



**Personnel  
Certification**

**Swiss Association for Quality**

SAQ Swiss Association for Quality  
Personnel Certification

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## **Certification «Business & Corporate»**

***Certification Program  
Certified Board Member SAQ***

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Version 2.2  
Replaces Version 2.1  
Level: Public  
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For the sake of clarity, only the male writing form is used in this document. However, the requirements are explicitly gender-independent.

**Personnel Certification**  
SAQ Swiss Association for Quality  
Ramuzstrasse 15  
CH-3027 Bern

T +41 (0)31 330 99 00  
pc@saq.ch  
www.personnelcertification.ch



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## 1. Overview

### 1.1 Objective and purpose

The certification program “Certified Board Member SAQ” describes the required learning content and defines the requirements for initial and recertification. The following certification guidelines are based on the requirements of the SN/EN ISO 17024:2012 standard.

### 1.2 Target Group

The certification “Certified Board Member SAQ” is aimed at board members or persons who have already assumed the role of a mandate in an administrative board.

### 1.3 Certificate benefits

The personnel certificate “Certified Board Member SAQ” shows the personal competencies and knowledge required for qualified participation in a Board of Directors. In addition, recertification confirms the ongoing continuing education and professional experience required to ensure that certificate holders meet the steadily increasing and changing demands placed on their professional profile.

## 2. Learning Topics

The learning topics are an integral part of the certification program and form the basis for the competence of certificate holders.

Topic	Subtopic
01. Strategic corporate management	01.1 Strategy development 01.2 Innovation processes at board level 01.3 Change processes 01.4 Digital transformation 01.5 Digital strategy 01.6 Culture
02. Control of operational management	02.1 Annual cycle of the BoD committee 02.2 Delegate of the BoD 02.3 Control of the BoD/CEO 02.4 Personal responsibility and self-regulation in the BoD
03. Controlling and finance	03.1 Financial and liquidity planning, investment management 03.2 Interpretation of business plans 03.3 Accounting and annual reports, internal and external audits 03.4 Meaning of and dealing with key financial figures and statistical evaluations 03.5 Management and control tasks, monitoring processes and instruments (ICS) 03.6 Business plan
04. Law and compliance	04.1 Directives and regulations in organizations 04.2 Legal fundamentals, duties and obligations, liability and responsibilities 04.3 Risk management, compliance and corporate governance 04.4 Management in crisis situations



Topic	Subtopic
05. BoD-Life-Cycle	05.1 Planning, foundation, compilation 05.2 Culture, ethics 05.3 From start-up to regular BoD operation 05.4 Separation 05.5 Succession planning 05.6 ESG and sustainability
06. Diversity and inclusion	06.1 Diversity and advantages 06.2 Quota system and media effectiveness 06.3 Inclusion 06.4 Remuneration
07. Media skills	07.1 Digitalization in the BoD 07.2 Digital communication 07.3 Social Media 07.4 BoD Marketing 07.5 Appearance skills as a BoD
08. Digital threats and cybercrime	08.1 White-collar crime 08.2 Corruption and the fraud triangle 08.3 "Red flags" 08.4 Preventing opportunities for crime 08.5 Liability of the board of directors 08.6 Data protection 08.7 Cybercrime

### **3. Initial Certification**

#### **3.1 Admission requirements**

Persons of legal age, working in Switzerland and who have a role/function as a member of a Board of Directors are permitted to be certified as "Certified Board Member SAQ". In addition, a training degree (course, CAS, Master, etc.) for the board of directors must be presented, which:

- is not older than 24 months when submitting the application
- covers at least 80% of the learning topics
- has reviewed the technical and methodological competencies in a qualification process

SAQ can contact the training provider and the employer for further information.

At the time of the certification application, the candidates must have a role/function of a mandate on a board of directors. The candidates are responsible for providing evidence of compliance with these requirements.



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### 3.2 Application

The certification application must be completed and signed in full and submitted to SAQ. In addition, the necessary enclosures must be sent with the application:

- Proof of training degree (not older than 24 months)
- Proof of current job and function/role (job reference/employer confirmation)

## 4. Recertification

Proof of recertification must be provided by the time the certificate expires at the latest. The proof relates to the components "work experience" and "further education". The certificate holders demonstrate to SAQ that they have maintained their specialist knowledge and practical expertise in the field of Board of Directors activities during the previous certification period. Recertification is only possible for the certification program of the initial certification and may only be obtained if the certificate holder is or has been active in this program. The certificate holder is responsible for the timely completion and submission of recertification measures recognized by SAQ.

### 4.1 Requirements

The following requirements must be met for recertification:

- Valid certificate "Certified Board Member SAQ" available.
- Have completed recertification measures in the amount of 50 learning hours. Both components "work experience" and "further education" must be covered.
- The recertification measures were completed during the validity of the certificate.
- Request for recertification submitted to SAQ before expiry of the current valid certificate.

### 4.2 Recertification measures

For recertification, measures amounting to 50 learning hours must be completed during the validity of the certificate. A distinction is made between the components "work experience" and "further education". A minimum number of learning hours must be provided for both components.

Component	Conditions / Learning hours
Work experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 5 learning hours are counted for every 6 months of work experience as a member of a Board of Directors.</li><li>• The total working hours in months can be divided into one unit or over the term of the certificate.</li><li>• Any months that are not included in a bundle of 6 months cannot be partially credited.</li><li>• At least 15 learning hours must be provided for the work experience component.</li><li>• As proof of "work experience", a job reference or employer confirmation is required, which shows the period of office.</li></ul>
Further education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Participation in measurable/verifiable classroom training and/or digital self-study learning methods/modules (or combination) with a focus on the relevant skills/competencies of the certification program.</li></ul>



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Component	Conditions / Learning hours
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Only learning hours from education trainings that are recognized by SAQ will be counted. The current list is available on the SAQ website.</li><li>• SAQ defines the learning hours/SAQ credits for each approved training in advance.</li><li>• For the "further education" component, at least 20 learning hours must be provided.</li><li>• The training must be completed and documented (diploma, certificate, confirmation of attendance or similar).</li></ul>

### **4.3 Application**

The certification application must be completed and signed in full and submitted to SAQ (email or post). The application must be accompanied by proof of the recertification measures. The recertification application can be submitted at the earliest 3 months before the currently valid certificate expires.

## **5. General Guidelines**

### **5.1 Certificate and title**

The certificate is issued digitally and is valid for 3 years. The validity period can be seen on the certificate. During this period of validity, the certificate holder may hold the following title: "Certified Board Member SAQ".

### **5.2 Validity**

The validity period of the certificate is limited to 3 years. This is followed by periodic recertification.

### **5.3 Dispatch**

The digital certificate and the invoice for the certification costs will be sent by e-mail. Without any other instructions from the candidate, the certificate will be sent to the e-mail address mentioned in the application. The certificate holder may provide the employer with a copy of the certificate.

### **5.4 Language**

The certificate is generally issued in the language of the degree of education. However, you can choose from one of the following languages: English, German, French, Italian.



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### 5.5 Ownership/Fraud

The certificate remains the property of SAQ and can be withdrawn from the owner, either in full or temporarily, for important reasons, without reimbursement of the cost of the certificate. Important reasons are:

- Reasonable suspicion of misuse by certificate holders
- Violations of the certification program
- Certificate costs are not transferred on time

The SAQ is authorized to check the information provided and to investigate any cases of misuse in the event of suspicion of misuse or indications of false information provided by the certificate holder.

The candidate undertakes to provide SAQ with accurate information at all times. If the certification application or during the certification validity breaches of the guidelines of the certification program are identified, this will result in the exclusion of certification.

### 5.6 Waiver/Return

If the certificate or its renewal is waived, the original document must be returned. If the certificate has been waived, it cannot be reactivated later. If the certificate holder no longer meets the conditions for a certificate within the period of validity of the certificate, they must inform SAQ in writing and return the certificate to the certification authority.

### 5.7 Appeal

Against a negative certification decision, a written complaint can be submitted to the program committee within 30 days. The costs of an appeal will be reimbursed in the event of approval. Further information can be found in the appeal application.

### 5.8 Archiving

The certification documents are archived electronically or in paper form. The retention period is based on the legal requirements. All documents are treated confidentially.

### 5.9 Duty to provide information and data protection

SAQ undertakes to use the personal data of the certified persons exclusively for the purposes of certificate management (e.g. recertification request), control and misuse testing purposes (e.g. Validity information to third parties, prevention of counterfeit certificates) and quality assurance purposes.

Furthermore, SAQ undertakes to implement the guidelines of the EU Data Protection Regulation (DSOs/GDPR) with regard to «Privacy by Design," i.e. the technical and organizational measures and with regard to «Privacy by default," i.e. the scope and use of the data collected.



### 5.10 Certificate costs

Initial certification	CHF 290.00
Recertification	CHF 200.00
Certificate replicate/certificate in additional language	CHF 100.00
Appeal*	CHF 200.00

All prices are VAT-exempt. Prices valid from January 1, 2020

\* In the event of a rejected certificate application by SAQ Swiss Association for Quality.