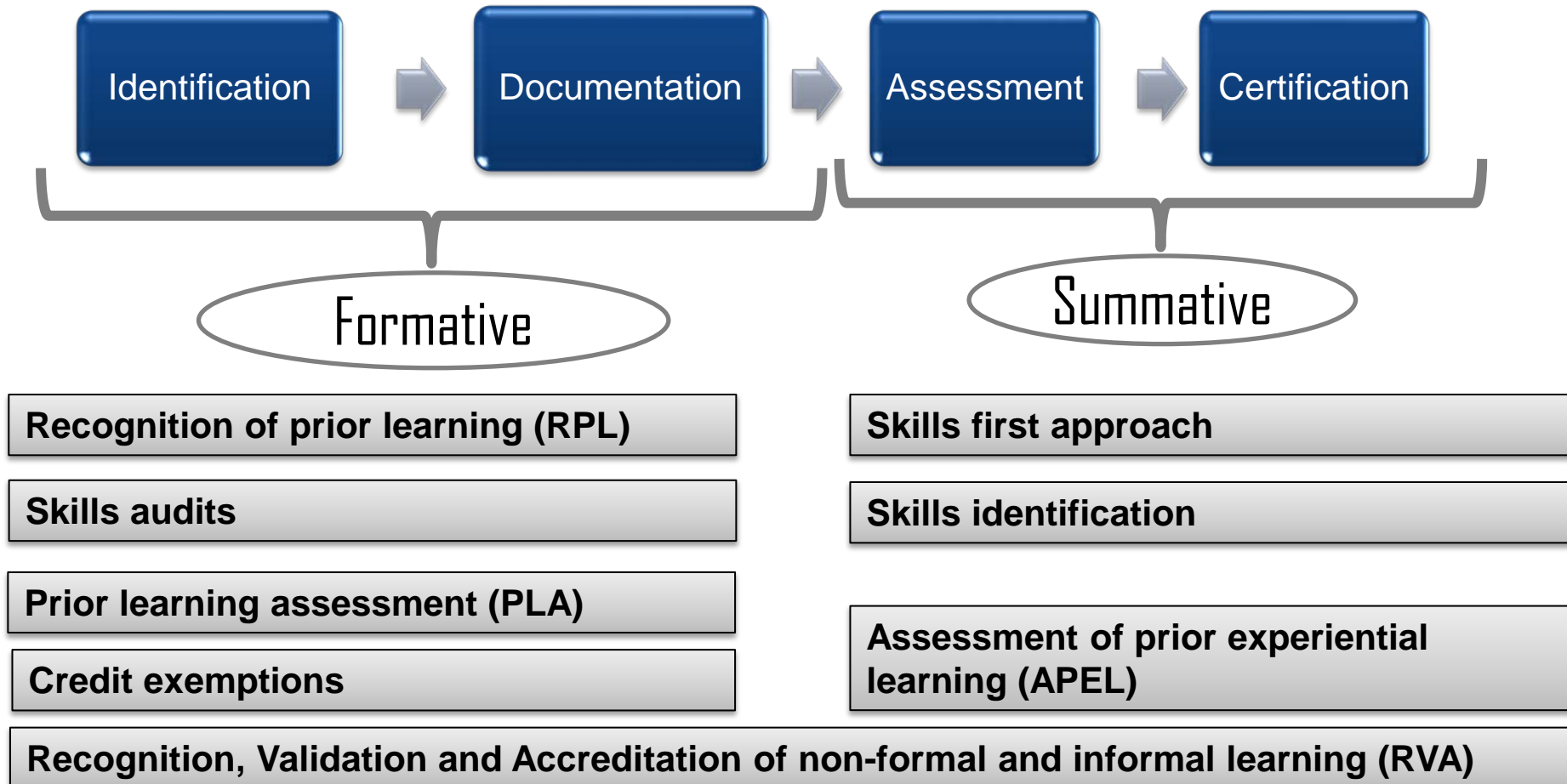
VALIDATION – a question of VALUES

All learning, irrespective of where and when it takes place, is valuable for the individual and for society.

Formal learning needs to be supplemented by validation of non-formal and informal learning.

Validation: The hero with a thousand faces

Validation means a process of confirmation by an authorised body that an individual has acquired learning outcomes measured against a relevant standard



Objective of the VNIFL Council Recommendation (2012)

GENERAL OBJECTIVE



...provide individuals in all Member States with opportunities to validate their skills acquired outside formal education and training systems and to use the results of validation to study or work anywhere in Europe

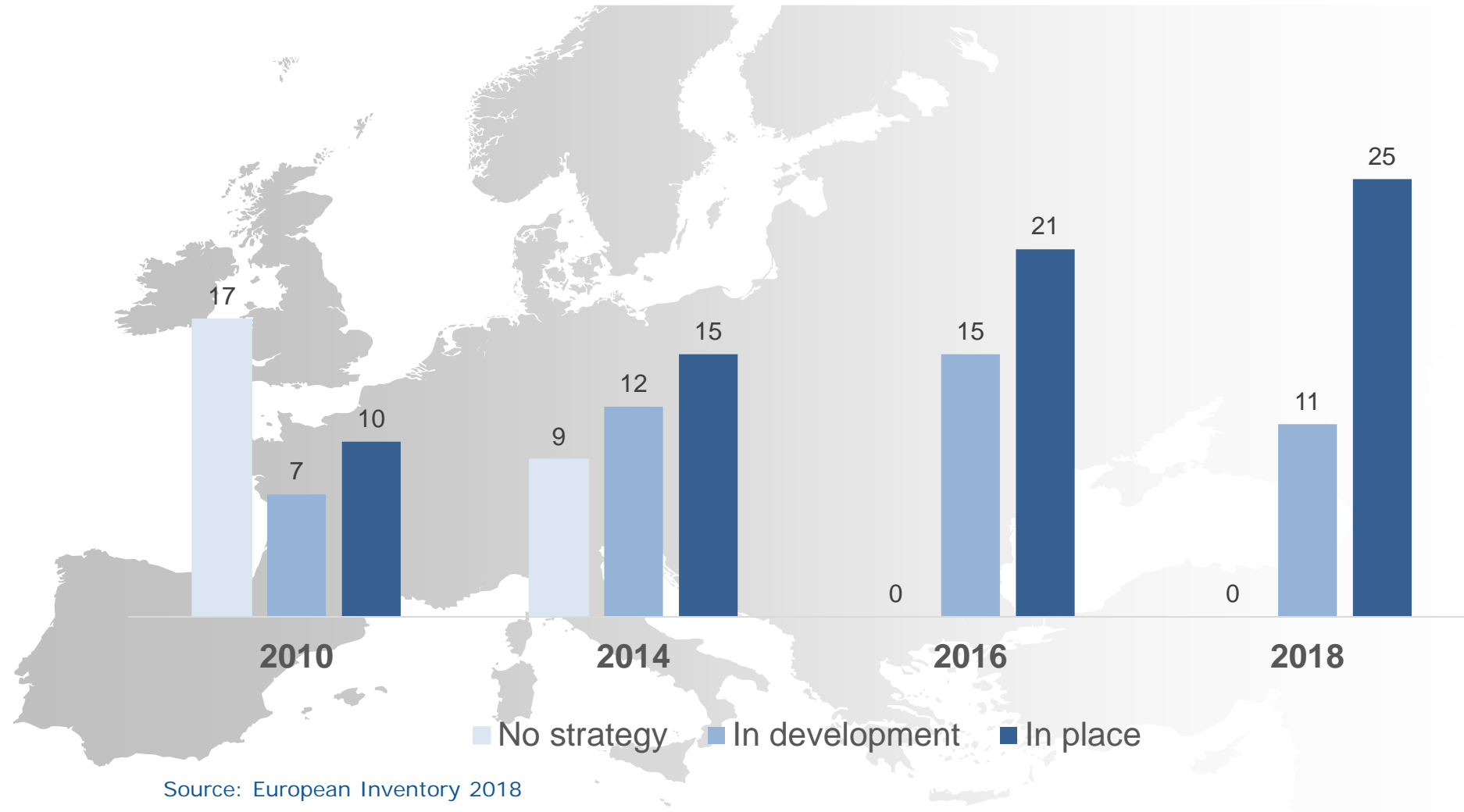
OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVES



- Qualifications in NQFs can be acquired through formal programmes and through validation
- Mechanisms for the identification, documentation, assessment and certification of skills acquired through non-formal and informal learning
- Allow people to have their skills and competences identified and documented
- Cooperation and exchange of good practices
- Raise awareness of validation opportunities
- Update the guidelines and the inventory in cooperation with Member States

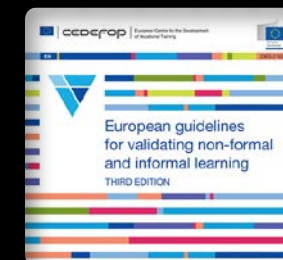
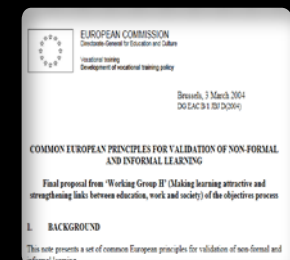
Validation strategies

Number of countries with validation strategies



Source: European Inventory 2018

Storyline of validation in EU



Adapted from: Villalba, E., & Bjornavold, J. (2017), Villaba-Garcia (2016), Villalba-Garcia, E., Souto-Otero, M., & Murphy, I. (2014)

Main drivers for validation through EU actions

- European Skills Agenda (2020) – many of its actions refer to validation:
 - Council Recommendation on vocational education and training (2020)
 - Council Recommendation on individual learning accounts (2022)
 - Council Recommendation on a European approach to microcredentials (2022)
 - Europass Decision (2018)
 - Council Recommendation on Upskilling Pathways - New opportunities for adults (2016); recalled in 2020 Skills for Life action
- Council Resolution on a new European agenda for adult learning 2021-2030



A harder than expected climb

May 2023 Published guidelines



Publication of the guidelines

Translation into other languages (EN, ES, DE, IT, FR)

Dec 2022 - EQF AG Written comments

28-29 November 2022

Last discussion at EQF AG

October 28 – 2nd Draft TO EQF AG

July - September 2022

Consultation with EQF project group on validation

Ground work since 2020

Projects and events and forums

Plenary discussions in EQF AG meetings

A specific project group

Consultation with experts

2 half-day expert event in November 2021

A EU Survey +100 respondents

What is the purpose of the guidelines and how do they add value?



- Build on the principles outlined by the **2012 Recommendation**
- Identify **relevant factors** for the design, development, promotion and implementation of validation
- Written for **everybody involved** in developing, implementing and operating validation
- Address **common challenges** at different levels and contexts and act as a source of inspiration and reflection for **peer learning**
- Work both, at a **strategic** and **technical** level
- Work **together with the European Inventory**



Any solution must be **fit for purpose** and reflect the context in question. The Guidelines point to available **options**, and the **implications** of these, when establishing and operating validation arrangements

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications/3093>

Key questions on validation

CHAPTER 2

A strategic vision: the individual at the centre

CHAPTER 3

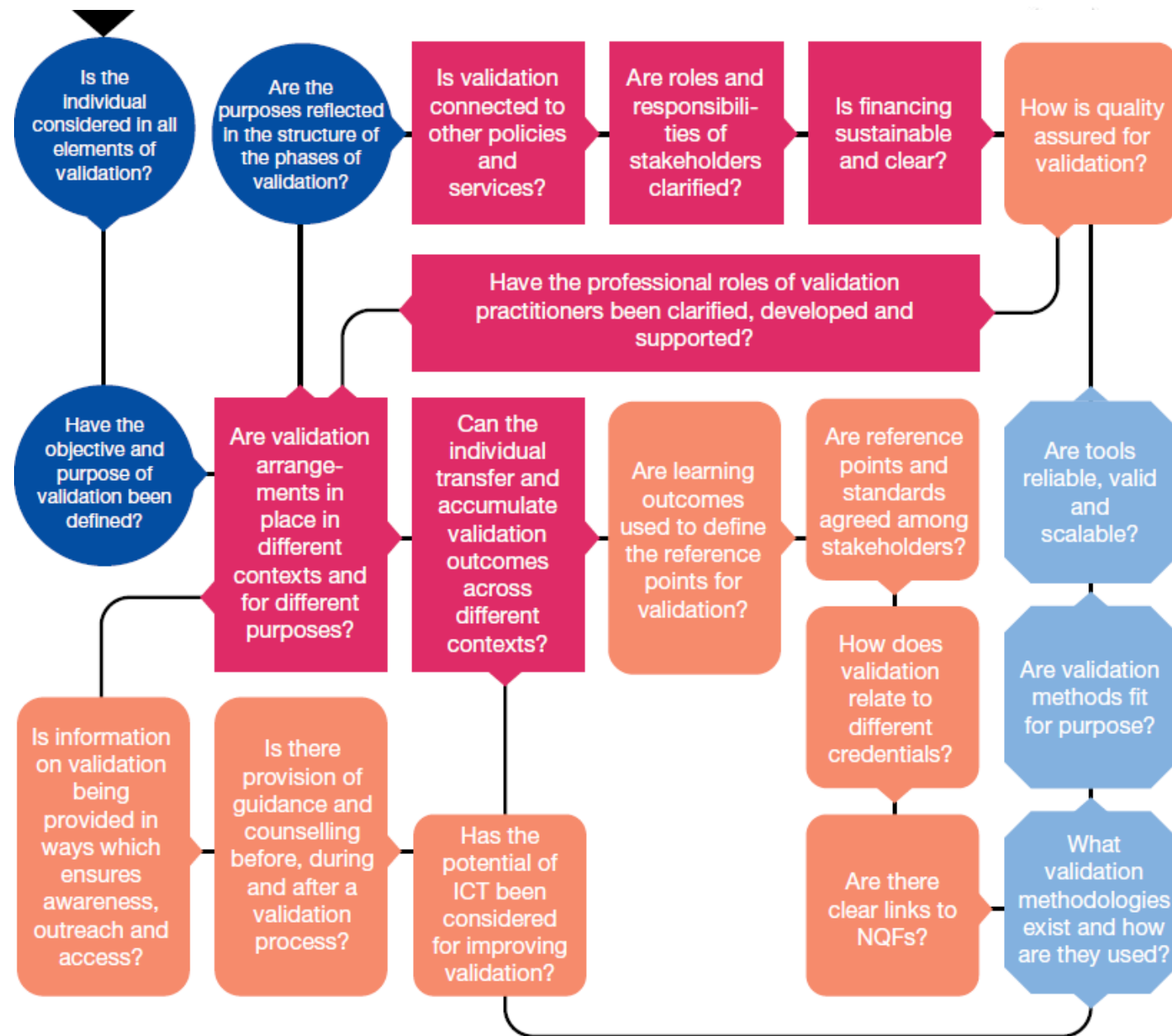
Validation as a facilitator of individual, lifelong and life-wide learning

CHAPTER 4

Validation provision elements

CHAPTER 5

Validation methodologies and tools



Source: Cedefop (2023). European guidelines for validating non-formal and informal learning. Luxembourg: Publications Office. Cedefop reference series; No 124. <https://dx.doi.org/10.2801/389827>

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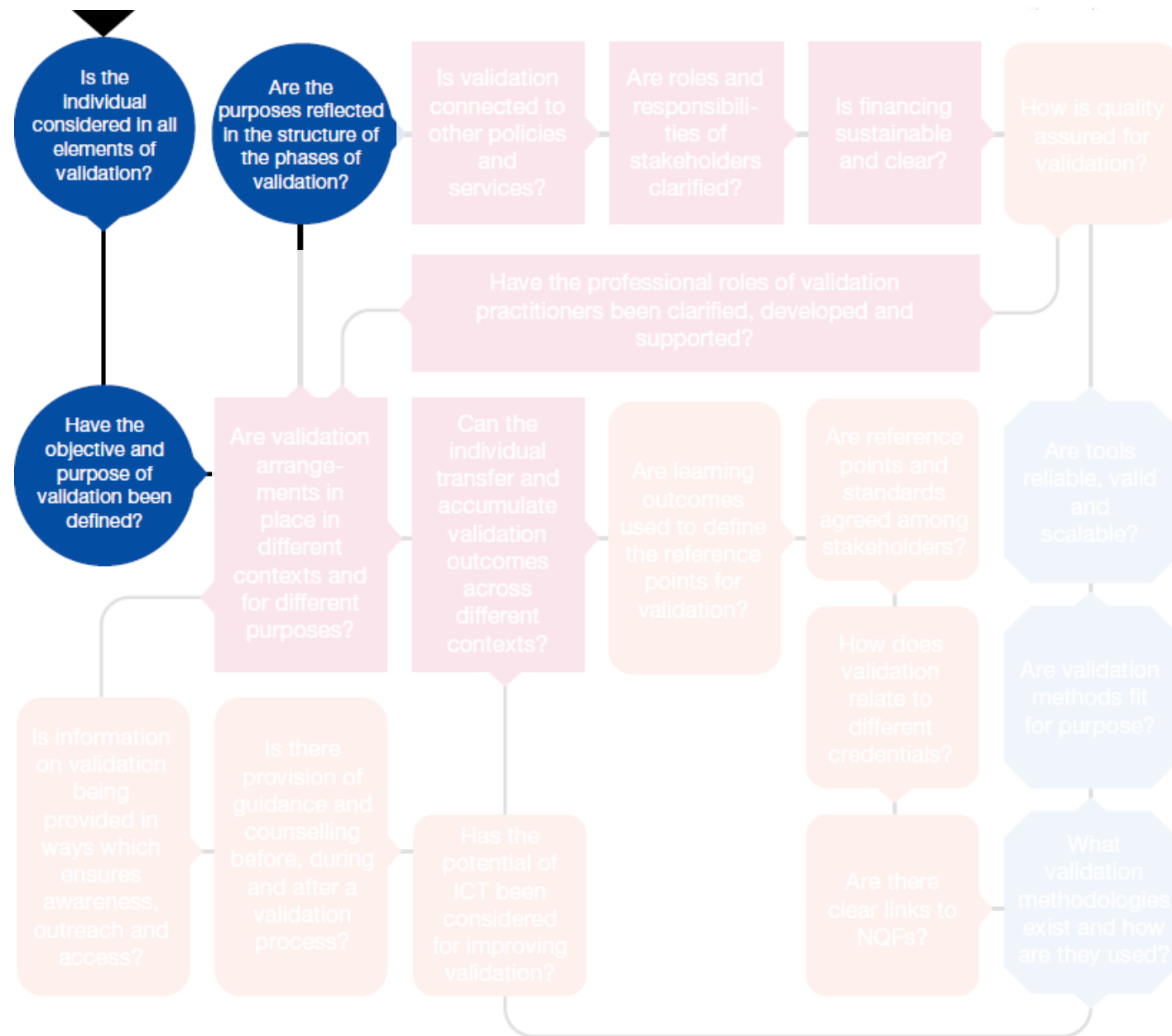
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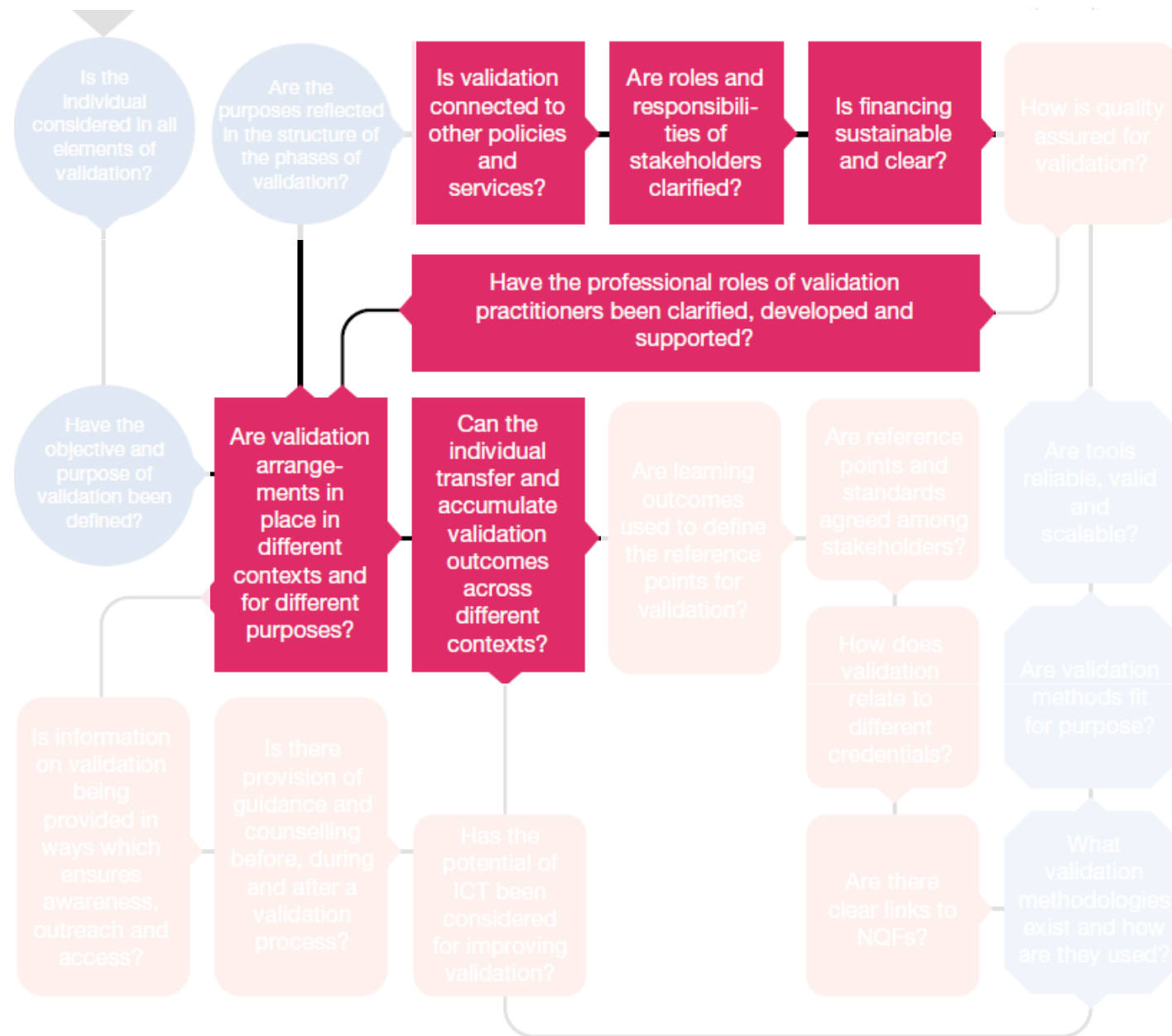
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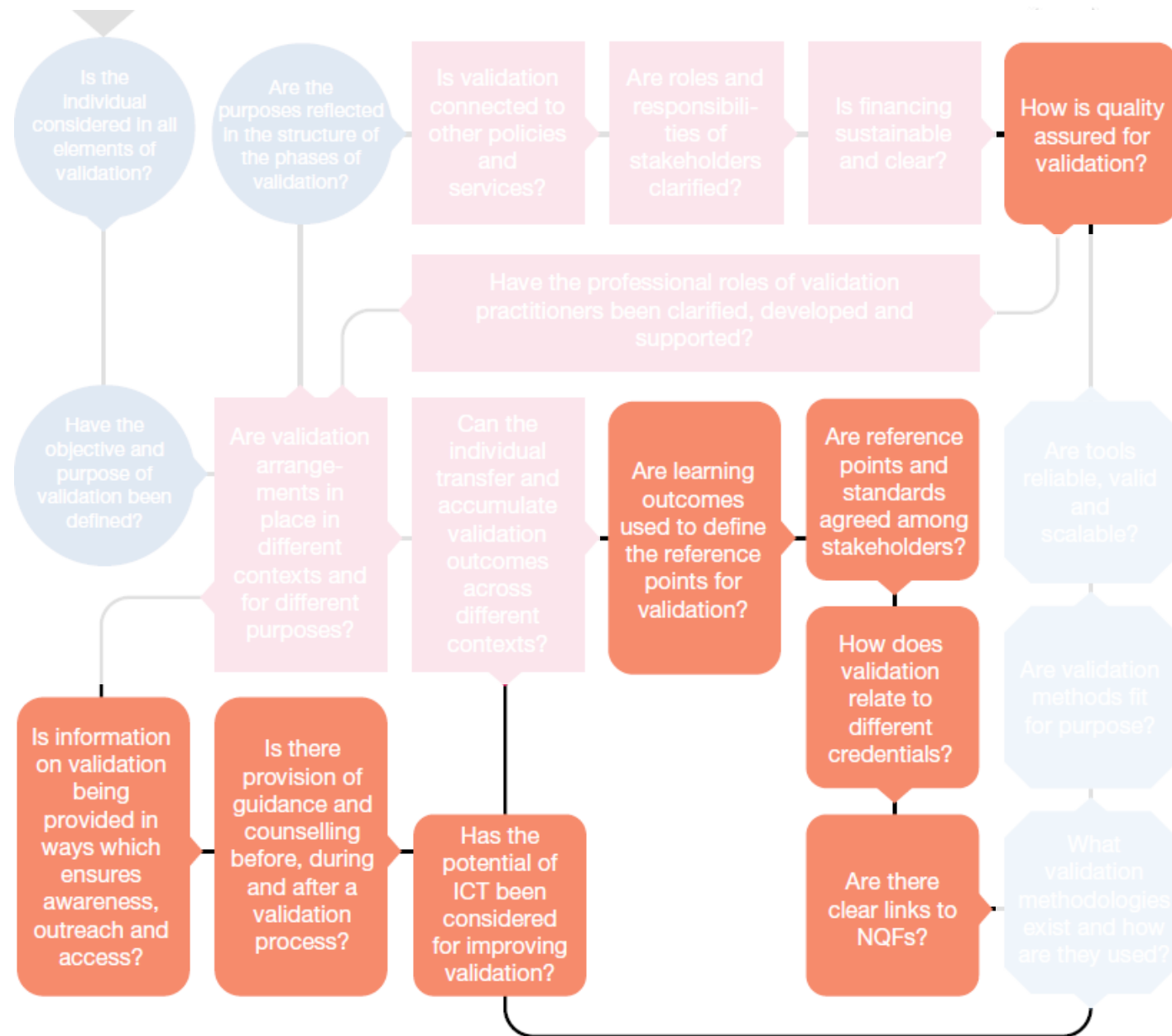
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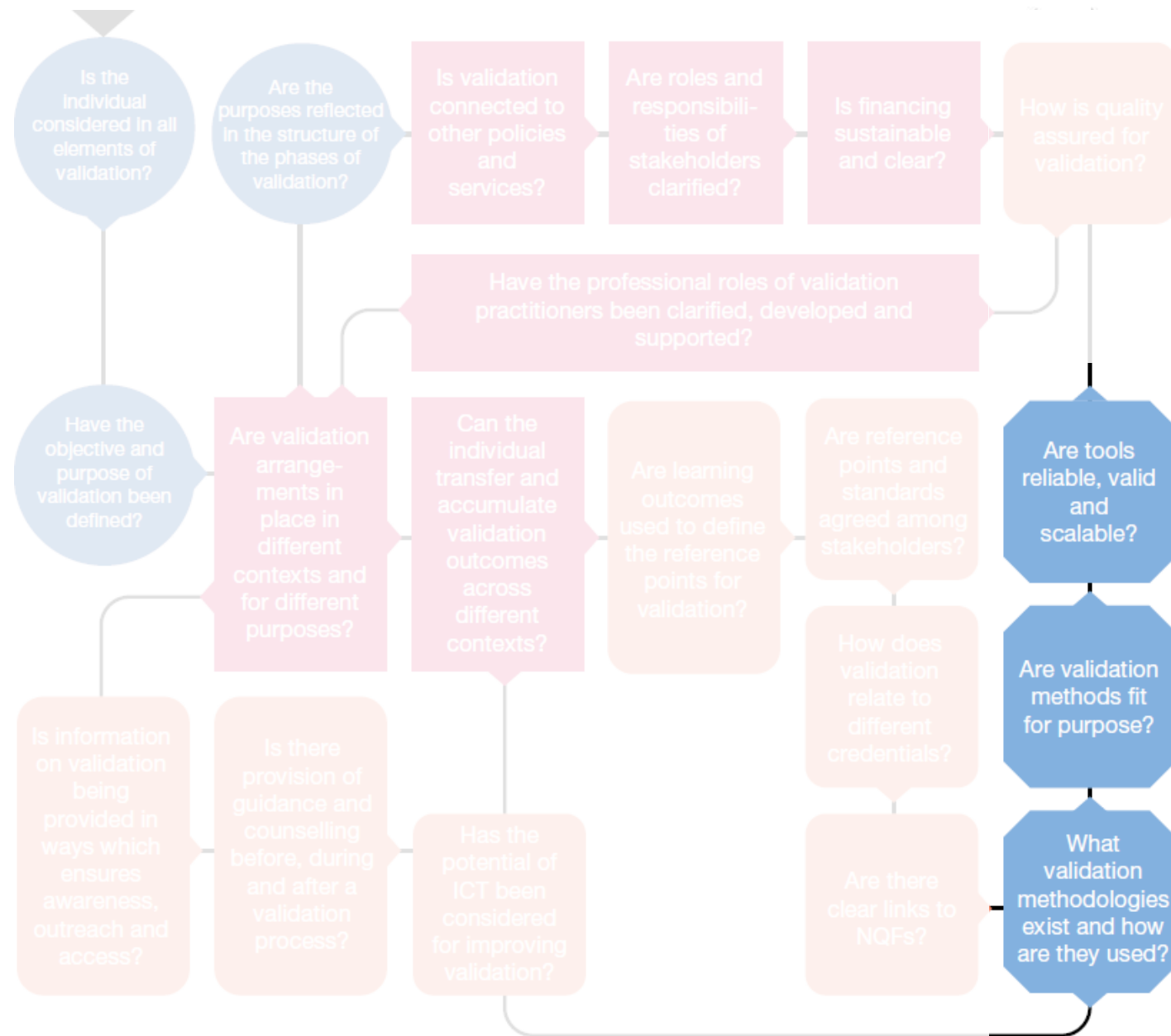
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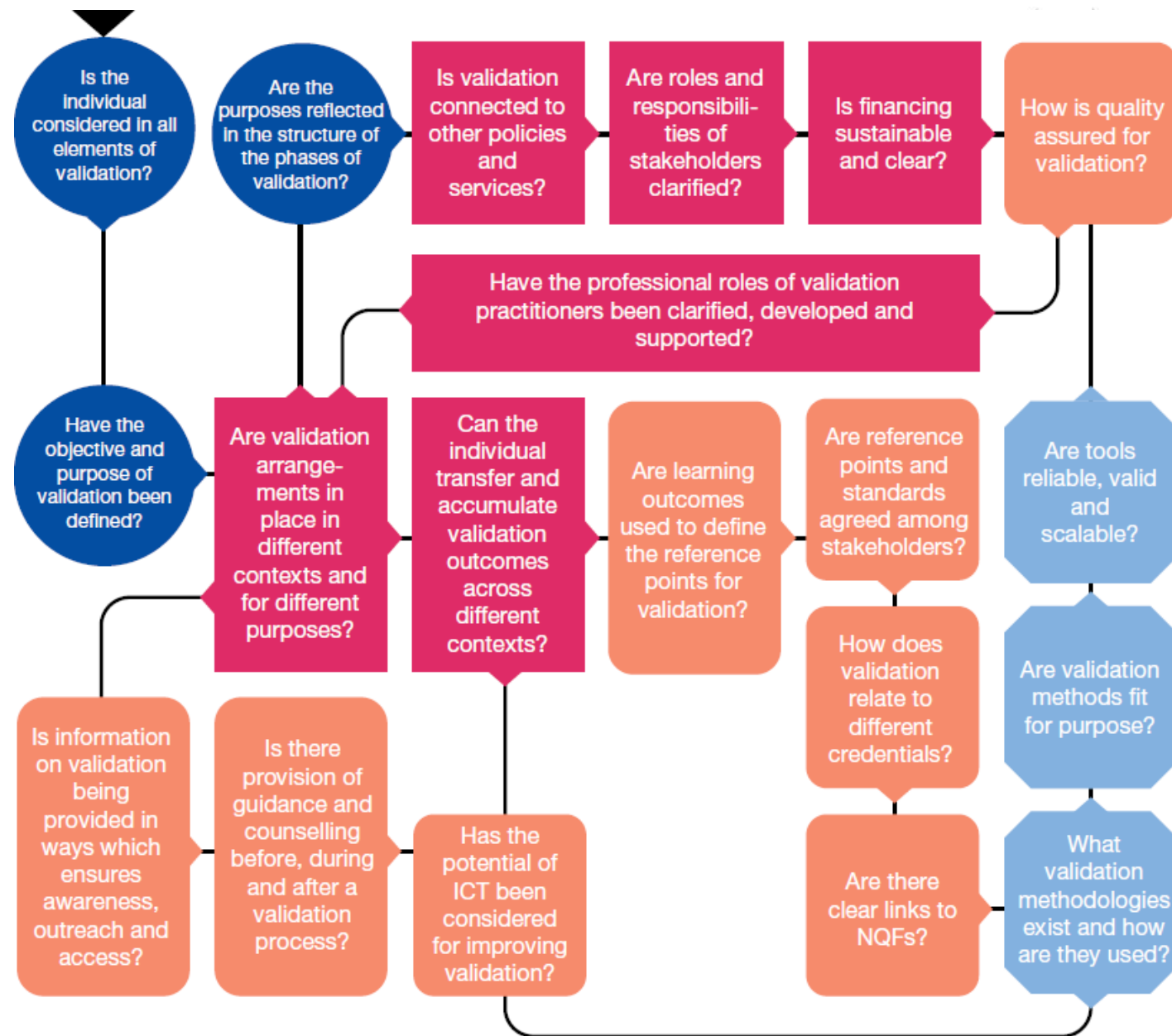
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Thank you



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