



Quality standards are, in this context, demands set on a higher level (for example European, national, or regional levels) to ensure the quality of the offerings in the area of start-up support. Often such standards are contained in **certification or accreditation**. They can also be defined (in addition to or instead of the above) in **professional qualifications** or in the **selection criteria of call for tenders**.

These requirements are met on the implementation level when **training or qualification offers** are developed such that people can acquire the necessary credentials. Organizations and individuals can, in addition, structure their **quality management** to meet the stated demands.

A short definition will serve to clear up the use of the terms in this context:

Quality standards: Higher-level demands on quality that must be met in the start-up support programs. Some such examples are requirements on the structure of the processes, documentation requirements, requirements for the personnel, etc.

Certification/accreditation: A process that tests the adherence to quality requirements and confirms it by means of a certificate (official seal, document, sticker, etc.). The certification institutions should act independently (without "self-evaluation"). For a closer understanding, the term is not used merely when

qualifications are shown. Certification consists of, next to clearly defined requirements for the personnel, criteria for the quality management system (for example process requirements, documentation requirements, and accountability).

Professional qualifications: Ensuring quality of start-up support through protected job titles. The title "start-up adviser" requires clearly defined credentials or a certain degree.

Conditions for public grants (call for tenders): The awarding of public grants only happens upon proof of the defined requirements (for example credentials, pre-defined proposals, quality seals, etc.).

Training/continuing education programs: Offerings to qualify people who will work in the area of start-up support. Such offerings could end with a certificate. This differs from certification and accreditation programs in that they provide the means to acquire the certificate, while a certification tests the presence of the required criteria. Certifications should also go above and beyond proving knowledge and skills (see certification/accreditation).

Quality management: Activities through which people or organizations ensure the quality of their offerings. They orient themselves in these activities on set requirements (norms or branch-specific requirements).