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*Validation of  
Non-Formal/Informal Learning  
in Russian Higher Education*

# Lifelong learning and validation at universities – the role of qualifications frameworks

Final Conference VALERU

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# Agenda



- (1) What is lifelong learning ?
- (2) Why lifelong learning?
- (3) Validation of lifelong learning
- (4) How to frame lifelong learning at universities?
- (5) Bologna Process and EHEA framework
- (6) European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (EQF)
- (7) Qualifications frameworks and their role



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# (1) What is lifelong learning?



# lifelong – lifewide – learning



- ▶ **lifelong – learning „from the cradle to the grave“**
- ▶ **lifewide – learning takes place everywhere**
- ▶ **learning – focus on the learner and on learning as an individual process**



# Types of learning



## Formal learning

- ▶ takes place in an organized and structured environment dedicated to learning
- ▶ learning outcomes and learning contents are defined (in curricula)
- ▶ leads to the award of a qualification

## Non-formal learning

- ▶ is organized and planned learning, similar to formal learning
- ▶ is not part of the public educational system
- ▶ takes place mostly in companies or other educational institutions

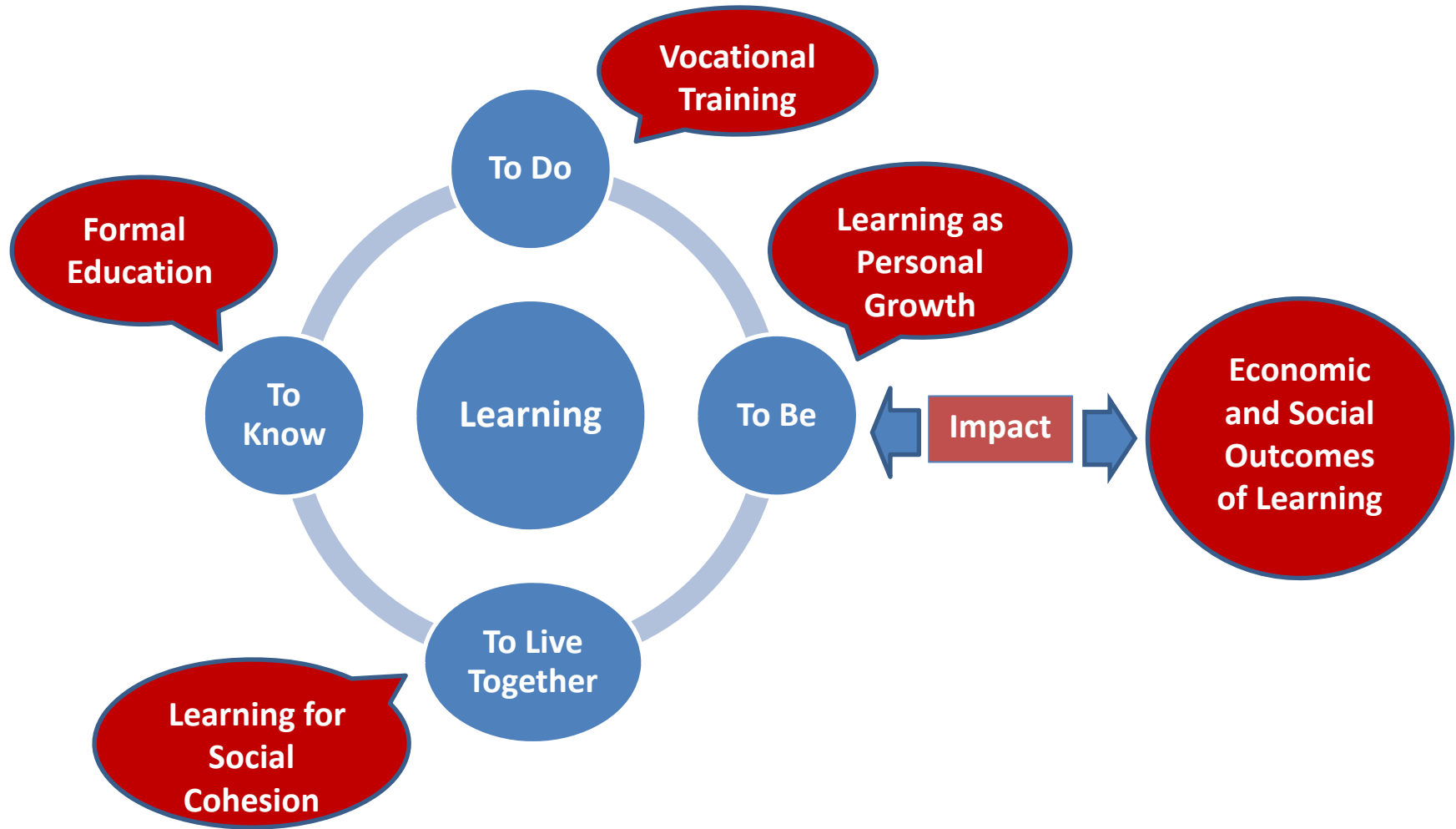
## Informal learning

- ▶ is not organized or structured (objectives, time, learning support)
- ▶ results from daily activities in work, family or leisure

(Council of the European Union, 2012)



# Forms of learning



(Delors & UNESCO, 1996)



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## (2) Why lifelong learning?



# The changing world

- ▶ Demographic change
- ▶ Economic change
- ▶ Cultural change
- ▶ Social change





# Concepts of lifelong learning



## Lifelong learning for ALL

- ▶ emancipatory or social justice model
- ▶ equality of opportunity and life chances through education in a democratic society

## Lifelong learning for all who want and are able to participate

- ▶ open post-industrial society model
- ▶ citizens of developed, multicultural and democratic countries

## Lifelong learning for finding or keeping jobs in a changing labour market

- ▶ human capital model
- ▶ lifelong learning as continuous work-related training and skill development
- ▶ qualified, flexible and adaptable workforce



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## **(3) Validation of lifelong learning**



## What is validation?



„Validation of non-formal and informal learning is [...] a process of confirmation by a competent body that learning outcomes [...] acquired by an individual in a formal, non-formal or informal setting have been assessed against predefined criteria and are compliant with requirements of a validation standard.” (CEDEFOP, 2014, 288)



## Procedure and outcome



- ▶ *validation* as umbrella term for different sorts of terms and understandings such as
  - ▶ accreditation of prior learning (APL)
  - ▶ accreditation of learning outcomes
  - ▶ recognition of prior learning (RPL)
  - ▶ recognition of learning outcomes
  - ▶ certification of prior learning
  - ▶ and certification of learning outcomes (CEDEFOP, 2014).
- ▶ The definition of validation implies two elements: it is both a *procedure* and the *outcome of this procedure*.



## In higher education validation can lead to...



- ▶ *access* to higher education
- ▶ *credit* for (part of) a study program in higher education

(Cendon, Dehnbostel, 2015a,b)



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**(4) How to frame lifelong  
learning at universities?**



# Different ways of learning



academic learning	learning from experience
theory	practice
abstraction	experience
reflection	problem solving
freedom of purpose	application and exploitation
knowledge orientation	improvement of practice
systematic learning	situated learning



## Some (implicit) assumptions

- ▶ academic knowledge
- ▶ the quality of higher learning
- ▶ development of students
- ▶ role of teachers
- ▶ self-sufficiency of higher education





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## **(5) Bologna Process and EHEA-Framework**



## Bologna Process: central action lines



- ▶ easily readable and comparable degrees
- ▶ three cycle structure
- ▶ use of credit system (ECTS)
- ▶ mobility
- ▶ cooperation in quality assurance
- ▶ European dimension
- ▶ Lifelong learning



# The EHEA-Framework



- ▶ 3 cycles (Bachelor – Master – Doctorate)
- ▶ generic statements of typical expectations of achievements and abilities associated with qualifications at the end of a cycle
- ▶ Dublin Descriptors look at (1) knowledge and understanding, (2) its application, (3) making judgments, (4) communication, (5) learning skills
- ▶ Descriptors should be read in relation to each other



# The value of the EHEA-framework



- ▶ structural dimension
- ▶ didactical dimension
- ▶ opening dimension



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# Structural dimension



- ▶ comparability of degrees
- ▶ structuring and description of qualifications
  - ▶ profiles
  - ▶ competencies
  - ▶ workload
  - ▶ level
  - ▶ learning outcomes



## Didactical dimension



- ▶ focus on the quality of teaching in higher education
- ▶ student-centred learning as new mission of higher education
- ▶ innovative forms of teaching and learning
- ▶ adequate forms of assessment



## Opening dimension



- ▶ preparing students for further learning in changing and insecure working contexts
- ▶ development of innovative study programs at the interface between academic and professional world
- ▶ flexible learning paths: recognition of non-formal and informal learning



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# (6) European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (EQF)





# European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (EQF) as a meta-framework



- ▶ covers all levels of qualifications
- ▶ facilitates gateways between subsystems of education and training
- ▶ adopts and promotes the use of learning outcomes
- ▶ promotes validation of non formal and informal learning



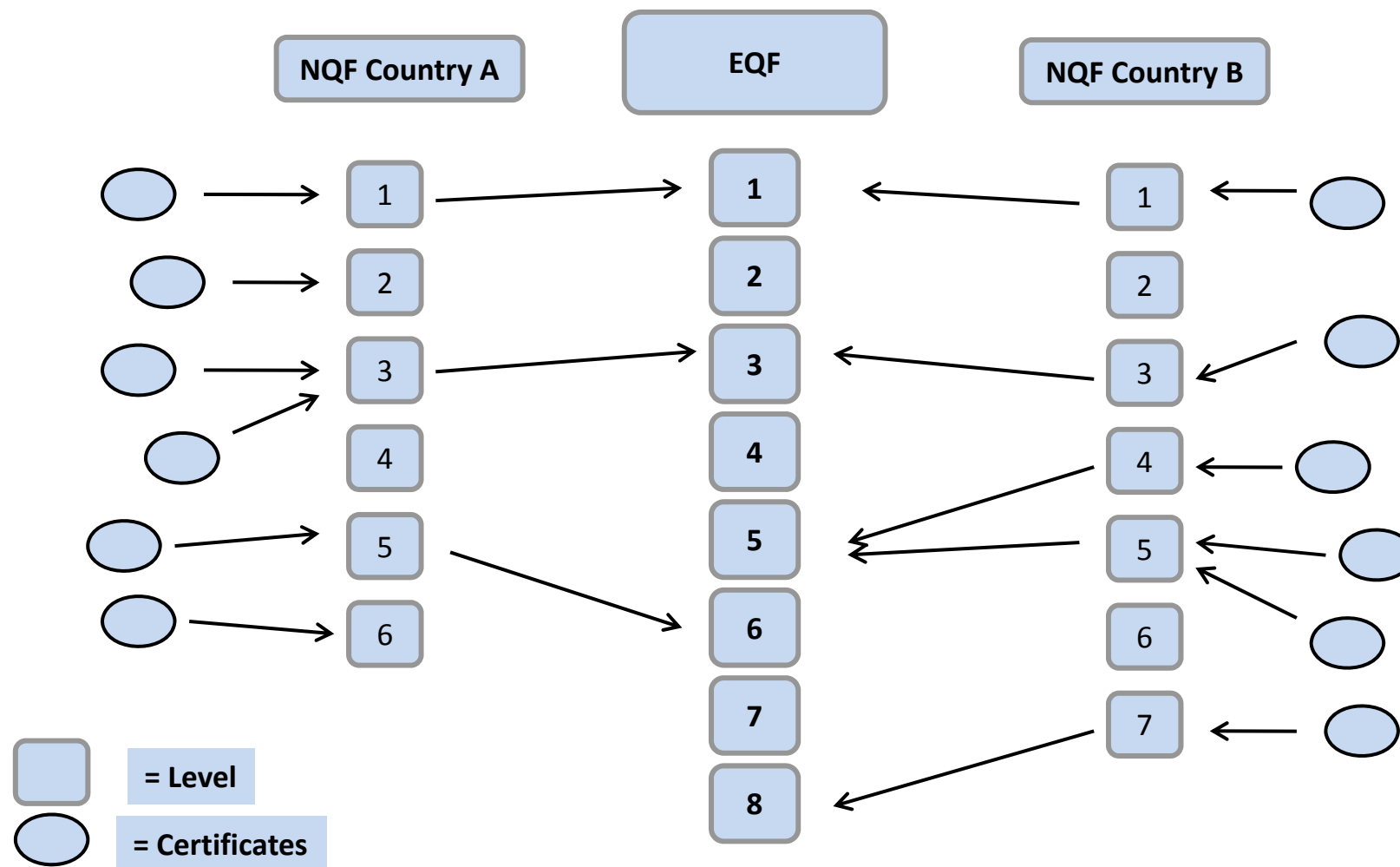
# Explaining EQF



- ▶ grid of descriptors defining 8 levels of qualification in terms of learning outcomes related to knowledge, skills, competence
- ▶ knowledge is described as theoretical and/or factual
- ▶ skills are described as cognitive (involving the use of logical, intuitive and creative thinking) and practical (involving manual dexterity and the use of methods, materials, tools and instruments)
- ▶ competence is described in terms of responsibility and autonomy



# Comparing qualifications (EQF)



=> <https://ec.europa.eu/ploteus/en/compare>



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## **(7) Qualifications frameworks and their role**



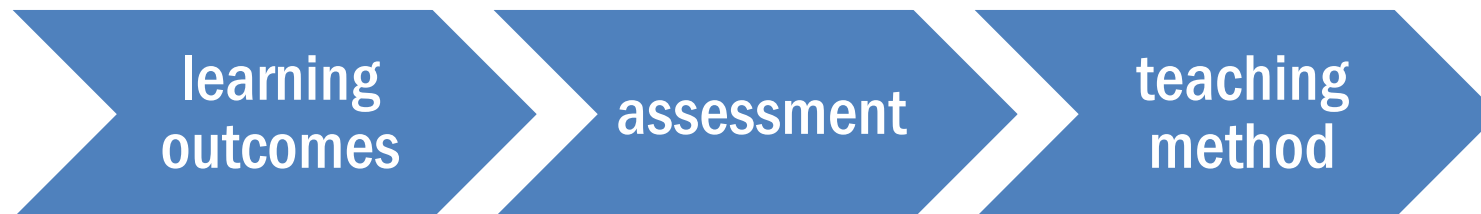
# New ways of curricula development



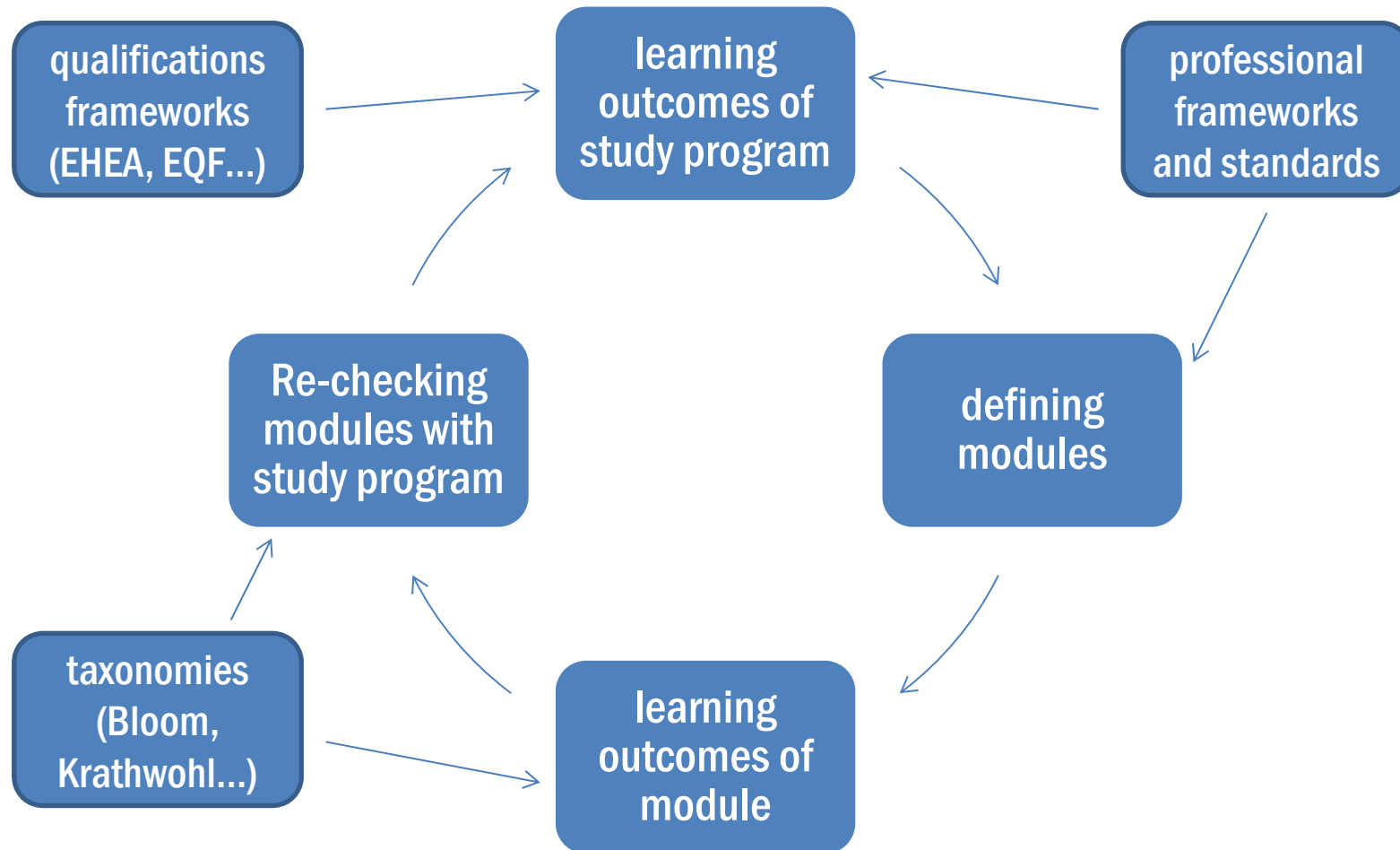
from a teacher-oriented approach



to a student-oriented approach



# Framing with frameworks



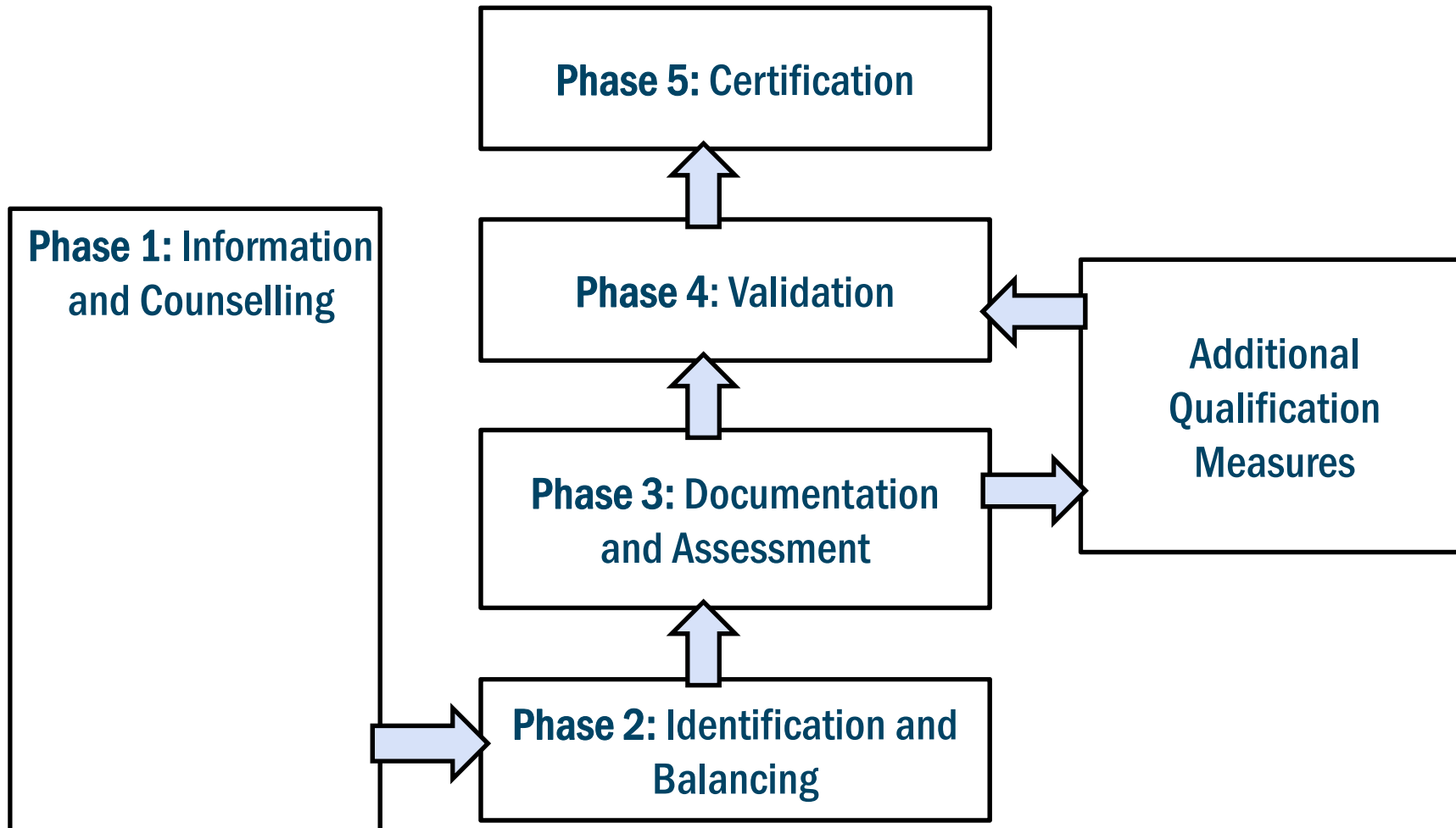
# How qualifications frameworks support LLL at universities



- ▶ **explicitness of academic learning and its quality**
- ▶ **transparency and clarity for students and teachers**
- ▶ **cyclic quality development (within curricula development)**
- ▶ **explicit quality assurance**
- ▶ **starting point for validation - students learning from outside academia can be measured and validated (learning outcomes)**



# Validation process – Five-Phases-Model





# spasibø!



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