

Things to know for new residents

Recognition of foreign qualifications

You have a foreign vocational or educational qualification and would like to take up a corresponding occupation in Switzerland. There are different approaches to how your qualifications and skills can be recognised in terms of career or studies.

The diagram on the next page illustrates the corresponding procedure depending on the individual starting position. Here is some useful preliminary information:

Regulated professions

Many professions (health, education, engineering, law, social work) are regulated in Switzerland and must be recognised before they can be practised. The **SERI** has compiled a [list](#) of these occupations (with a professional diploma or university degree) which also indicates the competent authorities.

Non-regulated professions

If your profession is not regulated in Switzerland, you can work without recognition of the foreign diploma being required. In this case, the current labour market or future employers will decide whether you are hired. You may also apply for a **level certificate**: this enables employers to better assess a degree that is unknown in Switzerland, even if it does not automatically improve your position on the labour market. A level certificate can also be helpful if you want to start a continuing vocational training course that requires completion of upper-secondary level training. Alternatively, SERI can also issue a **recognition of equivalence certificate**. However, this is associated with higher costs and is not absolutely necessary.

Recognition of work experience without professional qualification

If you do not have a vocational qualification and do not have any professional experience in the desired profession, you can complete a **regular apprenticeship**.

If you already have professional experience, there are three ways of obtaining a recognised professional diploma (**shortened apprenticeship, qualification procedure** or **validation procedure** for certain occupations), depending on your starting position.

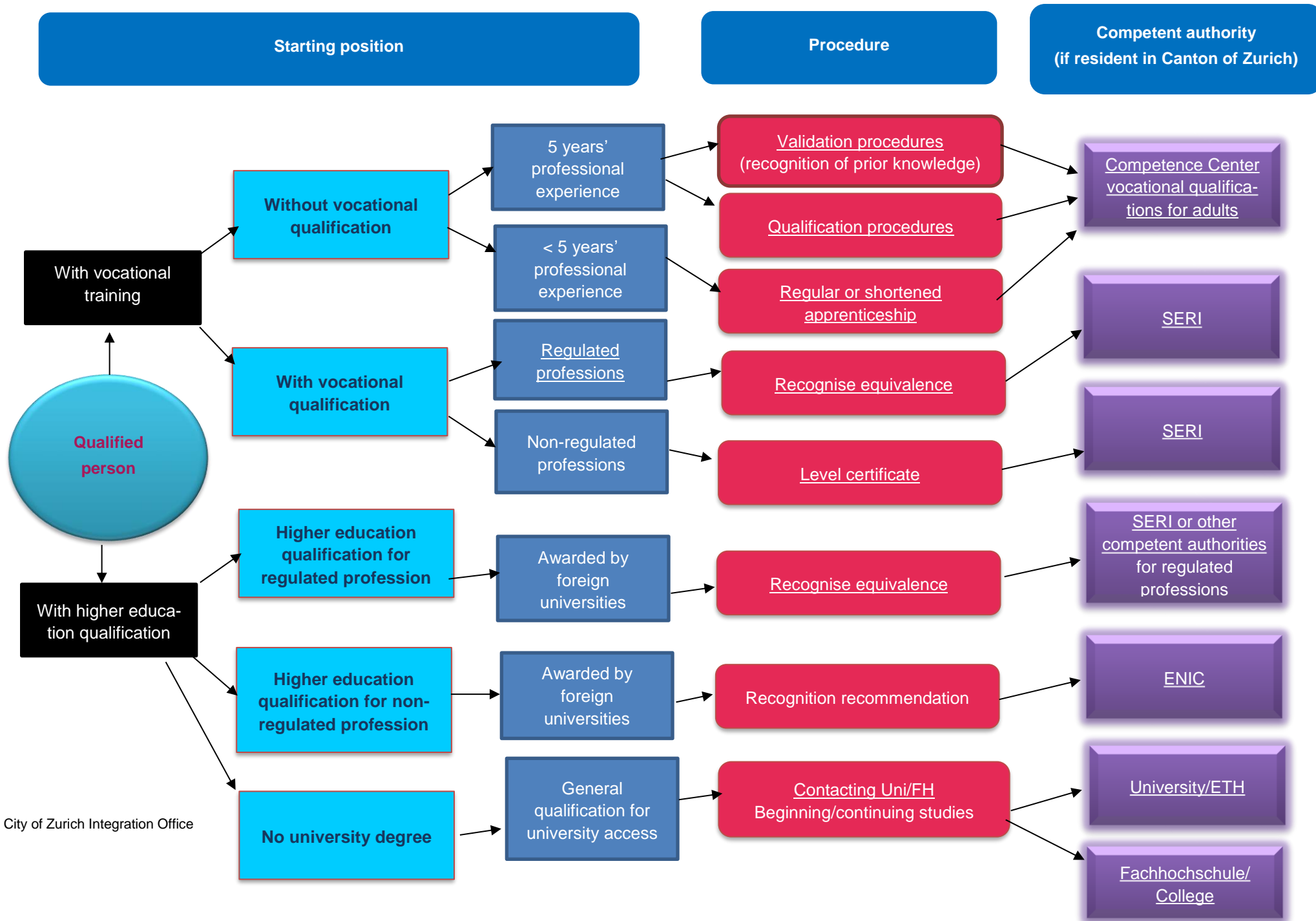
For more information you can contact the [Competence Center vocational qualifications for adults](#).

Recognition of university degrees

For persons with a foreign university degree in a non-regulated profession, [Swiss ENIC](#) may issue a recommendation for recognition. This is not legally binding, but shows a comparable classification for Switzerland.

If you have a **foreign higher-education entrance qualification** and would like to begin or continue your studies, please contact the university or technical college of your choice directly for recognition. For the German- and English-speaking Master's programmes, a C1 level is usually required.

If you have any further questions, please contact our [Welcome Desk](#). We can show you which offices are responsible for you or where you can obtain further information.



Source: City of Zurich Integration Office

