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# European inventory on validation of non-formal and informal learning 2023 update

## COUNTRY REPORT: **LUXEMBOURG**

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# 1 Abstract

Luxembourg offers multiple routes and procedures for the validation of non-formal and informal learning. Regardless of the education level or economic sector, the legislative framework recognises an individual right to benefit from the validation of formal, non-formal and informal learning. This process is known as accreditation of prior experiential learning or *validation des acquis de l'expérience* (VAE). National legislation sets out the administrative requirements and procedure, the personalised support applicants are entitled to and the composition of the validation commission. In line with Luxembourg's unique employment tradition, the validation request is examined not only by civil servants trained in education and training policy, but also by representatives of chambers and trade unions. Recent policy developments have responded to increasingly mobile workers and increasingly diverse backgrounds of candidates by strengthening the lifelong learning approach. This includes more improved provision of personalised guidance and support to applicants in more accessible formats (online and hybrid meetings), information provided in multiple languages (DE, FR, LU, EN but also Ukrainian), and enhanced two-way mobility between education and employment (via the transitional Diplom+ scheme for NEETS).

# 2 Introduction

In Luxembourg, the concept of validation of non-formal and informal learning has progressively risen in prominence since 2000. The development of validation systems has been closely related to national lifelong learning strategies and educational reforms based on learning outcomes.

Legislation recognises an individual right to all individuals to benefit from the validation of formal, non-formal and informal learning. This process is known as 'accreditation of prior experiential learning' or *validation des acquis de l'expérience* (VAE). A prerequisite to engage in VAE is to be able to supply evidence that the prior experiential learning is effectively relevant to the targeted qualification and has sufficient duration<sup>1</sup>.

The current legal framework on validation of non-formal and informal learning consists of several laws covering different education and training sectors. Three types of VAE procedures are in place, for formal qualifications referenced on Luxembourg's National Qualifications Framework (*Cadre Luxembourgeois des Qualifications*, CLQ):

- The **VAE procedure implemented by the Ministry of Education, Children and Youth**, concerning vocational certificates and diplomas and the general secondary education leaving diplomas at EQF/CLQ levels 2-4; and the **Master craftsperson certificate** (*Brevet de maîtrise de l'artisanat*) at EQF/CLQ level 5;
- The **VAE procedure for Higher technician certificates** (*Brevet de Technicien Supérieur*, BTS) at EQF/CLQ level 5: the procedure is implemented at the provider level, by the institution (secondary school) delivering the diploma targeted; not all BTS can be obtained via VAE;
- The **VAE procedure at the University of Luxembourg** concerning its Bachelor, Master, PhD diplomas (EQF/CLQ levels 6 to 8).

For the first two VAE procedures, targeting qualifications under EQF/CLQ levels 6, the outcome of VAE can be a partial validation or a full validation leading to the award of a qualification holding the same value as those obtained via formal education and training.

On the other hand, concerning the diplomas awarded by the University of Luxembourg (EQF/CLQ levels 6 to 8), VAE is used to grant access to a study programme or receive exemptions from study requirements, when a candidate does not hold the diploma required for eligibility.

In addition, in the continuing vocational education and training (CVET) sector, a validation procedure called *Validation des Acquis* is in place for some of the diplomas from the Luxembourg Lifelong Learning Centre, the training department of the *Chambre des salariés*. This procedure can also lead to the award of a certification.

Connections between the different sectors are not as strong as in other Member States, since each education sector, and often also the different economic sectors, have their own **separate validation authorities** (e.g. VAE in Higher Education is run by the Ministry of Higher Education and Research).

Luxembourg does not yet use Individual Learning Accounts (ILAs) where learners can accumulate and mobilise credits. However, lifelong learning is encouraged via the **Individual Training Leave** (similar to the French *compte personnel de formation* – CFP). In this scheme, the employer and the state pay into a scheme which allows workers to take paid leave for reskilling and upskilling. All workers are entitled to 80 days of individual training leave, which they can take at any time during their working life. These 80 days may be split into several periods of leave, with up to 20 days of leave at the most over a 2-year period. The “compensatory allowance” for employees (equal to their average daily wage) is paid by their employer, and is reimbursed by the state, while self-employed professionals (incl. in the liberal professions) are paid directly by the Luxembourgish state. These schemes are intended to support lifelong learning while minimising the financial risks that could be associated with training.

## 3 National perspective

### 3.1 Overarching approach to validation

The approach implemented in Luxembourg is to validate non-formal and informal learning outcomes against qualifications awarded in the formal education and training system. The Luxembourgish offer to validate learning acquired through experience (**validation des acquis de l'expérience - VAE**) has emerged from a consultation process, based on the existing long-standing dialogue with different stakeholders in the field of education and training, and has led to the adoption of several laws related to validation in different education sectors.

VAE is defined as an individual right accessible to all citizens without conditions based on the level of education, age, residence or professional status. The only condition is to meet eligibility criteria in terms of prior experience relevant to the qualification targeted; validation arrangements do not target specific groups.

The **policy framework** establishing VAE as an option and refining the procedure was constructed via the following laws:

- **Law of 19 December 2008 on a reform in vocational training**:<sup>1</sup> had the objective of improving training to promote labour market integration, social inclusion and personal development according to one's own capacities throughout the life of the citizen. Art. 45, Ch. V sets out that “Everyone has the right to have their acquired experience validated with a view to obtaining a professional qualification. This

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<sup>1</sup> [https://legilux.public.lu/eli/etat/leg/loi/2008/12/19/n19/jo#chapter\\_5](https://legilux.public.lu/eli/etat/leg/loi/2008/12/19/n19/jo#chapter_5)

provision covers the certificates and diplomas of technical secondary education (referred to as “general” education in the national context<sup>2</sup>), certificates for a level higher than technical secondary education, as well as the master craftsperson certificate. [...] can be the subject of a request for validation all the achievements resulting from formal, non-formal and informal learning for a total cumulative duration of at least three years and in connection with the certificate or the diploma for which the application is filed.” Art. 46 specifies that “Validation can constitute part or all of the professional qualification to be acquired. It is equivalent to the other methods of knowledge assessment with a view to obtaining a certificate or diploma. The certificates and diplomas acquired by the accreditation of prior experiential learning are equivalent to the certificates and diplomas acquired by the other methods of knowledge control and confer the same rights.” The remainder of Ch. V sets out the formal requirements of the procedure.

- **Grand-ducal Regulation of 11 January 2010:**<sup>3</sup> Sets out the practical aspects of the VAE procedure, such as the number of validation sessions per year, the elements of the application file and the composition of the examining validation commission. This commission must include representation from three parties: employers (e.g. trade association), employees (e.g. trade union) and the state education system (teachers, experts).
- **Law of 24 August 2016 modifying the modified law of 19 December 2008 on a reform in vocational training:**<sup>4</sup> Introduces the obligatory provision of support and guidance to VAE applicants. Art. 10 specifies that the competent ministry must offer (a) a group workshop delivered by the ministry, (b) one or more personalised interviews with a trained counsellor. These counsellors are appointed by the Minister.
- **Grand-ducal Regulation of 15 December 2017 on support through personalised interviews of the candidate seeking the accreditation of prior experiential learning:**<sup>5</sup> Specifies that personalised guidance by a trained counsellor should be provided in French, German and Luxembourgish for a total of 12 hours. It is also essential that all information shared during these counselling sessions remains strictly confidential.

Validation procedures in Luxembourg encompass the four stages of identification, documentation, assessment and certification. It should be noted that the identification and documentation phases are not necessarily carried out separately and successively, but can be combined.

### **Sectoral coverage of validation arrangements**

VAE arrangements are in place for formal qualifications awarded through the ‘general secondary education’ system in Luxembourg (including technical and vocational education, to be distinguished from ‘classical secondary education’, not covered by VAE)<sup>3</sup>, for post-secondary non-tertiary education qualifications such as Master craftsperson certificates; and for higher education qualifications (which include short-cycle degrees called BTS, and qualifications awarded by the University of Luxembourg). Please see Table 1 in section 3 for more details on overlaps and differences between the Cadre Luxembourgeois des Qualifications (CLQ) and the European Quality Framework (EQF) for qualifications in education and training.

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<sup>2</sup> “General secondary education is nationally referred to as “Classical” while technical secondary is referred to as “General”.

<sup>3</sup> <https://legilux.public.lu/eli/etat/leg/rqd/2010/01/11/n1/jo>

<sup>4</sup> <https://legilux.public.lu/eli/etat/leg/loi/2016/08/24/n1/jo>

<sup>5</sup> <https://legilux.public.lu/eli/etat/leg/rqd/2017/12/15/a1080/jo>

The **Ministry of Education, Children and Youth (Ministère de l'Éducation nationale, de l'Enfance et de la Jeunesse - MENEJ)** takes responsibility for the implementation of VAE in relation to secondary level qualifications ('general' secondary education), as well as Master craftsman certificates.

In the **higher education** sector, two different procedures are in place. While the Ministry of Higher Education and Research holds general responsibility for validation arrangements, the implementation of VAE procedure is decentralised, with a key role played by the short-cycle higher education providers (secondary schools) for higher technician certificates (BTS) and the University of Luxembourg for Bachelor, Master and PhD programmes.

In addition, in the continuing **vocational training** sector, outside the formal education and training system, a validation procedure known as *Validation des Acquis* is in place for some of the qualifications delivered by the Luxembourg Lifelong Learning Centre (LLLC), the training department of the *Chambre des salariés*.

Another form of assessment of competences acquired via professional experience and other informal and non-formal learning contexts, which can be used to support career development or labour market transitions, are skills audits. In Luxembourg, skills audits are known as *bilans de compétences*. These are not directly linked to VAE arrangements. However, both public training providers and private providers offer the possibility to take a skills audit in order to identify suitable training and possible paths for career progression – including VAE. The official information portal, [www.lifelong-learning.lu](http://www.lifelong-learning.lu), managed by INFPC (Institut National pour le développement de la Formation Professionnelle Continue), includes a list of training providers offering their expertise regarding the skills audit, classified by training domains.<sup>6</sup>

### **Coordination of validation arrangements**

Despite the lack of a single legal framework for validation in Luxembourg or a single national institution that holds primary responsibility for validation, informal coordination between different validation stakeholders takes place in practice and is also facilitated by the small size of the country. The allocation of responsibilities between the different key actors is well defined.

In 2015, a notable development was the setting up of a Working Group on validation of formal, non-formal and informal learning gathering key stakeholders in the field. This working group was founded in the framework of Luxembourg's Lifelong Learning Strategy.<sup>7</sup>

To date, the topic of validation is still actively discussed in Luxembourg according to the representatives of the Ministries consulted for this report, although no major changes have been introduced yet. Developments under discussion (no timeline has yet been set) include a change of legal basis for validation of non-formal and informal learning, either by creating a new overarching legal framework on VAE, or by adopting a new law on lifelong learning integrating provisions on VAE. Another possible development under discussion is the creation of an orientation and guidance service for adults, under the responsibility of services for adult continuing training which would be responsible among other tasks for the provision of guidance to VAE candidates.

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.lifelong-learning.lu/Detail/Article/Accueil/liste-des-organismes-de-formation-membres-proposant-le-bilan-de-competences/fr> <https://www.lifelong-learning.lu/article/liste-des-organismes-de-formation-membres-proposant-le-bilan-de-competences/en>

<sup>7</sup> [https://quichet.public.lu/en/organismes/organismes\\_citoyens/luxembourg-lifelong-learning-center-.html](https://quichet.public.lu/en/organismes/organismes_citoyens/luxembourg-lifelong-learning-center-.html), [www.s3l.lu](http://www.s3l.lu)



## 3.2 Validation in education and training

There is no single national system for validation in Luxembourg, since different authorities are in charge of different education sectors and various professional chambers are in charge of their respective economic sectors.

The three existing VAE procedures linked to formal qualifications are described below, in addition to a procedure implemented in the continuing vocational training sector by the LLLC.

### **VAE procedure managed by the Ministry of Education, Children and Youth**

The procedure covers different secondary certificates and diplomas at EQF/CLQ levels 2-4 and the Master craftsperson certificate (*Brevet de maîtrise de l'artisanat*) at EQF/CLQ level 5 (see Overview table in section 3).

VAE can lead to the award of a full qualification or part of a qualification. The programmes CCP, DAP and DT have a modular structure consisting of units and modules. A unit consists of several competences that need to be acquired to attain parts of a qualification. Each unit can be accumulated, assessed and validated separately.

The legal basis for VAE for these qualifications is the amended law of 19 December 2008 on the reform of vocational training, the Grand Ducal Regulation of **11 January 2010 and the law of 24 August 2016**.

Legislation adopted in 2016 introduced the provision of personalised guidance to VAE candidates. Article 10 of the law of 24 August 2016 foresees that the Ministry of Education, Children and Youth provides guidance services to support candidates through the elaboration of their portfolio, and Grand Ducal Regulation of 15 December 2017 provided further details on the implementation of guidance services via interviews.<sup>8</sup>

These new provisions were adopted following the results of the evaluation of the first years of implementation of the procedure. Indeed, an evaluation carried out by the University of Luxembourg in 2015 and an external evaluation completed in 2015 by the University of Lorraine identified the provision of guidance as critical factor for the development of VAE. Insufficient quality information given to candidates before entering the validation process and the difficulty for some candidates to describe their prior experiential learning were identified as key obstacles. The evaluation from the University of Lorraine stressed that credibility and further development of the validation process depends on the creation of a pool of well-trained guidance practitioners, as well as high-quality training for validation assessors. This was reinforced by the latest external evaluation of the University of Luxembourg undertaken by the quality assurance agency NVAO in 2020.<sup>9</sup>

### **VAE for Higher technician certificates**

The law of 19 June 2009 on higher education<sup>10</sup> and the Grand Ducal Regulation of 23 February 2010<sup>8</sup> specify the VAE procedure for programmes leading to short-cycle higher education degrees or Higher technician certificates (*Brevets de Technicien Supérieur, BTS*).

### **VAE at the University of Luxembourg**

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<sup>8</sup> <https://legilux.public.lu/eli/etat/leg/rqd/2017/12/15/a1080/jo>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.uni.lu/en/news/positive-university-evaluation-report-presented-to-parliament/>

<sup>10</sup> <https://data.legilux.public.lu/filestore/eli/etat/leg/loi/2009/06/19/n1/jo/fr/html/eli-etat-leg-loi-2009-06-19-n1-jo-fr-html.html>



The 2003 law<sup>11</sup> creating the University of Luxembourg and further regulations<sup>12</sup> includes provision allowing a prospective student to request a validation of prior learning.

According to the legislation, VAE can lead to the following outcomes: exemption to provide a diploma requested to access a given study programme; exemption to take part in modules for classes included in the modules of the study programme; exemption to follow part of validation measures; exemption from all modules, courses and examinations leading to the award of the diploma; access to the study programme without any requirements to follow a complementary programme (Gouvernement du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg, referencing report of the CLQ to the EQF).

In practice, validation is only used in order to gain access to studies. For example, a candidate with a Bachelor's degree (180 ECTS) and relevant professional experience may apply for validation to access the second year of a Master programme, which requires a diploma corresponding to 240 ECTS. VAE is not used to award a full qualification or credit exemptions, although previous relevant academic experience of the candidate is considered for exemptions in terms of credit points (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System or ECTS).

The scope of this report is limited to reviewing validation procedures in place in Luxembourg; however, validation procedures in the French higher education sector are also used by residents in Luxembourg.

### **Validation at the Luxembourg Lifelong Learning Centre**

Outside the formal education and training system, in continuing vocational education, a validation procedure is in place at the **Luxembourg Lifelong Learning Centre (LLLC)**, the training department of the *Chambre des salariés* for some of its diplomas which can also be acquired via evening classes.

Following the 2008 law reforming the VET sector, all LLLC curricula are now based on learning outcomes to facilitate validation processes. The LLLC evening courses are structured around a framework of competences which the learners must develop (*référentiel de compétences*). Curricula are modularised (there are five main levels) and each competence is broken down into learning objectives. Specific targets to assess individual learners' learning outcomes are defined on this basis.

At the LLLC, it is not possible to request validation for a single module, but only for a complete training profile. Full qualification or parts of a qualification can be awarded to individuals if they supply evidence that the total length of their prior learning amounts to at least three years and is effectively related to the certificate/qualification desired.

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<sup>11</sup> Loi du 12 août 2003 portant création de l'Université du Luxembourg, <https://data.legilux.public.lu/filestore/eli/etat/leg/loi/2003/08/12/n17/jo/fr/html/eli-etat-leg-loi-2003-08-12-n17-jo-fr.html.html>

<sup>12</sup> Règlement grand-ducal du 22 mai 2006 relatif à l'obtention du grade de doctorat de l'Université du Luxembourg, <https://data.legilux.public.lu/filestore/eli/etat/leg/rgd/2006/05/22/n1/jo/fr/html/eli-etat-leg-rgd-2006-05-22-n1-jo-fr.html.html#:~:text=R%C3%A8glement%20grand%20du%2022,de%20l'Universit%C3%A9%20du%20Luxembourg.&text=Le%20pr%C3%A9sent%20r%C3%A8glement%20a%20pour,de%20l'Universit%C3%A9%20du%20Luxembourg> ; Règlement grand-ducal du 22 mai 2006 relatif à l'obtention du grade de bachelor et du grade de master de l'Université du Luxembourg, <https://data.legilux.public.lu/filestore/eli/etat/leg/rgd/2006/05/22/n2/jo/fr/html/eli-etat-leg-rgd-2006-05-22-n2-jo-fr.html.html>

### 3.3 Validation and the labour market

As outlined in the 2018 country report, VAE arrangements are strictly linked to formal qualifications and can thus be best characterised as part of Luxembourg's (tripartite) education and training policy, rather than a labour market policy instrument; VAE schemes fall under the responsibility of the Ministries in charge of education and higher education.

To guarantee the quality of the VAE process, representatives of employers and employees sit on all VAE validation committees. Professional chambers representing the interests of employers and employees (*Chambre des salariés*) are consulted on the elaboration of laws and regulations concerning VAE schemes, although they are not directly involved in the governance and implementation of the schemes. The professional chambers are, however, involved in the validation commissions.

It is difficult to assess to what extent collective VAE is promoted at the sectoral or enterprise level, since all VAE applications are handled individually. They are usually initiated by the individual seeking a certification.

Another form of assessment of competences acquired via professional experience and other informal and non-formal learning contexts, are skills audits. These are known as *bilans de compétences* in Luxembourg. Skills audits help users map their own skills and competences to identify potential job opportunities, career development or training opportunities. Skills audits are formative in nature and do not lead to the award of a specific qualification. However, skills audits are an increasingly important opportunity to facilitate career development or labour market transitions not directly linked to VAE arrangements. Both public training providers and private providers offer the possibility to take a skills audit. The official information portal, [www.lifelong-learning.lu](http://www.lifelong-learning.lu), includes a list of skills audit providers, members of the portal, classified by training domains.<sup>13</sup>

Concerning jobseekers, Luxembourg's public employment service, the ADEM (*Agence pour le développement de l'emploi*) offers a right for unemployed people to undertake a skills audit free of charge. The *bilan de compétences* offered by the ADEM was introduced by legislation drawn up in 1998, when the National Action Plan for Employment was revealed.<sup>14</sup> Skills identification and development are also essential pillars of the ADEM's "Stratégie 2025", which includes "Developing the employability of jobseekers and employees" (Goal 2), "Supporting the identification of solutions for people who are remote from the labour market" (Goal 3) and "Helping employers attract and retain key competences" (Goal 4).<sup>15</sup> At the ADEM, the *bilan de compétences* is used as a tool to explore the knowledge, know-how, professional personal competences of the user and compare them to the skills required by the labour market, and is formative in nature. It includes the following different stages:

- **Preparation phase:** collective information sessions on the skills audit objectives, assessment of individual needs and selection of appropriate tools.
- **Investigation phase:** analysis of the individual's information and identification of possibilities for career development. This is typically organised in sessions

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<sup>13</sup> <http://www.lifelong-learning.lu/Detail/Article/Accueil/liste-des-organismes-de-formation-membres-proposant-le-bilan-de-competences/fr> <https://www.lifelong-learning.lu/article/liste-des-organismes-de-formation-membres-proposant-le-bilan-de-competences/en>

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/publications/article/1998/labour-market-measures-in-the-national-action-plan-for-employment>

<sup>15</sup> <https://adem.public.lu/fr/publications/adem/2022/rapport-activite-2021.html>

with a specialist adviser – these take place every two weeks to allow a self-assessment process between sessions.

- **Conclusion phase:** based on the results, factors likely to affect the realisation of a training or professional project are assessed and recommendations and a personal action plan are prepared.
- **Follow-up:** both the beneficiary and the ADEM advisor receive a written synthesis of the skills audit; support is provided for the concrete implementation of the action plan.

No recent information is publicly available on take-up (data on take up was only available in the annual activity reports of the ADEM up until 2013).

### 3.4 Validation and the third sector

In the third sector, tools focusing on the recognition of learning outcomes from non-formal and informal learning are in place. These tools aim at documenting competences acquired by participants, typically young people, to support applications for jobs or education and training opportunities. These practices are not linked to formal qualifications and the VAE procedures described earlier.

## 4 Links to credentials and qualifications

Validation procedures are closely linked to the Luxembourgish Qualifications Framework (Cadre Luxembourgeois des Qualifications – CLQ), which in turn is modelled on the European Qualification Framework. Please see table 1 (replicated below) for more details on the equivalence of different certifications in Luxembourg.

Table 4.1 VAE schemes by education sector

CLQ/ EQF level	Sector in Luxembourg's education system	Qualifications	Level of implementation of VAE; eligibility requirements	Outcomes of validation
2	"Technical" <sup>1</sup> secondary education, vocational training" (Formation professionnelle)	<i>CCP, Certificat de capacité professionnelle</i> (Vocational capacity certificate)	Procedure centralised by the Ministry of Education, Children and Youth (since 2010)	Partial validation or award of a complete qualification
3		<i>DAP, Diplôme d'aptitude professionnelle</i> (Vocational aptitude diploma)		
4		<i>DT, Diplôme de technicien</i> (Technician's diploma)		
4	"Technical" <sup>1</sup> secondary education (Enseignement secondaire général)	<i>Diplôme de fin d'études secondaires de l'enseignement secondaire général</i> (Technical <sup>1</sup> secondary school leaving diploma)	Requires 3 years (5 000 hours) of relevant experience	

5	Post-Secondary Non-Tertiary Education	<i>Brevet de maîtrise</i> (Master craftsman's certificate)		
5	Higher education	<i>BTS, Brevet de technicien supérieur</i> (Higher technician certificate) (note : VAE is not available for all BTS)	Decentralised implementation at the provider level or technical secondary schools (lycées techniques) (since 2009)  Requires 3 years (5 000 hours) of relevant experience	
6		Bachelor	University of Luxembourg (since 2003)  Requires 3 years (5 000 hours) of relevant experience	Access to study programmes
7		Master		
8		<i>Doctorat</i> (Doctoral degree)		

<sup>1</sup> General secondary education is nationally referred to as "Classical" while technical secondary is referred to as "General".

Source: Produced by the Ministère de l'Éducation nationale, de l'Enfance et de la Jeunesse

Validation can take place at all qualification levels, and also allows successful applicants to progress between different levels and types of education. This includes partial validations, which may be complemented by additional recommended training in order to achieve the full qualification and reach the next CLF/EQF level. The use of microcredentials as components of partial validation has not yet been rolled out across Luxembourg. A Cedefop study mapping the use of microcredentials in different European labour markets (Cedefop, 2022) offered no detailed information about Luxembourg.

The outcomes of validation procedures are well regarded by users, employers and the education and training sector. VAE Participants report improved professional standing and often a better job – either in the same company or with a new employer. In contrast to some other countries, employees who have boosted their profile through additional validation procedures can even access prestigious jobs in Luxembourg's public administration.

## 5 Standards

The main standard and reference framework for measuring non-formal and informal learning remains the *Luxembourgish Qualifications Framework*. Each educational curriculum and certification issued in Luxembourg must comply with the specifications

set out in this framework. This includes the new *National Reference Framework for Non-formal education for Children and Youth*, which applies until the age of 25.<sup>16</sup>

The standards and reference points for validation follow the model of those used in formal qualifications. They have the same ‘market value’ as those used in formal qualifications.

Competence frameworks are often linked to professional sectors. Some sectoral organisations and employers’ associations set out their own additional competence frameworks for the training of their members and the wider public. These frameworks can also be used when assessing competences through VAE. For example, the influential Association of Banks and Bankers of Luxembourg (*Association des banques et banquiers luxembourgeois* – ABBL), uses the joint EU/OECD-INFE financial competence framework for adults for its internal and external training offer. This training includes personal finance competences such as budget planning, saving, investing, borrowing or retirement planning; thematic competences concerning digital finance, sustainable finance and financial resilience; as well as “the knowledge/awareness, skills/behaviours and confidence/attitudes/motivation that individuals need to have in order to support their financial well-being throughout their lives”.<sup>17</sup> The association’s current training offer includes: projects for children (Money Week), young adults (European Money Quiz), and also vulnerable adults (with targeted training that results in a formal certificate).

## 6 Institutions involved in validation arrangements and its coordination

The number of institutions and actors involved in Luxembourgish VAE procedures is set by law. In contrast to other Member States, there is broad representation beyond the Ministry of Education.

Potential applicants’ first point of contact is the **Maison de l’orientation**.<sup>18</sup> Professional chambers may also provide continuous advice to their members. The *Chambre des salariés*, for instance, is the main coordinator of the Luxembourg and specialised services such the **Luxembourg Lifelong Learning Centre (LLLC)**.<sup>19</sup>

Once the application is ready to be examined by a **validation commission**, this jury must include representation from three parties: employers (e.g. trade association), employees (e.g. trade union) and the state education system (civil servants, teachers). This commission may also consult additional **experts**, who can come from any academic or economic background.

Given this diversity of involved actors and institutions, statistical data on the validation of informal and non-formal learning may also be collected separately. The different bodies – first and foremost, the Ministry for national education, children and youth – may publish their respective VAE figures in their annual reports.

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<sup>16</sup> <https://guichet.public.lu/dam-assets/catalogue-formulaires/creche-foyer/cadre-reference-national/cadre-reference-national-fr.pdf>

<sup>17</sup> <https://abbl.lu/en/professionals/cmu-action-7-empowering-citizens-through-financial-literacy-what-s-new-2>

<sup>18</sup> <https://maison-orientation.public.lu/fr.html>

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.lifelong-learning.lu/formateur/luxembourg-lifelong-learning-centre-de-la-chambre-des-salaries/en>

## 7 Outreach, awareness raising, provision of information, advice and guidance

### 7.1 Outreach and awareness-raising

The quality of information and guidance for validation candidates is considered essential to further developing the validation system in Luxembourg. The availability and accessibility of information has steadily increased thanks to the country's rapid progress in the field of e-government. The general portal [www.quichet.public.lu](http://www.quichet.public.lu) allows citizens to access information on a variety of policy initiatives – via their own digital identity card<sup>20</sup> and the mobile app GouvID- and also allows for the download and submission of online forms and other administrative documents.

Awareness-raising about validation procedures and recruitment is a shared responsibility of different stakeholders in Luxembourg, including the Ministries involved in VAE; formal education and training providers, guidance providers, the public employment service (PES), and the professional chambers. There have been no major changes in this area in the last years. According to previous versions of the Inventory as well as consulted interviewees; VAE is well-known in the country among providers of counselling services, as well as among potential candidates for validation.

General information on the different types of validation procedures in place in Luxembourg can be accessed via different online portals:

- The governmental information **web portal for the general public** ([www.quichet.public.lu](http://www.quichet.public.lu)) provides a comprehensive overview of the possibilities offered to individuals who wish to validate prior learning, according to the sector and level of education targeted. It also includes useful information for employers.
- The information **web portal on lifelong learning** in Luxembourg ([www.lifelong-learning.lu](http://www.lifelong-learning.lu)) also provides comprehensive information on types of VAE procedures for different types of qualifications.<sup>21</sup> The portal is managed by the national institute for the development of continuing vocational training (*Institut National pour le développement de la Formation Professionnelle Continue*, INFPC), a publicly funded body under the responsibility of the Ministry in charge of education. Information includes a video made by the INFPC with a testimonial from candidates who obtained a diploma via VAE, websites of the Ministry of Education, Children and Youth and the Ministry of Higher Education and official forms used to apply for validation.

The LLLC also provides information via its website on validation arrangements for its own diplomas.<sup>22</sup>

### 7.2 Information, advice and guidance

In Luxembourg, general information and advice on VAE is mostly delivered online. The online information portals for the general public ([www.quichet public.lu](http://www.quichet.public.lu)) as well as Ministry websites mentioned earlier provide general information and advice on the different types of VAE procedures in place. Different websites can also be used to help identify which qualifications correspond to the experience of the candidate (e.g.

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<sup>20</sup> <https://ctie.gouvernement.lu/en/dossiers/eID/eID.html>

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.lifelong-learning.lu/accueil/fr>

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.csl.lu/fr/lllc/>



websites of the *Chambre des Métiers, Chambre de Commerce* and the national lifelong learning portal ([www.lifelong-learning.lu](http://www.lifelong-learning.lu)), and the website of MENJE [www.vae.men.lu](http://www.vae.men.lu) which contains all of the important information regarding the procedure, the available qualifications and the guidance)

The VAE Unit of the MENJE Professional Training Department also organises several **information sessions** in the form of group workshops. These are often organised in collaboration with the professional chambers. There are two types of workshops depending on the participant's situation:

The **first type of workshop** offered by the ministry is for candidates interested in the accreditation of prior experiential learning (VAE). These workshops are advertised on all the relevant websites and are offered 6-8 times per year. Only registered participants may attend. Workshops take place at the Luxembourgish Lifelong Learning Centre (LLLC). Each group workshop is an information session during which potential VAE applicants have the opportunity to ask questions about the diploma they are aiming for. The workshop leaders (including a representative of the validation commission) offer details on the processing of applications and outline the criteria and requirements related to obtaining the diploma concerned. The main objective of the collective workshop is to provide each candidate with as much information and advice as possible on the required degree.

The **second type of workshop** targets participants whose admissibility request has already been accepted. Since they have passed the first stage of the VAE procedure, this workshop helps them understand how to build a comprehensive and convincing VAE dossier. Participants learn how to articulate and present all the different components of a comprehensive validation file, and have the opportunity to ask any questions relating to the methodology for building their dossier.

Additional information sessions are provided by the National Institute for the development of continuing vocational training (Institut national pour le développement de la formation professionnelle continue - **INFPC**) in cooperation with the "Cellule VAE"/VAE unit of the Ministry of national Education, Childhood and Youth (Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale, de l'Enfance et de la Jeunesse – MENJE) and the professional Chambers. To be more accessible for the widest possible public, these workshops provide information on VAE opportunities to users in a hybrid format: face-to-face with and online live stream. The INFPC and MENJE, in cooperation with the professional Chambers have also produced an explainer video on VAE, which has been publicised on the institute's own website and social media channels, but also through the lifelong learning portal.<sup>23</sup>

In addition to general information and advice; **individualised guidance** is provided to candidates before, during and after the process, concerning opportunities for and benefits of VAE, as well as on the process and outcomes. This form of support is optional but "strongly recommended". The procedures in place for the provision of individualised guidance to candidates, differ across the types of VAE procedures and education level. However, the support offered to candidates generally consists in the following steps. Trained counsellors provide methodological guidance to inform the candidate about the framework programme of the certificate, diploma or degree concerned; guide, help and advise candidates in drawing up their file for the validation commission on the basis of their professional and/or extra-professional experience.

In addition, the Department of Adult Education (Service de la formation des adultes - SFA) offers guidance and advice on VAE at the Educational and Vocational Guidance

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<sup>23</sup> [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vPSalHs\\_eeQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vPSalHs_eeQ)



Centre (Maison de l'orientation) in Luxembourg City. These SFA counsellors are available two days a week for walk-ins and scheduled appointments.<sup>24</sup>

More information on different forms of guidance adapted to the different VAE procedures is provided below:

**a) VAE procedure managed by the Ministry of Education, Children and Youth (MENEJ)**

In response to an evaluation conducted in 2015, Luxembourg adopted new provisions in 2016 and 2017 concerning the provision of individualised guidance for VAE candidates. Article 10 of the law of 24 August 2016 foresees that the Ministry of Education, Children and Youth (MENJE) provides guidance services to support candidates through the elaboration of their portfolio. A Grand-Ducal Regulation adopted on 15 December 2017 provides further details on the implementation of guidance via individual interviews.<sup>25</sup> Representatives of employers and employees (professional chambers) were consulted during the elaboration of the text and supported the introduction of these provisions and proposed amendments to clarify its implementation.

Guidance is offered to eligible VAE candidates (free of charge) and focuses on the second part of the application (*demande de validation sur le fond*). Guidance is not compulsory and eligible beneficiaries should request it within a month after receiving the confirmation of eligibility. Individual interviews can be offered in French, German or Luxembourgish and last for up to 12 hours in total.

**b) VAE for Higher technician certificates (BTS)**

It is the responsibility of each training provider (secondary schools) to provide information, advice and guidance to VAE candidates. Counsellors working in the secondary school where the targeted programme is offered provide candidates with information and guidance.

**c) VAE at the University of Luxembourg**

The University is responsible for the provision of information and guidance to VAE candidates. Potential VAE applicants can either look for information on the website of the institution or contact directly the service responsible for students (*Service des études et de la vie étudiante* - SEVE). The application is an online process. Once the application is considered valid by the institution, the candidate receives further guidelines and requirements relating to documents/evidence to be sent. At any time in the process, candidates can contact SEVE for further guidance and support.

**d) Validation at the Luxembourg Lifelong Learning Centre (LLLC)**

The LLLC is responsible to provide guidance and support services to candidates interested in validation procedures linked to evening courses. Information sessions are being regularly held.

The LLLC also delivers advice to candidates interested in VAE for some qualifications awarded by French higher education institutions, following provisions set by the French validation system.

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<sup>24</sup> <https://guichet.public.lu/en/citoyens/enseignement-formation/formation-adultes/diplomante/validation-acquis/vae-diplome-secondaire-technique-brevet-maitrise.html>

<sup>25</sup> <https://legilux.public.lu/eli/etat/leg/rqd/2017/12/15/a1080/jo>

## 8 Validation practitioners

### 8.1 Profile of validation practitioners

This section focuses on practitioners who provide guidance and counselling during the validation process; and those responsible for assessment (members of VAE commissions). These two categories of ‘validation practitioners’ in Luxembourg typically perform other tasks in addition to being involved in validation. Overall, there have been no significant changes in the profile, training and qualifications of validation practitioners since the 2018 country report.

Concerning the practitioners in charge of providing **guidance** about VAE (for qualifications under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education, Children and Youth), the Grand-Ducal Regulation of 15 December 2017 on guidance via individual interviews of VAE candidates states that the guidance practitioners are either civil servants or members of professional chambers.<sup>26</sup>

Concerning validation practitioners responsible for **assessment**, the different laws on VAE contain provisions on the composition of VAE commissions, which typically include representatives of teaching/academic staff, employers and/or workers. Their professional profiles often include a background in education, human resources management or workplace psychology.<sup>27</sup>

Concerning the VAE procedure at the Ministry of Education, Children and Youth, the Grand-Ducal Regulation of 2010 states in Art. 8 that a commission comprising six members (two employer representatives, two worker representatives and teachers/trainers from secondary schools) is set for each qualification.<sup>28</sup> This tripartite representation is required by law. If one or more of the commissioners cannot attend due to illness or unforeseen circumstances, then all three categories of commissioners must still be represented. Members of validation commissions are nominated for five years. Commission members must designate a chair (president) and a secretary among them. Whenever needed, they have the possibility to involve external experts.

Concerning the VAE procedure for higher technician certificates (BTS), the law of 19 June 2009 foresees that ad-hoc validation commissions comprise a minimum of two people who are not a member of the teaching staff. Concerning VAE at the University of Luxembourg, the ad-hoc validation commission/jury must comprise university lecturers and professionals from the field of activity concerned; the composition of the jury is stipulated by the University rector according to the nature of the qualification targeted.

### 8.2 Provision of training and support to validation practitioners

Both guidance practitioners and members of VAE commissions receive specific training.

Concerning **guidance practitioners**, the focus of such training is on how to advise and guide candidates to prepare their application, identify and document learning

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<sup>26</sup> <https://legilux.public.lu/eli/etat/leg/rqd/2017/12/15/a1080/jo>

<sup>27</sup> Interview with the Ministry of Education on 03/03/2023.

<sup>28</sup> <https://legilux.public.lu/eli/etat/leg/rqd/2010/01/11/n1/jo>

outcomes from their education and training, professional experience and non-work-related experience). The VAE procedure is managed by the ministry of Education, Children and Youth. The Grand-Ducal Regulation of 15 December 2017 refers to the provision of regular training sessions by the ministry for guidance practitioners involved in individual interviews.

**Members of VAE commissions** are trained to carry out an evaluation of learning outcomes of the candidate and assess them against curriculum requirements. The organisation of specific training sessions for the newly nominated members of VAE commissions started in 2009. The first training session organised was a three-day session. Since then, the approach has moved toward the provision of recurrent and shorter (one day) training sessions for new members. Initial training is provided partly by the University of Lorraine and partly by the Ministry of Education, Children and Youth. Members of validation commissions remain in place for five years and their mandate can be renewed.

### 8.3 Qualifications and experience

There are currently no specific qualification requirements for validation practitioners set by legislation in Luxembourg.

Concerning guidance practitioners for VAE procedures managed by the Ministry of Education, Children and Youth, the above-mentioned *Règlement grand-ducal* of 15 December 2017 mentions that they regularly undertake training sessions organised by the Ministry related to VAE but does not specify qualification requirements.

During the consultation process prior to the adoption of the text, the Chamber of Commerce of Luxembourg suggested that guidance practitioners benefiting from training from the Ministry should receive a formal certification. The Chamber of Commerce had argued that this would be useful to promote the competences of VAE guidance practitioners as well as to distinguish their services from the growing offer of private counselling services, not subsidised by the Ministry of national education.

Concerning members of VAE commissions, requirements vary depending on the type of qualification targeted by the validation procedure. Members of validation commissions should have a thorough knowledge of the skills and competences required on the labour market for a given qualification.

## 9 Inputs, outputs and outcomes

### 9.1 Funding and costs

The different types of VAE procedures in place in Luxembourg are mostly publicly funded. The main budget line is the Education Ministry's department for Vocational Education and Training (*Service de la formation professionnelle*), which includes measures to invest in upskilling initiatives with enterprises, reform and expand lifelong learning. The expense budget for these services in 2023 is EUR 101 660 324, which represents 2.86% of the ministry's budget and 0.39% of the total annual state budget.<sup>29</sup> Further funding is available to the Ministry of Labour, Employment and the social and solidary economy – especially for the public employment service (*Agence*

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<sup>29</sup> <https://budget.public.lu/lb/budget2023/am-detail.html?chpt=depenses&dept=10&sect=80>

*pour le Développement de l'Emploi – ADEM*). EUR 63 782 113 were allocated in the 2023 budget,<sup>30</sup> but this also includes labour activation methods other than VAE.

The cost of each validation procedure also includes compensatory payments for validation commission members. In 2020, members of validation commissions received EUR 208.69 to read an application file and EUR 41,74 per hour for time spent in validation commission meetings. The president of each validation commission and the secretary, received even more: EUR 250.43 to examine the application dossier and EUR 83.48 to attend the validation meetings.<sup>31</sup> Validation commission members also have the right to claim back any transport costs incurred due to their role.<sup>32</sup> However, no consolidated data concerning the annual public funding of validation procedures is available.

At the University of Luxembourg, there is no specific budget line for VAE. The management of VAE is under the responsibility of the service for students or SEVE. The University of Luxembourg receives a lump sum grant from the Ministry of Higher Education and Research.

The Chamber of Commerce of Luxembourg (2012) made a compilation of the different costs to be covered during one year of validation procedures. The total estimated costs come to about EUR 90 000 per year.

Most of the real costs linked to a validation procedure are not borne by validation users in Luxembourg. Candidates are only required to pay some flat-rate administrative fees:

- For the VAE procedure managed by the Ministry of Education, Children and Youth, an administrative fee (stamp duty) of EUR 25 is required when the application for eligibility is submitted by the candidate. Guidance is free of charge.
- The Ministry of Higher Education charges applicants with EUR 75 per application for third-country Higher Education diplomas.
- At the LLLC, the cost for validation candidates is EUR 150 per application.

No financial support is provided to facilitate access to VAE procedures for vulnerable or disadvantaged groups. The reasoning behind this is that the applicant only pays a fraction of the total cost of the procedure and that this fraction should be affordable for anyone with a Luxembourgish salary. The national minimum wage stood at EUR 2 387 per month in early 2023 and the average annual income in 2022 was EUR 72 200 in 2022.<sup>33</sup>

## 9.2 Beneficiaries and users of validation processes

### 9.2.1 Validation trends

Since there are different types of VAE procedures, data on the use of validation is not systematically compiled; available information for each type of VAE procedure is presented below.

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<sup>30</sup> <https://budget.public.lu/lb/budget2023/am-detail.html?chpt=depenses&dept=16&sect=107>

<sup>31</sup> <https://sfp.lu/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/declaration-VAE-a-partir-du-1er-janvier-2020-MENJE.pdf>

<sup>32</sup> <https://legilux.public.lu/eli/etat/leg/rqd/1993/08/05/n5/jo>

<sup>33</sup> <https://statistiques.public.lu/fr/publications/series/luxembourg-en-chiffres/2022/luxembourg-en-chiffres-2022.html>

### **VAE procedure managed by the Ministry of Education, Children and Youth**

The Ministry of Education, Children and Youth collects data on flows of beneficiaries for VAE procedures.<sup>34</sup> Data is currently collected for each period of validation (two sessions of validation are held per year).

From the spring of 2010 until 24 January 2018, close to 2 500 requests (first step of the application) were submitted in total. In the first years after the introduction of VAE the number of annual requests for validation has remained around 250-300 per year and is following an increasing trend in the last couple of years. In 2019 the figures were very similar, but in 2020 the COVID-19 pandemic led to a decline in VAE applications and validation committee meetings, followed by an increase in applications towards the end of the year, when the labour market was reopening. At the time of this update, the ministry reported receipt of 450 validation requests in 2022.

The Ministry's latest annual report shows that in 2022, 450 requests were submitted, of which 382 were declared admissible (84.8%). The 68 requests which were declared inadmissible were mostly rejected for often procedural reasons (e.g., error in the diploma requested, request out of time, incomplete applications). In total, 266 people whose request was declared admissible (1st file – *demande de recevabilité*), and who wanted to benefit from personalised support, have received the contact details of a support person for the preparation of their request for validation on the merits (2nd file - *demande de validation sur le fond*). Individualised support is not obligatory, but at the discretion of the applicant.

Concerning the evaluation of the requests for validation on the merits, 143 files were presented to the various evaluation commissions. Of these submitted requests, 43 were pronounced "total validations". By the time of the publication deadline, in March 2022, 29 further applications were at the "partial validation" stage. The annual report 2023 may offer more information on how those partial validations progressed. The 71 remaining applications were refused by the validation commissions, diplomas and certificates combined.

### **VAE for Higher technician certificates (BTS)**

According to the on-off report from the ministry of Education, Children and Youth on the implementation of the 2012 Council Recommendation on validation of non-formal and informal learning, the numbers of applications is relatively low.

### **VAE at the University of Luxembourg**

At the University of Luxembourg, about 50 requests for validation are examined per year across the three faculties of the University; an upward trend can be noticed. Requests come from adult learners with professional experience and interested in accessing specific higher education programmes to improve their qualification level.

## **9.2.2 Validation users**

No detailed data on VAE participants is available to the public.

## **9.2.3 Validation and disadvantaged groups**

There is no specific strategy targeting to disadvantaged groups (including migrants and refugees) within existing VAE procedures in Luxembourg; no changes in this area have been observed in recent years.

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<sup>34</sup> <https://men.public.lu/en/publications/rapports-activite-ministere/rapports-ministere/rapport-activites-2022.html>

The VAE procedure and guidance offered by the Ministry of Education, Children and Youth are open to all potential beneficiaries, without giving priority to specific target groups.

Personalised guidance for potential applicants is also offered by the Adult Training Department (*Service de la Formation des Adultes* - SFA).<sup>35</sup> This advice is provided during a face-to-face appointment or over the phone.

As outlined in the 2018 report, the University of Luxembourg launched some **initiatives for refugees in 2016**. These concern primarily language training and competence identification to facilitate the validation procedures.

When the **war in Ukraine** generated waves of displaced persons, the Luxembourgish authorities prepared a leaflet<sup>36</sup> and communication campaign to help the new arrivals integrate into the national labour market. This leaflet invited refugees to attend free training courses via the **Diplom+ Ukraina scheme**. This consisted of a training cycle that extends over seven weeks and offers complementary and varied modules. The six modules included: (1) live and work in the EU, (2) Discover Luxembourg, (3) Public speaking & empowerment, (4) Time and stress management, (5) First aid, (6) Practical workshops and upcycling. Participants received a certificate for each successfully passed module and further individual support if necessary.

The one-stop-shop "Ukraine Guichet Unique Enregistrement" allowed Ukrainian refugees to request Temporary Protection and receive guidance on further integration, including access to the Luxembourgish PES (ADEM) and the national labour market.

Beneficiaries of temporary protection are exempt from applying for a temporary work permit and can therefore freely access the Luxembourg labour market without the need for a specific permit, for as long as their temporary protection certificate is valid. The people concerned can also register as job seekers with the National Employment Agency (*Agence pour le Développement de l'Emploi* - ADEM). However, there is currently no public information on take-up and success rates of Ukrainian refugees in the Luxembourgish labour market.

## 10 Validation methods

Most of the methodologies, methods and tools used for VAE in Luxembourg have remained unchanged since 2018. And yet, it is worth highlighting that the exceptional experience of the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the digitisation of public services, especially when it came to labour market integration. VAE procedures were thus conducted largely online with candidates benefiting from more "accessible and flexible" communication formats.

### 10.1 Methodologies and methods

Across the different types of VAE procedures in place in Luxembourg, the main method used is the declarative method, via a portfolio providing evidence (e.g. detailed descriptions) of the candidate's knowledge, skills and competences acquired through experience. The content of the portfolio depends on the qualification targeted.

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<sup>35</sup> <https://men.public.lu/fr/formation-adultes.html>

<sup>36</sup> <https://men.public.lu/dam-assets/fr/actualites/grands-dossiers/systeme-educatif/flyer-diplom-ukr-en.pdf>



Once the candidate has submitted a complete portfolio, it is assessed by a validation committee. The standards towards which the candidate's prior experiential learning is assessed is the curricular framework of the targeted qualification. The portfolio assessment can be complemented through interviews with the candidate and/or an assessment in a work context.

Validation methods have not changed since the introduction of VAE procedures; ICT-based assessment methods are not used.

Additional details on methods used for different types of VAE procedures are provided below.

**VAE procedure managed by the Ministry of Education, Children and Youth.** This follows a four-step process:

- 1) **Eligibility check:** candidates submit an application for admissibility (*demande de recevabilité*) in writing to the Ministry of Education, Children and Youth which specifies the qualification/diploma/certificate targeted, and provides a general description of their motivation and objectives, background, specific experience, etc. Standard forms provided by the Ministry are used. In addition, the candidates need to provide official documents such as a certificate of affiliation to social security and a copy of the employment contract (or a certificate of employment or payslips) proving periods of learning or certificates issued by the president of the association with respect to volunteer activities taking place in associations. A positive decision on the eligibility of the VAE application remains valid for two validation sessions.
- 2) **Documentation:** eligible candidates submit a detailed application (validation on the merits - *demande de validation sur le fond*) providing a thorough explanation and detailed description of their aptitudes, skills, knowledge in relation to the targeted qualification, based on concrete examples from their professional and non-work-related experience. They can receive guidance and support when preparing their application. Applications (in the form of a portfolio) can be submitted in time for two deadlines per year corresponding to the two validation sessions taking place annually: deadline of 31 July for session of the autumn session (taking place in October-November) and 28 February for the spring session (validation occurs in May-June).
- 3) **Assessment:** the experience of the candidate is assessed by a VAE commission against the standards of the targeted qualification. The commission consists of six members: two employer organisation representatives, two employee representatives and two representatives from education and training providers. The validation commission can decide to either set up an interview with the candidate or carry out an assessment of the performance of the candidate in a real or simulated professional situation if considered more relevant.
- 4) **Certification:** the VAE commission decides to grant a full or partial validation or refuse a validation. In case of partial validation, the candidate is expected to acquire the skills required for the award of the full qualification (either via professional experience or participation in a training course) within the next three years. In case of full validation, qualification is awarded to the successful candidate by the relevant bodies.

### **VAE for Higher technician certificates (BTS)**

An ad-hoc validation commission is set up by the *secondary school* where the application has been sent, for each individual asking for recognition of prior learning. The validation commission examines the application submitted by the candidate, interviews the candidate and can also carry out an assessment of his/her performance



in a real/simulated situation. The validation commission decides either to grant the candidate access to the study programme, exemptions, or award the full qualification.

### VAE at the University of Luxembourg

The VAE process is carried out autonomously by the University of Luxembourg.

Candidates must register online and submit a complete application. The assessment is carried out by a panel (jury), the composition of which is stipulated by the University rector according to the nature of the qualification targeted.

The panel is primarily made up of research staff, although when assessing prior work-based learning, experts from the private sector are also present. Evidence upon which the panel bases its decision is a combination of the evidence provided by the candidate, an interview with the candidate or, in certain circumstances, directly via observation of the candidate in their occupational setting, either real or simulated. The panel also determines the scope of the validation and states where knowledge and skills in a certain area need to be evaluated by a complementary assessment (additional testing).

## 10.2 Use of ICT in validation

Although the Luxembourgish administration is very advanced in the area of digital public services and residents hold a digital citizen's identity card to log into e-government services,<sup>37</sup> VAE is largely conducted in analogue format. Even if the experience of the COVID-19 pandemic led to increase the provision of online and hybrid information sessions for potential VAE applicants, most of the meetings linked to the actual validation procedure take place in person.

This is about to change with several projects inside the ministry of National Education, Children and Youth (MENJE) related to the digital transition.<sup>38</sup> In addition to computational thinking being introduced in the primary education curriculum and a new compulsory "Digital sciences" course for all learners in secondary education, vocational and lifelong learning will be supported by a digital learning booklet (**carnet d'apprentissage numérique**). This is modelled on the paper booklets which apprentices in Luxembourg use to document learning objectives, milestones and feedback from supervisors and counsellors. This is not a personal training account which holds funds that can be mobilised for VAE like in the case of France's *compte particulier de formation* (CPF). Nonetheless, these steps help Luxembourg in the digitisation of its education and training offer.

The **Digital Learning Hub** (DLH), for example, was created in the context of continuing vocational training within the MENJE in order to reduce the digital skills gap in Luxembourg. The DLH is a learning structure that offers short and hands-on training courses in the fields of computer science for all professionals to further educate themselves, improve their skills or switch careers – including through VAE.<sup>39</sup>

## 10.3 Quality assurance processes

The administrative body for analysing validation procedures and suggesting possible improvements is the Service for the coordination of research, pedagogical and technological innovation (**Service de coordination de la recherche et de**

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<sup>37</sup> <https://ctie.gouvernement.lu/en/dossiers/eID/eID.html>

<sup>38</sup> <https://men.public.lu/fr/actualites/communiqués-conference-presse/2022/03/08-fedil-tic.html>

<sup>39</sup> <https://dlh.lu/>

**l'innovation pédagogiques et technologiques – SCRIPT<sup>40</sup>**). Within that structure, there is a Competence unit for curriculum design in vocational training (*cellule de compétence pour la conception curriculaire de la formation professionnelle*). Since September 2017, the SCRIPT has been responsible for evaluating the curriculum documents for vocational training. The unit is made up of a working group comprising four members who take care of this task on a part-time basis. Following the analysis of curricular documents for a trade or profession, the unit invites representatives of employers, young graduates and teachers to interviews in order to determine any needs for adaptation. For the same purpose, questionnaires concerning the tasks of employees and the expectations of employers are sent to companies. This helps clarify the competences required for different professions and makes sure VAE requirements are adapted to labour market needs.

SCRIPT runs this analysis every five to six years in order to guarantee the adequacy of the content of the training, at school and in companies, to the needs of the labour market and thus to increase the employability of the learners.

For more detailed information on quality assurance frameworks for each of the validation opportunities available in Luxembourg, please consult the 2018 country report.

## 10.4 Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation may be undertaken by each of the three parties involved in the Luxembourgish validation process. Nonetheless, most of the information obtained through such monitoring is not accessible to the public.

Although each certifying ministry has its own validation unit, a cross-governmental study is currently underway to assess the effectiveness and attractiveness of existing VAE procedures. The aim is to identify strategies to increase the number of applicants for VAE.<sup>41</sup>

## 11 The position of validation in society; visibility and trust

As stated in the 2018 country report, the value of learning outcomes from non-formal and informal contexts is largely accepted in Luxembourg. This is due to the high value given to lifelong learning and to the consensual political culture of Luxembourg, with social partners and all relevant stakeholders involved at all stages of the policy design and implementation process concerning validation (Houot, 2016). Overall, validation systems and their outcomes are highly trusted by stakeholders. The fact that VAE procedures can give access to formal qualifications referenced on the CLQ (equivalent to EQF levels 2 to 5) is seen as a strength of the validation system in Luxembourg.

Validation also helps the large number of foreign-born inhabitants develop and validate their competences in order to participate fully in Luxembourg's dynamic international labour market. The labour market shifts and new working practices

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<sup>40</sup> <https://script.lu/fr>

<sup>41</sup> Interview with the Ministry of Labour on 3 March 2023.

caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, combined with the governmental efforts to boost digitisation, digital competences and digital industries has given jobseekers and employees further motivation to engage in validation procedures to confirm their in-demand skills.<sup>42</sup>

Considering the visibility of validation procedures; evidence collected from interviews suggests that validation procedures are well-known in Luxembourg. All relevant public information portals – from the general e-government portal [guichet.lu](https://guichet.lu) to the cross-sectoral [lifelong-learning.lu](https://lifelong-learning.lu) and the websites of relevant ministries – offer citizens detailed information on the advantages, requirements and procedure for VAE. The number of requests received is continuing an upward trend.

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<sup>42</sup> Interview with the Luxembourg Lifelong Learning Centre, conducted on 6 March 2023.

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# European inventory on validation of non-formal and informal learning 2023 update

This report is part of the 2023 update of the [European Inventory on the validation of non-formal and informal learning](#). The inventory provides a comprehensive overview of validation practices across Europe, covering 32 systems in EU-27 Member States and EFTA countries.

The European inventory is the product of a long-standing cooperation of the European Commission, Cedefop and ETF on the field. The inventory was endorsed by the [Council recommendation of 2012](#) on validation and works together with the [European guidelines](#) as a tool to support countries in developing and implementing validation arrangements.

A rich source of information, the inventory informs dialogue and learning between countries and stakeholders developing and implementing validation in Europe. Our key objective is to support Member States so that more learners and workers can acquire and make visible new skills, which will support their career and further learning and improve their quality of life.

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