

**PLEASE READ CAREFULLY BEFORE COMPLETION  
OF YOUR APPLICATION FORM**

**EUROPEAN COMMUNITY CERTIFICATE OF EXPERIENCE**

**GUIDANCE NOTES FOR APPLICANTS FROM THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND**

**What is a Certificate of Experience for?**

1. Freedom of movement for people to live and work in other Member States is one of the main aims of the European Single Market. However, many Member States ask for specific qualifications before you can do certain jobs, particularly if you intend to work in a self-employed capacity. To make it easier for the people who are citizens (Nationals) of one Member State to work in another Member State of the European Union (EU) or any other State in the European Economic Area (EEA), the European Union Directives have been drawn up. These require Member States to recognise **certified** experience and training gained elsewhere in the EU/EEA. In order to do this, a Member State issues a “**Certificate of Experience**” to a worker, which is evidence of that worker’s experience and training.
2. Directive 2005/36/EC (the ‘Directive’) covers a wide range of jobs. Citizens of one Member State may work in another Member State (a host country) if their experience and training meet the requirements of the Directive. If these requirements are met, there should be no further need to obtain any national qualifications for that job in the host country. You may, however, also have to provide further information to show for example that you are of good character and have never been declared bankrupt.

**How to apply for a Certificate of Experience (COE)**

3. In the Republic of Ireland, Certificates of Experience are processed and issued by SOLAS Legal Services Department. To qualify for a Certificate of Experience you must be a citizen of one of the Member States of the EU/EEA and show that you meet the terms of the Directive.
4. An **application form** is available from SOLAS Legal Services Department. To obtain a Certificate of Experience you will need to **provide evidence of any previous training and work experience in the Republic of Ireland** that is relevant to the job you wish to undertake in the host country. The signatures of two referees must confirm the details on your form.
5. An application fee of €150 applies if you are employed and a fee of €30 if you are unemployed. The fee should be included in your application and if unemployed, you should provide evidence of your unemployment status.
6. Deciding whether to issue a Certificate of Experience will take time, because we will need to check your details and may have to request further information. Every effort will be made to issue Certificates of Experience as quickly as possible.

## **Do you qualify?**

7. The Recognition of Professional Qualifications (Directive 2005/36/EC) Regulations 2008 (the 'Regulations') implement the provisions of the Directive in Ireland. Before applying, please check that you are likely to qualify for a Certificate of Experience by reading Regulations 10 to 14 of the Regulations which are attached.
8. The Regulations show what is needed to qualify for a Certificate of Experience: usually you must have managerial or self-employed experience for a number of years in the job concerned. If you do not have enough experience you may also qualify if you have - **Received an acceptable level of training and have worked in the job for a number of years.**

If you are unable to provide sufficient evidence of your work experience in the Republic of Ireland then you will need to contact the Revenue Commissioners and request from them a letter detailing the periods of your self-employed or employed status, profession or trade in the Republic of Ireland in support of your application.

## **Your previous work.**

9. When filling in the application form please give exact details of your previous employment. This means giving exact dates (month and year), so that we can see whether you meet the requirements of the Directive. If you do not give exact dates, your application will be delayed. You will also need to enclose evidence to support your application form.
10. Please give **two referees** to confirm your experience. References may be provided from the following list:
  - Accountant
  - An employer (for your experience in an employed capacity)
  - Bank Manager
  - Business associates
  - Contractor (for whom you have undertaken work for over several years in a self-employed capacity)
  - Local Authority
  - Other statutory bodies
  - Professional or trade association
  - Relevant Tax Office
  - Solicitor

**Your referee(s) will also be required to have their declaration signed by a Commissioner for Oaths/Practising Solicitor. Your referee(s) must bring a copy of the certificate of experience application form with him/her when having the declaration signed by the Commissioner for Oaths/Practising Solicitor.**

Other references will be considered on their merits. We will contact your referees to check that they are suitable to verify your work experience. We may also request further evidence from you to support the application for a Certificate of Experience.

## How can the Certificate of Experience be used?

11. When you receive your Certificate of Experience, you need to register it with the relevant authorities in the host country. These authorities vary from Member State to Member State. They might be Chambers of Commerce, Handicrafts Chambers, Government Offices etc depending on the type of work you will be undertaking in the host country. You should check with the Chambers of Commerce in the area in which you plan to work, because local requirements may vary.

### N.B.

- i. These authorities may require you to provide an authenticated translation of your Certificate of Experience in the host country's language;
  - ii. These authorities may charge a fee for registration.
12. Many of the host countries will also require you to show that you are of good character and that you have never been bankrupt. This requirement may be met by making a declaration on oath or solemn declaration. We suggest that you do not obtain a declaration until you have confirmed that this requirement applies to you and you have received your Certificate of Experience. This is important as a declaration is only **valid for three months** from the date of issue.

There may also be other requirements that you will need to meet. You should find out about income tax, reciprocal health arrangements, passports and residence permits, etc. **Please note that SOLAS cannot advise on these matters.** It is important that you fully meet all of the host country's legal requirements.

## European Union Certificate of Experience - A short guide to jobs covered

13. Work in the wholesale trade
  - Work in manufacturing, processing, repair and construction
  - Work in the retail trade
  - Work in the food manufacturing and beverage industries
  - Work providing food, drink or accommodation
  - Work in the wholesale coal trade and coal trade
  - Activities, trade and distribution of toxic products
  - Various services, including fishing, transport and postal services
  - Telecommunications, recreational, community and personal services (including couriers and interpreter guides)
  - Itinerant Traders
  - Work in services relating to transport and travel agencies
  - Storage and warehousing
  - Hairdressing

Please note that the trades shown are only a broad guide to what is included within the Directive. Annex IV of the Directive, which is attached, provides full details and should be consulted.

**For further information please contact:** Legal Services Department - + 353 1 533 2394