

## Federal VET Diploma in Commerce (Banking)

*Significance and international classification of the "Federal VET Diploma in Commerce / Banking Sector".*

### Vocational training in Switzerland

In Switzerland, about two thirds of young people choose to pursue vocational training (apprenticeship). Vocational training is classified as upper-level secondary education (level II). It is founded on clearly defined elements of vocational training and uniform qualification procedures. Upon completing their compulsory schooling (level 1 secondary education), every year around 1,300 school leavers begin a commercial apprenticeship in banking. Participants in this three-year course of training acquire recognised professional qualifications and a foundation upon which to build a lifelong learning process. The commercial apprenticeships offered by banks are usually of the type "profile E" (extended basic banking training) or "profile M", where a vocational "Matura" diploma is earned simultaneously, qualifying the graduate to study further at a university of applied sciences in Switzerland.

### Dual system of classroom and on-the-job learning

This form of vocational training takes place on the job, at vocational schools and in intercompany courses<sup>1</sup>. It focuses on professional qualifications that are actually in demand and is thus very pertinent to the real working environment. This is a distinctive feature and advantage of vocational training. The contents of the curriculum are uniformly defined and organised for Switzerland at the national level.

Basic vocational training in commercial business takes place at a bank, where the programme participants acquire practical banking-related skills and know-how. The vocational school supplements this practical training with additional education (parallel track) consisting of vocational and general educational courses.

### Career prospects

Holders of the "Federal Certificate of Proficiency in Commercial Business / Banking Sector" (profile E or M) are qualified to pursue a broad range of higher education and further training. Basic vocational training in banking can be followed by a three-year course of specialised vocational training in banking and finance (Specialist College of Banking and Finance, "HFBF"). It provides specific professional qualifications and prepares graduates for management and specialist functions in the banking industry. Alternatively, with the vocational "Matura" (profile M) graduates have the option of matriculating directly in the programmes offered at Switzerland's universities of applied sciences.

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<sup>1</sup> The subject matter handled in the inter-company courses (iC) is taught on an off-the-job basis. Classes in banking studies are for the most part held at CYP [www.cyp.ch](http://www.cyp.ch).

## Knowledge, skills and competencies

Holders of the "Federal Certificate of Proficiency in Commercial Business / Banking Sector" possess the following banking knowledge, skills and competencies:

- **Client advising:** As a commercial business graduate you understand that clients are the most important stakeholder group in any business enterprise. You handle inquiries from clients in a professional, competent manner to the clients' satisfaction. You have a good knowledge of products and services, a high level of advisory competence, client-gearred sales skills, service orientation and a professional attitude towards service quality.
- **Handling orders:** As a commercial business graduate you are responsible for the client-gearred processing of the orders within your area of responsibility. You execute the steps of order processing in accordance with internal directives, on time and in a quality-conscious manner. You work independently and efficiently and apply the relevant tools and resources correctly and professionally.
- **Administrative and organisational activities:** As a commercial business graduate you are conscious of the fact that administrative and organisational tasks need to be performed efficiently and accurately. You perform the tasks and functions entrusted to you conscientiously and apply regulations and tools correctly and efficiently.
- **Ability to utilise knowledge of one's own industry and company:** As a commercial business graduate you are conscious of the fact that knowledge of one's own company, the competition and the industry is essential in your work. You utilise this knowledge in order to independently and competently handle work processes, client advising and administrative tasks.
- **Implementing marketing and public relations measures:** As a commercial business graduate you understand the importance of marketing and public relations for the success of a business. You make use of marketing and public relations instruments in a manner commensurate with target groups and situations.
- **Executing financial processes:** As a commercial business graduate you recognise the importance of correctly processing financial information. You carry out finance-related tasks conscientiously and in accordance with regulations.

## International classification

The "Federal Certificate of Proficiency in Commercial Business / Banking Sector" can be classified both on the basis of UNESCO's International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) – (classification based on educational system) – and the European Qualification Framework (EQF) – (classification based on level of qualifications).

### **International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) (UNESCO)<sup>2</sup>**

The "Federal Certificate of Proficiency in Commercial Business / Banking Sector" corresponds to level 3A + 3B<sup>3</sup> in the ISCED classification system.

### **National Qualification Framework (NQF Switzerland European Qualification Framework (EQF)<sup>4</sup>**

The EQF uses an eight-level scale to assess knowledge, skills and competencies. The "Federal Certificate of Proficiency in Commercial Business / Banking Sector" comes under the EQF through its classification in the NQR Switzerland. Work in this area is currently underway and is expected to be finished by the end of 2015.

A standardised procedure exists for recognising Swiss diplomas in the EU<sup>5</sup>.

## Further information

Further information about basic training in the banking industry in Switzerland is available in German, French and Italian at [www.swissbanking-future.ch](http://www.swissbanking-future.ch).

Swiss Bankers Association  
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<sup>2</sup> [http://www.unesco.org/education/information/nfsunesco/doc/isced\\_1997.htm](http://www.unesco.org/education/information/nfsunesco/doc/isced_1997.htm)

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.edudoc.ch/static/web/bildungssystem/grafik\\_bildung\\_d.pdf](http://www.edudoc.ch/static/web/bildungssystem/grafik_bildung_d.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> [http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/DE/TXT/?uri=celex:32008H0506\(01\)](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/DE/TXT/?uri=celex:32008H0506(01))

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.eda.admin.ch/eda/de/home/leben-im-ausland/auswandern/arbeiten-im-ausland/diplome-abschluessezeugnisse.html>