CH-Q model
for competence management

Establish, assess and recognise
competences and qualifications

Guidelines
for training and advice

Level 1

Reference basis:
Standards for training and advice with the CH-Q model for competence management,
adopted by the membership meeting of the CH-Q association on 26 April 2001
(revised on 7 December 2001 and 4 April 2003)

Foreword

The CH-Q Swiss career qualification programme association was founded in 1999 and its most important task is the creation and preservation of a general offer in the area of skills, competences and qualifications of people.

The CH-Q model for competence management is part of this offer. It has been set up in the form of an open, flexible concept for training and advice and makes use of specially developed products. As the responsible organisation the CH-Q association provides for the guidelines, preconditions and structures.

Of decisive importance for the quality are the internal standards adopted by the membership meeting. This determines which requirements are imposed on the development of the products and the application thereof by partner organisations and providers.

This document is meant for professionals in the area of training and advice who participate in a training of CH-Q. It also serves to inform institutions that are interested in the CH-Q model for competence management and that actively want to make efforts in this area. The principles and provisions in this document are endorsed by the Dutch CH-Q NL/B foundation.

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Framework

1 CH-Q Swiss career qualification programme

1.1 Background of CH-Q

General offer

What is CH-Q?
CH-Q is the abbreviation for 'Schweizerisches Qualifikationsprogramm zur Berufslaufahn' (Swiss career qualification programme). It consists of a general offer aimed at skills, competences and qualifications of people. Central objective is the development and establishment of a competence-oriented offer for application in areas that are relevant to the career. The model for competence management is part of the general offer.

What does CH-Q want?
The most important objective of CH-Q is the further individual development of young people and adults in training and profession, and the furtherance of their professional flexibility and mobility. This centres on the establishment, the assessment and the validation of, whether or not, formally acquired professional and more general competences in a variety of areas.

What does CH-Q do?
CH-Q supports and stimulates life-long learning, it builds bridges between training and work, creates the conditions for further professional and personal development, offers perspective on new directions with regard to training and profession and stimulates the recognition of work in all conceivable areas.

Responsibility; who bears the responsibility?
The responsibility for the offer of CH-Q is borne by the CH-Q Swiss career qualification programme association.

The CH-Q association is not a provider but is, as a not-for-profit organisation, encumbered with the preconditions, development, quality assurance and coordination. Upon the realisation of the objectives the association is assisted by the responsible institutions in the area of training and by the social partners.

1.2 Training initiative

Origins, how did CH-Q come into being?

1993   First steps towards a national training initiative
Joint initiative of people from the sectors for training and professional advice, women's organisations and politics in order to arrive at:
- flexibilisation of the training routes;
- equality of official and non-official competences / learning results;
- creation of scaling tools.

Similar steps in the national parliament by the relevant group of female members of parliament from all political parties.
Result: commission of the Federal Council to the national institution for professional training and technology, BBT, to set up two projects for the creation of:
- a modular training and further training (building blocks);
- a system for the establishment, assessment and recognition of non-official competences including counselling tools (CH-Q).

1996-1998   Implementation of the projects under joint responsibility of the umbrella organisations:
- Federation of Swiss women's organisations; and
- Swiss association for applied research on professional training.

1998   Completion of the starting points for the model for competence management.
Start of the courses for trainers and advisers. Objective:
- transferring the content of the model for competence management according to established quality criteria.

1999   Conclusion of the project phase and incorporation of the 'CH-Q Swiss career qualification programme association'.

As from   Preparation and sale of a product series with tools for young people and
1999   adults and work material for trainers and people responsible in the area of personnel and training at companies and institutions.

Application

2 CH-Q model for competence management

2.1 General concept

Philosophy

What is the CH-Q model for competence management?

The CH-Q model for competence management is an open and flexible total concept for learning how to handle competences responsibly and sustainably. It is based on the reference bases of the CH-Q association that form the starting point for all products of CH-Q. Meanwhile they contain substantive material, methods and procedures for specific applications in the specific discipline of the provider / organiser that have been tested for many years.

Starting points and objectives

What are the most important objectives?

Starting point: of paramount importance is the competence of individual people or groups to:

- consciously, realistically and responsibly make use of their possibilities;
- sustainably take control over the personal skills, competences and qualifications;
- give shape to the personal career, i.e. aimed at resources and results.

Objective is the practical and optimal use of strengths and the conversion thereof into qualifications (classification). The intention is to promote the personal identity, to practically gear the strengths to the requirements and to the changes in training and on the labour market. This should result in individual skills broadly being relied on in personal life, training and professional practice.

Elements

What products can be used?

Reference bases:

- guidelines for training and advice in the CH-Q model for competence management;
- framework concept for development of the CH-Q offer by experts in the area of training and advice for the own discipline;
- regulations for the issue of certificates and labels, as well as licences (abroad);
- ethical starting points for training and advice.

Tools, i.e.:

tools geared to each other, mutually combinable, for independent use or for use in controlled learning processes, for instance:

- Personal portfolios for the further development in training and profession. These form:

- The starting point for the systematic documentation of and thinking about professional biographic processes.
- A tool for effective support during the counselling and shaping of the career.

- Specific 'evidence files':
  - For obtaining specific diplomas in the area of training, for instance: 'Competence evidence file for obtaining the Swiss professional instructor diploma', 'Competence evidence file for obtaining the professional accounting diploma', 'File for the benefit of recognition of former nursing duties by the Swiss Red Cross'.
  - For moving on to a follow-up course.
  - For specific additional qualifications within the profession (job application, promotion).
- Evidence folders for official documentary evidence / statements of employers, schools, training institutes, institutions.
- Work material for supervisors (manuals) and users.

What are the features of the products?
All products are:

- coherent: all components have been geared to each other on the basis of a common, uniform language (identity);
- user- and practice-oriented: geared to the needs of the target groups;
- based on the latest insights in the discipline, coherence with developments in education studies, the business community, society and culture;
- modular form: flexible and simple link to other existing programmes, tools and concepts in this area.

Quality assurance and further development

What are the basic conditions?
CH-Q committee for quality assurance
The committee for quality assurance set up by the membership meeting of CH-Q is responsible for the preservation and safeguarding of the quality.
The committee checks if the quality requirements are met for:

- obtaining the CH-Q certificates at all levels. This includes, among other things, the approval of the programmes and the resources that are used;
- accreditation of the developed CH-Q offer in the area of training or advice.

The members of the CH-Q committee for quality assurance completed a training in CH-Q competence management, dispose of knowledge in the area of assessment and qualification procedures and are employed in managerial positions.

The further development of the offer aimed at need, goal and quality
The committee for development set up by the CH-Q association is responsible for the development. The committee supervises the use of existing products, assists the further development thereof and takes the first steps towards new developments. An exchange of experiences regularly takes place with the CH-Q committee for quality assurance. The committee consists of qualified experts in the area of training and advice with many

years' practical experience for CH-Q. The members hold managerial positions in the institutions where they work.

At the moment a CH-Q NL/B Competence Management Foundation is in formation, which will operate in the same structure as the Swiss CH-Q Foundation and which will use the same starting points, guidelines and philosophy as outlined above.

2.2 Conditions of CH-Q offer for training and advice

Target groups, users

What is the target group?

The training and advice offer for self-management of competences at basic level is basically meant for a broad circle of users, regardless of their origin, training level, profession or position. It is aimed at both young people and adults:

- who fall under the compulsory education or not;
- who originate from primary education, further education or adult education;
- who are in the transition between school / training and profession, between not working and working or who return to work;
- in the professional practice.

Training structure, objectives

How has the training been structured, what are the objectives?

The CH-Q model for competence management has been integrated in CH-Q training and advice as a framework concept. It is part of the reference bases and complies with the quality criteria of the CH-Q association. It consists of an offer at four levels.

Level 1: Basic level

- Certification level 1: self-management of competences:
    - CH-Q 1A Certificate: step towards a professional career;
    - CH-Q 1B Certificate: positioning, career formation;
    - CH-Q 1C Certificate: preparation for a job application / qualification procedure.
- Users can demonstrate with their certificate that they can carry out the competence management according to CH-Q for themselves, can keep a portfolio and, where necessary, compile an evidence file.

Level 2: Continuation level

- Certification level 2: course and process counselling with CH-Q competence management as internal offer within the organisation with an existing programme under supervision of a CH-Q supervisor certified under level 3.
- Certified course and process supervisors of CH-Q document that they are able to counsel and support the users during the awareness process of their strengths, the establishment, critical consideration and submission of evidence of the same.

Level 3: Extended level
- Certification level 3: training and advice in CH-Q competence management.
- Trainers and advisers are able to compile, sell and implement an extensive training offer for the users.

Certified experts with multiple years of practical CH-Q experience can be included in the specialist committees by the CH-Q committee for development.

Level 4: Expert level
- Certification level 4: institutionalised framework for experts in the area of the CH-Q training system (expert committee).
- Certified specialists in the training system of CH-Q are able to gear its guidelines to the practical requirements and are able to qualify experts at the continuation and extended level accordingly.

Development and transfer of the offer
Who provide for the development and transfer of the offer?
The development and transfer of the offer are in the hands of professionals:
- who participated in a CH-Q training and completed this with the CH-Q level 2 or 3 certificate;
- who are willing to use the CH-Q model for competence management during the counselling and advising of people.

Level 3 supervisors develop a concept within the framework of their CH-Q training. This concept is implemented during the training in the form of a pilot. It is assessed on the basis of fixed criteria and qualifies as evidence of competence.

The following conditions are applicable to the entire offer:
- flexible form with entrances from user to trainer level;
- a combination of course, seminar, workshop days and self-study;
- aimed at specific application;
- concluded with the award of a qualification certificate (competence evidence).

Form of the offer
What principles determine the layout of the offer?
The following starting points apply as guidelines for the substantive layout of the offer:
'Holistic' principle (training policy / institutional area), i.e.:
- coupling of different areas of activities;
- mixture of cultural, general and professional training;
- equal division between theoretical and practical lessons;
- discussion of all sorts of competences: professional, methodological, social competences and self-competences;
- observation of the equal opportunity principle.

'Life-long learning' principle (individual area), i.e.:
- expansion of the awareness of the personal possibilities (self-concept);
- expansion of the acting competence (empowerment);

- expansion of the professional flexibility / mobility (sustainable skills for the labour market).

What substantive requirements are imposed?

The application of competence management requires that one is engaged in the following substantive points:

- *Control and submit skills and competences in all areas of activities. It is about being aware of the available resources and making the available skills visible.*
- *Assess skills and competences, personally and by others. It is about focusing on skills and competences: classify, evaluate and value the same.*
- *Evidence competences in view of recognition / validation. It is about comparing competences with requirements (job application and qualification procedures).*

The learning process progresses gradually and consists of, among other things, biography work (development, inventory), the determination of the possibilities (analyses of acts) and the preparation of a current profile (synthesis).

The content and the learning processes ultimately result in an extensive inventory and a competence balance.

What approach is used?

The approach comprises three mutually coherent acts / methods:

- Document, i.e. systematic determination, compilation and sorting of data and facts.
- Consider critically, i.e. regularly focus on development steps, evaluate learning, professional and life situations and deduce conclusions from the same.
- Plan and implement, i.e. result-oriented way of preparation and plotting a course in a specific situation (perspectives, objectives, measures, action plan).

This approach results in a personal portfolio and/or file for specific competence evidence (job applications, participation in learning routes, registration of equality).

What methodological-dialectical guidelines must be observed?

The following methodological-dialectical guidelines are applicable to the substantive transfer:

- process-oriented, individual learning;
- action-oriented approach;
- taking the different methods and the different procedures for the personal assessment and the assessment by / of third parties into account.

How long does the training take?

As a guideline for the total learning and development process at certification level 1 (course meetings, individual or group advice) the following applies:

- for groups: at least 20 hours of attendance during classes, divided over 4 to 6 weeks;
- for individual counselling of individual people: at least 8 hours;
- personal time burden in between the lessons: based on personal need.

The required time can be expanded or shortened per target group and per training or advice objective. In the latter instance the requirements with regard to the interpretation of the offer must, however, be met.

Organisation

What form does the offer have?

The offer has the form of course meetings and individual or group advice.

In terms of the form and layout they comply with the following criteria:

- transparency: clear and complete information and documentation;
- partnership with the participants: arrangements about the conditions for participation (requirements, rights, obligations);
- target group orientation: adjusted learning objectives, learning steps and foundations. Upon communication of the offer (tenders, advertising) these foundations must be represented in an appropriate and comprehensible form.

What are the requirements with regard to the implementation of the offer?

The offer in the area of training and advice of CH-Q is implemented by individual providers (advisers, trainers) or by institutional organisers (institutions, organisations). They are recognised by the CH-Q association.

In terms of the organisation and implementation they need to comply with the following requirements:

- work in conformity with the quality criteria and guidelines of the CH-Q association;
- transparent description (tender) and implementation of the offer with regard to preconditions, objectives, content and form;
- transfer of the offer by qualified CH-Q professionals in the area of training and advice.

Qualification

3 Certification and accreditation

3.1 Certification of CH-Q experts

Guidelines and procedures

What is the principle?

The certification system is aimed at individual people. Certified CH-Q professional are responsible for the quality during the transfer of competence-oriented systems. If institutions act as client or organiser of CH-Q material then it falls under the responsibility of the certified experts to agree on the required preconditions in association with these institutions.

What are the objective and conditions?

The certification serves as evidence of the skill to apply and transfer self-management of competences and the guidelines of the CH-Q competence management. The certificate implies that the holder complies with the quality criteria of the CH-Q association. By way of quality mark the label of the CH-Q association is shown.

Condition for certification is completion of the learning route in conformity with the quality criteria, concluded with the testing and assessment of the acquired knowledge and skills. After the successful completion of the learning route and approval by a specialist in the area of CH-Q training systems, the presentation of the certificate follows.

3.2 Accreditation and issue of the label

Guidelines and procedures

What is the principle?

The accreditation system is aimed at specific CH-Q offer. Accredited offer has been provided with the label of CH-Q. This corresponds with a quality mark.

What are the objective and conditions?

The accreditation is applicable to the course offer with regard to training and advice that has been developed at level 1 or 2 by certified trainers / advisers. The accreditation serves as evidence that the quality criteria of the CH-Q association are met. The CH-Q committee for quality assurance is responsible for the procedure and the award. After successful accreditation the CH-Q label can be used, in addition to the following qualification: 'Accredited CH-Q training and advice offer'.

3.3 Quality assurance abroad

Conditions and procedure

Partners abroad can obtain a label licence at certification level 3 for offer of CH-Q. This qualifies as a regional or national quality assurance. Award takes place on the basis of the reference bases of the CH-Q association. The specific needs and interests of the relevant organisations are taken into account in the agreement between the parties.