

France: DAVA, Academy of Reims

Type of provider

The DAVA program of the Academy of Reims is the first certifying body in the Region of Champagne-Ardenne. Its mission is to receive and process all validation applications for the professional diplomas under French National Education, the diplomas of the social sector: DEES, DEETS, DEME and DECESF and accounting diplomas: DCG and DSCG. DAVA is also involved in validating certain professional diplomas of the Ministry of Employment, and diplomas in higher education.

Objective

DAVA enables all or part of a certification to be obtained on the basis of professional experience (one-year minimum). It allows the candidate to have his/her qualifications recognised, in order to gain access to higher level training or to take certain competitive examinations, to change jobs, and to develop overall professionally.

Candidate benefit from a personalized accompaniment of 24h - one on one- from the start of the project until he/she obtains the diploma in question.

DAVA aims to:

- provide information to potential candidates
- provide guidance on the choice of their diploma
- analyze the admissibility of their applications in order to help the candidate prepare their admittance file accordingly (DAVA is in constant liaison with the Regional Division of Examinations and Contests in order to ensure that papers are processed in due time)

These first stages help learners to:

- understand and navigate through the certification landscape.
- become conscious of the need to validate their skills through recognised qualifications.
- take ownership to validate their qualifications during their whole life

Upon admission, the applicant is then accompanied to assess his/her competences, and then proceeds to a validation procedure by a commission.

After the commissions's procedure, the counsellors follow up with the applicant to determine next steps.

Assessment approaches

DAVA counsellors are generally workplace psychologists by training and are then trained and hired by the Certification and Validation Department at the Continuing Training of the Academy of Reims. They subsequently become familiar with the national education framework/system of reference of certification. Counsellors use few formal tools during the initial interview, which is carried out face to face.

Counsellors draw on their knowledge of the different validation methods, and experience in work psychology and analysis of labor, as well as the experience of the candidate at

Assessment approaches (rest)

the initial interview. Together they fill out the first validation booklet which allows for the admissibility of the application. It is a kind of detailed CV (name of employers, professional experience, etc.).

The counsellor assists the candidate to choose the appropriate diploma corresponding to their professional experience and competences. Since there are over 700 diplomas available, the advisors are not “specialists” in each diploma but rather «general methodologists». They draw on their experiences and refer to the repository - which is essential - because it specifies the prerequisites for obtaining the diploma concerned.

Once a candidate’s application is accepted, the counselor begins to prepare the applicant for the oral validation procedure by the commission.

The applicant is accompanied by the counsellor to elaborate a documented presentation of one’s experience (a second booklet). This second booklet is very different from the first: it is a kind of memory about one’s professional experience. It includes questions about the autonomy of the applicant, know how, tools, and the description and the analysis of their professional activities. It includes methodological workshops and individual interviews to prepare for the oral interview with the jury/commission.

Active innovative methods are employed such as:

- Action-Training-action
- Testimonials & Brainstorming
- Inter-sessional work
- Subgroups
- Individualization

Upon completion of these 24h, the applicant obtains a certificate of training.

Once the training and assessment is complete, the applicant will be seen by a commission in an oral interview. The commission is comprised of 2-4 members; one must be a professional (an employer or employee) working in a similar profession, and the other a teacher in the diploma requested by the applicant.

A commission analyse the 2 validation booklets and evaluates and assesses the professional skills by the applicant comparing them with the system of reference of the certification/activities. The commission conducts an interview with the applicant during 40 minutes.

The commission can decide to fully validate the qualification: the qualification obtained through VAE becomes the same as the one obtained through other training pathways.

A partial validation: members of the commission allow some certification credits, but not all. The candidate can then obtain the certification by combining validation procedures with continuing education.

A denied validation: some certifying bodies provide advice for starting a new procedure.

Target group

All employees, non-employees, volunteers, job seekers, traders, artisans ... can obtain a diploma if they have at least one year of professional experience equivalent to 1 full-time in direct relation with the diploma referred. No prerequisites are required to enter the process. It enables all or part of a certification to be obtained on the basis of professional experience. The validation of one’s acquired experience is a personal and individual approach.

Potential
transferability/
scalability

Summaries or
Basic elements
of analysis

DAVA is implemented in the context of each regional academy across France.

Over 2016, almost 95% of candidates are satisfied with DAVA's accompaniment. 66% candidates have graduated entirely as a result of this approach. 6% submissions were entirely validated, 16% were partially validated, 18% were not validated and 1% were absent.

The overall average process takes 11 months.

Among the 3 different categories of post-secondary diplomas, successful candidates who were already employed at the time were at 60%, 71% and 78%. Those actively looking for employment were at 0,11% and 27% respectively. Inactive candidates represented 0 and 1%, and unaccounted-for candidates were at 10%,13% and 29% respectively.

